LeadersPlus

APRIL 2019

LEADER PLUS IMPACT REPORT

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CAN Invest
Driving growth in social enterprise

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"THE LEADERS PLUS PROGRAMME ENABLED ME TO BE MORE AMBITIOUS, MORE MOTIVATED AND CONFIDENT THAT I CAN HAVE LONG AND REWARDING CAREER"

Leaders Plus was incorporated as a Community Interest Company in 2017. The Fellowship was launched in 2018 and Leaders Plus decided to work with CAN Invest to evaluate the first year of this programme. The Fellowship is designed to support talented individuals to stay on the leadership pipeline and continue to develop their careers while enjoying their young families.

The 2018 Fellowship included 9 workshops and events. The content focuses on career acceleration skills and support to overcome barriers. The Fellowship is designed to address the issue that too many new parents drop off the leadership pipeline, leading to gender inequality in senior leadership roles. All workshops and events are baby accessible.

Analysis suggests that during their engagement with Leaders Plus, beneficiaries experienced small to large improvements in all key outcomes that were measured, most of which were statistically significant.

BENEFICIARY OUTCOMES

Analysis suggests that during their engagement with Leaders Plus, beneficiaries experienced small to large improvements in all key outcomes that were measured, most of which were statistically significant.

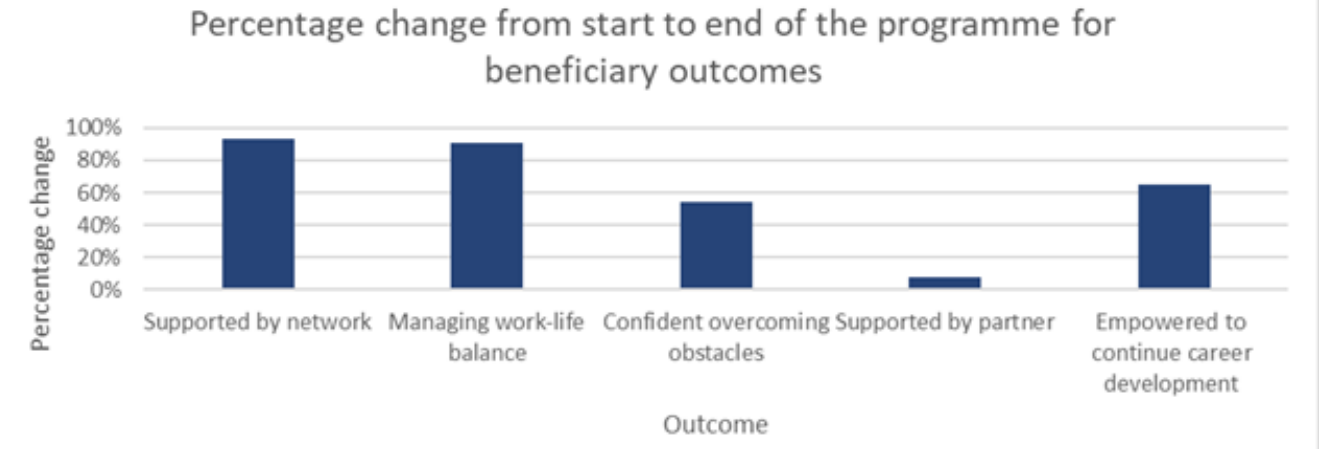


Figure 1. Percentage change over time for beneficiary outcomes

Overall, the analysis suggests that Leaders Plus are having a high impact on beneficiaries across all key outcomes moving from an average baseline score of 4.6 to an exit score of 7.1, a percentage increase of 55%. The outcome which saw largest change (93% increase) was **'feeling supported by mentors and role models'.** Across the group, the ability to **'manage work-life balance'** almost doubled (91% increase) and there was also a large increase (67%) of those **'empowered to continue career development'** once they go back to work. Considering the latter outcome, one fellow said the programme **"made me realise that I can do work and have a child – at one point I was thinking that I would have to hand in my notice to do something less stressful."**

Finally, beneficiaries saw an increase of 2.3 points (52%) in **'confidence to overcome obstacles'** with a small increase (8%) in those feeling **'supported by their partner'**.

In addition to the above, seven beneficiaries got promoted, and three additional people experienced other forms of career progression (e.g. board roles, expanded teams) by the end of the programme.

EMPLOYER OUTCOMES

Analysis suggests that during their engagement with Leaders Plus, employers of beneficiaries experienced small to large improvements in all key outcomes that were measured, most of which were statistically significant. It should be noted that this is based on the perceptions of fellows only as no feedback was collected from employers directly.

Figure 2. Change over time for employer outcomes

The outcomes which saw largest (and statistically significant) change were **'influencing employer to support working parents'** and **'supporting other parents'** suggesting Leaders Plus is creating a network of champions to institute change within organisations around supporting working parents.

Beneficiaries that participated in the programme saw some change in the three indicators related to **'employer supports parent to progress career'** (two of which were statistically significant). This suggests that involvement of employers in the process is having some positive effect.

Finally, there has been no real change (in fact a small decrease, although not statistically significant) in likelihood of beneficiaries staying in their current role for more than 3 years. It should be noted that this question had the highest baseline score of all employer outcomes, and so there was less opportunity to increase this. Furthermore, only three people (out of 30) moved to a different employer 12 months after the programme began, showing most fellows have stayed with their current employer. This retention rate (90%) compares favourably to the best available benchmark, which sees a retention rate of 77% (Chanfreau et al, 2011).

More generally, the average score for employer outcomes at baseline was 5.6 compared with 4.6 for beneficiary outcomes. This average employer outcome score did increase to 6.9 (24%), only slightly below the summary score for beneficiary outcomes (7.1) suggesting that there was a bigger need to address for beneficiaries than employers, which the programme did successfully.

In conclusion, Leaders Plus have developed a programme that is clearly having a positive impact on parent leaders during a critical phase of their career, which in many cases is statistically significant. On top of this, there is evidence that they have created a cross sector network of leaders who are influencing employers and peers positively in relation to career development.

This could lead to substantial organic change across sectors driven by the 'champions' created through the programme, especially as they take on more leadership roles and roll out best practice. One can therefore expect that the intervention will increase gender parity at leadership levels and address a root cause of the gender pay gap.

If there were one top indicator that encompasses the mission of Leaders Plus, it would be **'How likely do you think it is that your parent role will impact negatively on your career progression?'** It is a fantastic result that beneficiary scores on this outcome have more than doubled (positively), it being the second most significant level of change of any indicator across the programme.

ABOUT LEADERPLUS

Too often parents feel they have to choose between being a good parent and a fulfilling leadership career. We exist to change this.

Leaders Plus is a social enterprise enabling talented women and men with young children to continue to develop their leadership careers.

Leaders Plus is accredited by Social Enterprise UK, selected to be part of Cambridge Social Ventures, recently won the 50 New Radicals award by the Observer and Nesta, and has been supported by the RSA (Royal Society for the Arts and Commerce).

Leaders Plus' award winning **Fellowship Programme** supports Leaders with Babies on parental leave or beyond to progress in their careers. The Social Enterprise has supported professionals from organisations such as the BBC, NHS, HSBC, Action Tutoring and the Salvation Army. We welcome applications from fathers and mothers.

Leaders Plus believes that having a baby shouldn't negatively impact on your career progression, that is why all events and workshops are baby accessible.

Leaders Plus works in partnership with organisations who are committed to a paradigm shift. Together, they aim to build a positive movement for change so that new parents can thrive in leadership roles.

Leaders Plus' Founder has won the WeAreTheCity Rising Stars and the Prime Minister's Points of Light award for her work in setting up Leaders Plus.

THE PROBLEM LEADERS PLUS IS SEEKING TO ADDRESS:

- Many diversity initiatives exist – yet parents with caring responsibilities are still underrepresented in senior leadership roles and most new parent support focuses on work life balance only.
- Between the ages of 30-40, the gender pay gap increases by more than 10%, the average UK childbirth age is 30, and with every child the pay gap increases by 3% (1).
- 4 in 10 people feel that women are less committed at work when they've had a baby, the effect is the other way round for men (2) .
- Bain & Company found that fathers are punished career wise for making flexible working requests or asking for parental leave (3).

OUR INTERVENTION – THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

The Fellowship is designed to support talented individuals to stay on the leadership pipeline and continue to develop their careers while enjoying their young families.

The 2018 Fellowship was oversubscribed with four applications received per place available, Fellows have come from a wide range of organisations such as the BBC, HSBC, the NHS, Santander, the Salvation Army and Shelter.

The 2018 Fellowship included 9 workshops and events including one jointly with their line manager and an optional workshop with their partner/spouse if applicable. The content focuses on career acceleration skills and gives the space to challenge assumptions. The content in 2018 included:

- Inspirational House of Commons Leaders with Babies Event
- Mentor matching & induction event with the Senior Leader Mentor
- Career development 1 workshop
- Career development 2 workshop
- Line manager workshop
- Sleep consultant session (optional)
- Innovation workshop to support Leaders with Babies in their organisation
- Workshop with partner (optional)
- Final event where Fellows shared their recommendations with senior leaders in their organisations

Fellows were able to take along their babies to sessions and events, making it accessible during maternity, shared parental and adoption leave.

The 2018 Fellowship was open to all genders, Fellows were selected through an interview process assessing their senior leadership potential and willingness to become part of a movement for positive change.

There were a total of 30 Fellows, most workshops were run in groups of 15.
Fellows were individuals in leadership roles from across a range of sectors and organisations. 1 person identified herself as lesbian, 29 identified themselves as heterosexual, 1 person identified herself as single, 29 identified themselves as in a relationship, 10% of Fellows identified as BAME, 20% were on maternity/shared parental leave at the start of the programme, all were female even though the programme welcomes male applications.

(1) Lionel Wilner, 2017
(2) Fawcett Society, 2016
(3) Bain & Company, 2016

WHY IS IT UNIQUE?

- First maternity/paternity intervention which focuses on leadership & career development.
- Practical intervention with content that is targeted at key barriers and enablers for parents continuing their careers.
- Babies welcome. This matters because it sends a strong visible message that fellows don't have to choose between their leadership career and the parent role.
- The programme comes at a critical time in the first two years after children are born when many parents decide that they can't go on with their leadership role.
- The content has been developed in consultation with Leaders Plus members who are in the target group for the programme.
- Intervention which gives fellows the platform to offer suggestions to senior leaders in their organisations and the wider system.

OUR PRINCIPLES

- We believe in supporting **leaders with young children to fulfil their potential** in their leadership career while looking after young children.
- Fellows are **invested** in each others' development and ability to balance happy family lives with work.
- We support individuals to choose **diverse** journey's congruent with each persons' values, whatever they may be.
- We offer high quality professional development which is **informed by evidence**.
- We empower new parents to **shape the debate** about parents in leadership.
- We create an **environment of trust and mutual support** through facilitation approaches such as the Thinking Environment Methodology (4) or peer coaching.

(4) https://www.timetothink.com/thinking-environment/

HOW THE EVALUATION WAS DONE

A pre-post survey design was selected to measure the social impact of the programme.

This means the target outcomes were measured before and after Leaders Plus support, and the observed changes over time in these outcomes are used as indication of impact. The present design is not able to provide proof of impact (a more robust design, such as a comparison group design, will be necessary for that).

Beneficiaries were asked to fill in an online baseline survey before starting to receive support. They were then asked to fill in follow-up surveys at the last event of the programme.

Five individuals who missed that last event completed the survey online after the event, the last person completed it two weeks after the end of the programme.
It was not possible to match baseline and follow-up responses for beneficiaries to understand what the change has been for specific individuals. Therefore this report solely presents a snapshot summary at baseline and exit.

The surveys are available at the end of this report.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings from the impact evaluation, looking first at outcomes for beneficiaries (fellows on the programme), followed by outcomes for employers.

THE SAMPLE

Data was collected for 29 beneficiaries at baseline and 26 beneficiaries at follow up, from a whole population of 30.
It is unknown how many people that completed the baseline survey also completed the follow up survey, and vice-versa.

RESULTS - BENEFICIARIES

Analysis suggests that during their engagement with Leaders Plus, beneficiaries experienced small to large improvements in all key outcomes that were measured, most of which were statistically significant.

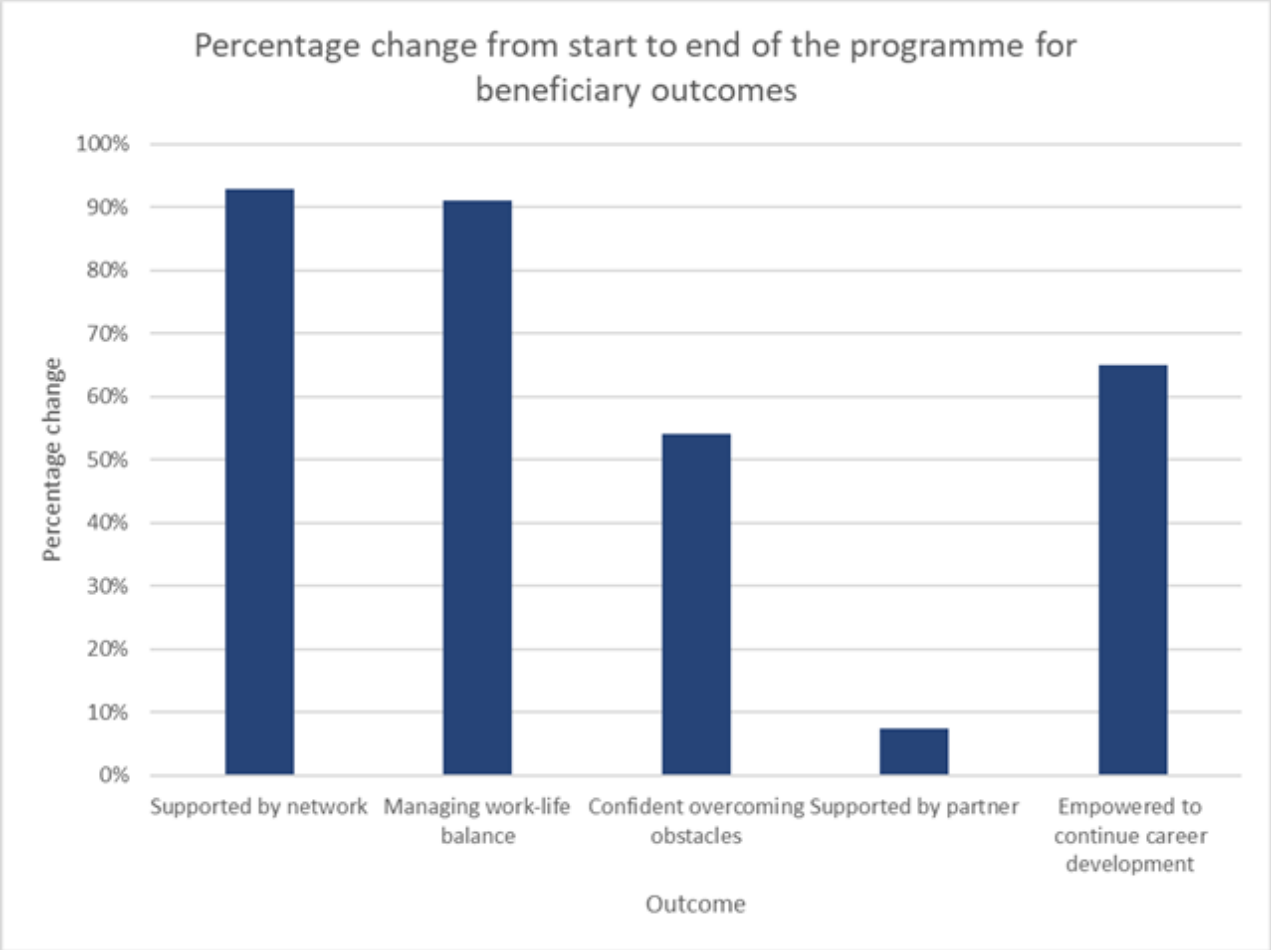


Figure 3. Percentage change over time for beneficiary outcomes

The below table shows percentage change from the start to the end of the programme. Where some outcomes have more than one indicator which is measuring the outcome, all of these are presented.

All indicators highlighted green have achieved statistically significant change (see appendix for further information).

Outcomes for the beneficiaries - percentage change from the start to the end of the programme	Indicator 1	Indicator 2
Supported by mentors and inspirational role models	83%	104%
Find your personal approach to managing your work life balance	91%	
Confident about overcoming obstacles that may be faced as a leader with young children	52%	
Supported by partner	8%	
Empowered to continue career development	102%	31%

Table 1. Percentage change for beneficiary outcomes

The outcome which saw largest change was **'feeling supported by mentors and role models**'. It is clear that beneficiaries who have participated in the programme have been able to make progress in finding mentors, sponsors and developing their network. This is exemplified by one fellow who stated that her mentor "made me feel very motivated and inspired as she fully understands my scenarios and that nothing that was happening when I went back to work was unusual, which is reassuring." Another fellow stated that in relation to her mentor, it "really helped to talk through career progression options with someone neutral and narrow down to 2-3 things. And then to think about what I might need to do in terms of skills and learning over the next few years to get to that point." Finally, another fellow felt that she "got really lucky with her mentor, she is just awesome! There aren't many senior women that I find really impressive but she is one and her support has been very encouraging."

Those participating in the programme almost doubled their ability to **'manage work-life balance'**. One fellow said the programme "enabled me to put boundaries around my work life balance."

There was also a large increase of those **'empowered to continue career development'** once they go back to work. If there were one top indicator that encompasses the mission of Leaders Plus, it would be **'How likely do you think it is that your parent role will impact negatively on your career progression?'**, which is the first indicator for this outcome. It is a fantastic result that beneficiary scores on this outcome have more than doubled (positively), it being the second most significant level of change of any indicator across the programme. The other indicator (knowledge and ability to progress career) had a relatively high score at the outset, meaning that whilst improvement was similar in number to other outcomes, in was lower in relative percentage terms.
One fellow said the programme **"made me realise that I can do work and have a child – at one point I was thinking that I would have to hand in my notice to do something less stressful."** Another said that the programme **"gave me permission to be ambitious"** and a final fellow stated that she now **"feels more able to have a career, rather than just to move between jobs".**

Finally, beneficiaries saw an increase of 2.3 points (52%) in **'confidence to overcome obstacles'** with a small increase in those feeling **'supported by their partner'**. For the latter (the only change that was not statistically significant), the baseline score was the highest of all outcomes by 2 points leaving little room for improvement.
This is also the outcome which it is arguably most difficult for Leaders Plus to influence. However, the positive change recorded is backed up by one fellow who said the workshop with partners was "an opportunity to cross the work life divide; two worlds that have to talk to each other, which was very powerful.

I don't know of many other programmes that would be that inclusive and holistic." Considering confidence to overcome obstacles, one fellow said that "I didn't really know what to expect when I went back but the programme helped me feel more capable for some scenarios."

Overall, this analysis suggests that Leaders Plus are having a high impact on beneficiaries across all key outcomes moving from an average baseline score of 4.6 to an exit score of 7.1, a percentage increase of 55%.

PROMOTIONS

In addition to the above, seven beneficiaries got promoted, and three additional people experienced other forms of career progression (e.g. board roles, expanded teams) 12 months after the start of the programme.

Over a third of the fellows of the Leaders Plus programme went on to gain a promotion or a significant role change during the duration of the programme itself.
This is a very high number, particularly over a short period of time, and considering that generally speaking, some parents do not go back to work at all.

Further research is needed on the contribution of Leaders Plus and the extent to which this change would have happened anyway, but the results available are very positive.

CASE STUDY

LISA GROVER (HEAD OF REWARD, THE SALVATION ARMY)

Lisa heard about the Leaders Plus programme through her manager who was one of the mentors for first cohort. It felt timely for her as "I was thinking, what do I do now? What is my career path going to be?" It provoked a rekindling of ambition for her. Working in HR, she is also generally passionate about flexible working and supporting parents in the workplace. She was already back at work when she started the programme, and her child was one of the oldest.

Lisa's experience

Lisa felt that all of the sessions were useful. It was positive to meet other people and make connections, both with those in a similar sector or with those at different stages of their career or in different sectors. The sessions that focused on the parental side of things were very pertinent and timely. It was also "great to be with ambitious people who weren't shy about it, who wanted to make their career and family life work."

Generally, the programme was very practically useful as it "focused you in on what was really important, by developing a well-defined, clear five year plan.." The career planning session with her manager was also very useful; "you can have plans but need support and structure to implement them. You don't normally have the time to talk about that. We also found out things about each other that we didn't know previously."

The sessions around networking and auditing networks were also really useful. This helped her to think about who she knows from elsewhere and who can potentially shift into a sponsorship role and potentially open up opportunities. The final session, on influencing employers, "was a nice way to tie it up, as it created a thread with the senior directors from work to try and influence a wider audience."

"Having a mentor was super useful, to have 1-1 time to get into detail." At the start, Lisa had 101 ideas of what she wanted to be doing work-wise. Her mentor really helped to talk through those ideas and narrow down to a more manageable number of options. And then to think about what she might need to do in terms of skills and learning over the next few years to get to that point.

Lisa's future

Lisa is already "more open with her manager about things that she would like exposure to or experience of, and that is already happening". This is strongly linked to the five year plan she developed and the skills she identified she needed with her mentor.

She also has a better idea of longer term goals based on her cohesive vision of work and family. She now "feels more able to have a career, rather than just to move between jobs".

Lisa's influence

Lisa really liked the mentoring and would like to roll out something similar internally to support ambitious parents. She would also like to review how Keep-in-Touch days are managed and maternity/paternity/shared parental pay, across a three year plan.

Her organisation is also working on policy changes which will tie in with some of these ideas – more immediately she wants to showcase examples of where flexible working arrangements are working well as not all managers do things the same way or have the confidence to try new approaches.

RESULTS - EMPLOYERS

Analysis suggests that during their engagement with Leaders Plus, employers of beneficiaries experienced small to large improvements in all key outcomes that were measured. It should be noted that this is based on the perceptions of fellows only as no feedback was collected from employers directly.

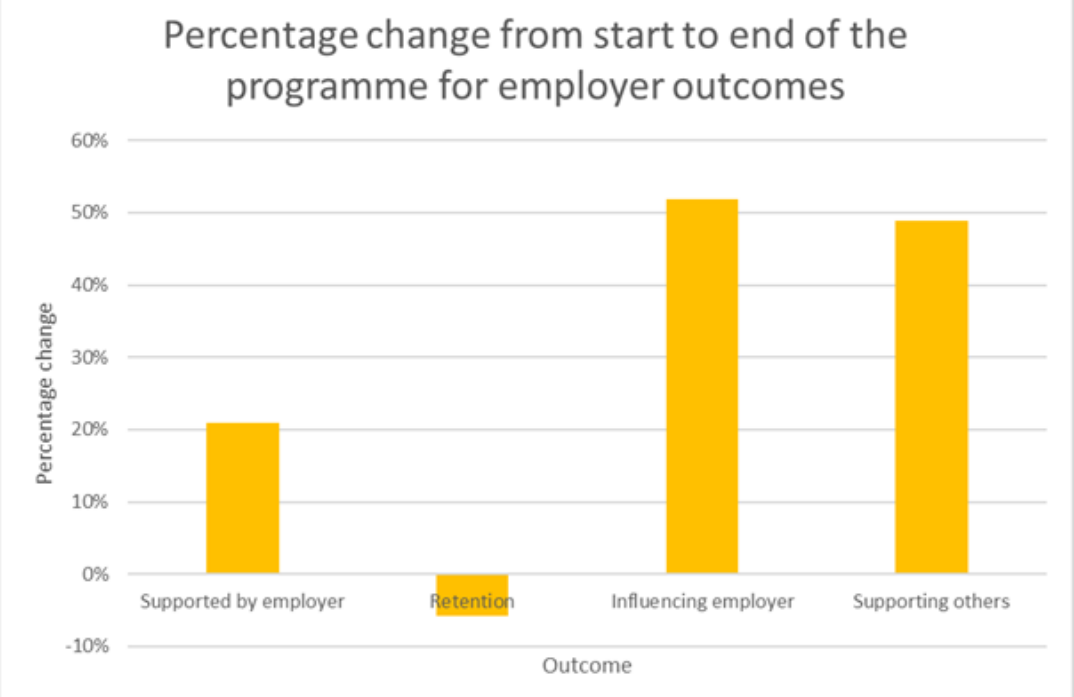


Figure 4. Change over time for employer outcomes

Outcomes for employers – change from baseline to exit	Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3
Employer supports parent to progress career	4%	28%	25%
Retention of top talent	- 4%		
Influencing employer to support working parents	50%		
Supporting other parents to progress career	64%		

Table 2. Percentage change for employer outcomes

The outcomes which saw largest (and statistically significant) change were **'influencing employer to support working parents'** and **'supporting other parents'** suggesting Leaders Plus is creating a network of champions to institute change within organisations around supporting working parents. It is clear that beneficiaries who have participated in the programme have been able to make progress in finding sponsors and developing their network. One fellow has helped to implement a parent-buddy scheme, whilst others have developed working groups to review and develop policies. Another stated she feels she now has "more tools to make change".

Beneficiaries that participated in the programme saw some change in the three indicators related to '**employer supports parent to progress career**' (two of which were statistically significant). This suggests that involvement of employers in the process is having some positive effect. However, the 'supportive line manager' indicator saw least change, suggesting this could be an area where Leaders Plus look to develop further support.

One fellow did state that the session with the line manager was "**very useful as it enabled me to get the support from my manager to implement by five year plan. We don't normally have time to talk about things like that and we found things out about each other that we didn't know!"**

Finally, there has been no real change (in fact a small decrease, although not statistically significant) in likelihood of beneficiaries staying in their current role for more than 3 years. It should be noted that this question had the highest baseline score of all employer outcomes, and so there was less opportunity to increase this. Furthermore, only three people (out of 30) moved to a different employer 12 months after the programme began, showing most fellows have stayed with their current employer. This retention rate (90%) compares favourably to the best available benchmark, which sees a retention rate of 77% (Chanfreau et al, 2011).

More generally, the average score for employer outcomes at baseline was 5.6 compared with 4.6 for beneficiary outcomes. Employer outcomes score did increase to 6.9 (24%), only slight below the summary score for beneficiary outcomes (7.1) suggesting that there was a bigger need to address for beneficiaries than employers, which the programme did successfully.

CASE STUDY

COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR AT A CREATIVE ADVERTISING AGENCY

This fellow heard about Leaders Plus via a colleague, a few months into her maternity leave. “When I looked it up, it had been something I had been thinking about at the time. Why should I end a career that I have spent 10 years developing because I want a family?”.

She felt that she “was naïve at the time as it was my first maternity leave. I assumed everything would be the same and have realised since coming back how different they are.”

The experience

She enjoyed the workshops which helped think through career and family vision and the stepping stones to achieve both. She was able to look through new perspectives by expanding her network and being strategic about how she allocates her time by “not taking everything on”. The practical sessions, particularly the one with the sleep consultant “were exactly what I needed at the time. The cost of a consultant would be very expensive.”

She matched with a mentor from the same industry, and she has been superb. The conversations always made “me feel very motivated and inspired as she fully understands my scenarios and that nothing that was happening when I went back to work was unusual.” The scheme “has given me more role models; meeting women in more senior positions and with more children is inspiring and they may not exist in my current organisation.”

The majority of the sessions were while she was still on maternity so she had the return to work to come. She has gone back to the workshop content lots of times since. “The tools are ongoing and super helpful for career progression.” The initial 6 months back at work were very challenging. The Leaders Plus programme helped me to “feel more capable for some scenarios.”

The future

“If I hadn't gone on the programme, I would have gone back to work with low confidence and self-doubt.” She came back to work “feeling more motivated and fully capable to do the job.” She hasn’t found any difficulties in terms of juggling work and family but “I felt there were assumptions made about me, such as not being able to travel, or not being able to take on work opportunities. I felt I had got better at my job and was no less ambitious, but there was still unconscious bias and assumptions that I am less committed.”

Therefore, she has “had to work harder than ever to prove that I deserve my role. The scheme has helped me face up to that and speak up if certain assumptions are being made, to be braver. Things have improved over 6 months but it has taken time.”

She also developed lots of transferable skills on maternity leave. “Prioritising more effectively makes me a better leader; I am able to step aside to give others opportunity to learn and develop. I feel I am now a better worker than when I left. I don't always say yes just to be helpful, but look at what would be useful to the business. I can be more strategic on the tasks I do.

Maternity leave can help women become better leaders. I still feel ambitious, motivated and confident that I can have long and rewarding career."

"I have learnt to be patient and play the long game with my career. I know I can't progress as quickly if want to maintain a family but I feel realistic when thinking longer term."

Her influence

She is speaking to others in the organisation about Leaders Plus, especially HR, and has helped to put in place a parent-buddy and mentor scheme and a parent support network. This has helped people "realise that coming back to work, lots of people are in the same boat and this gives a new way of bonding with other people in the same situation."

DISCUSSION

Leaders Plus have developed a programme that is clearly having a positive impact on parent leaders during a critical phase of their career, which in many cases is statistically significant.

On top of this, there is evidence that they have created a cross sector network of leaders who are influencing employers and peers positively in relation to career development. One can therefore expect that the intervention will increase gender parity at leadership levels and address a root cause of the gender pay gap.

If there were one top indicator that encompasses the mission of Leaders Plus, it would be '**How likely do you think it is that your parent role will impact negatively on your career progression?**' It is a fantastic result that beneficiary scores on this outcome have more than doubled (positively), it being the second most significant level of change of any indicator across the programme.
General feedback backed that up, including **'I thought the programme has been incredibly well thought through.'**

A number of fellows stated that some of the specific approaches such as the workshops on innovation and the thinking environment were very powerful, and had been of ongoing use.

Thinking about longer term impact, one fellow was already being able to take on more work and getting more exposure, which is "hugely positive and came out of the career planning session." Another "came back to work feeling more motivated and fully capable to do the job" thanks to the programme.

Unsurprisingly, given the fact that employees receive significantly more support than employers, employers do not seem to have achieved as much impact but the change is still positive.

CASE STUDY

SUSANNAH HARDYMAN (CEO, ACTION TUTORING)

Susannah heard about Leaders Plus four months into maternity leave for her first child.
At the time, she was lacking confidence about going back to work to lead an organisation and balancing that with becoming a mother. When she found out about Leaders Plus, she was excited about the opportunity to be part of a network that were experiencing similar issues. She started the programme just as she was returning to work after maternity leave.

Susannah's experience

Susannah found great value in the peer network element of the project. "It was a great to be part of a network of similar women, to go on a journey with them, to learn with them, and sometimes to cry with them."
Susannah felt that the workshops effectively encourage sharing in intentional ways, especially through pair work. This enabled fellows to share their struggles of having children and balancing that with work.

The workshop where she brought along her partner definitely stood out. To have some work-based CPD that involved a partner felt particularly unique. An opportunity to cross the work life divide; two worlds that have to talk to each other was very powerful. "I don't know of many other programmes that would be that inclusive and holistic."

Being able to bring her son to the session was incredibly valuable and unique too. "It was amazing how well the sessions ran with the little ones there!"
She also felt the mentoring was really powerful – her mentor has been brilliant and helpful.

Susannah's future

Taking part in the Leaders Plus programme "made me realise that I can do work at a level of high responsibility and have a child – at one point I was thinking that the two could prove a stretch too far." It also enabled Susannah to put boundaries around her work life balance. Susannah now feels more confident about the future and more ambitious about how she will be able to progress her career and has been able to have some productive conversations at work about this.

Susannah's influence

Susannah feels that being able to role model working 4 days per week has been really positive, to show to young women (and men!) that they can make that work.
Within her organisation, she and a colleague who also took part in Leaders Plus introduced a policy that gave more flexibility to staff in terms of paid leave for unexpected circumstances. This includes emergency childcare, but also things like caring for another dependant or compassionate leave.

She now brings her son into the office every now and then and when she has had to do a couple of things on days off, she just brought her son in anyway to normalise the work life split. The team always love it when he visits and it's led to positive conversations about work/life balance.

She is now thinking about how she can further influence the charity sector by speaking with other CEOs about what she has done and her organisation's policies, at events or individually.

LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

This being Leaders Plus' first impact report, there were a number of limitations to the research. These will be outlined below and then recommendations made to improve in the following section.

- **Lack of longitudinal data:** as outlined above, this report only represents a snapshot summary of impact at baseline and exit. It is not possible to track change for specific beneficiaries from baseline to exit, nor therefore to draw statistically significant conclusions from the data, such as the number of beneficiaries that improved or reduced across certain outcomes.

- **Erroneous question in baseline survey**: one survey question on whether individuals had sponsors was asked on a scale of 0-100 in the baseline survey, rather than 0-10. All other questions in the survey were asked on a scale of 0-10 and the exit survey asked the question on a scale of 0-10 as well. Therefore, it may be the case that either or both of the below has occurred:
    - o Some respondents misread the scale and answered out of 10 rather than out of 100
    - o Phrasing the question differently at baseline and exit resulted in different responses e.g. people are more/less likely to answer low/high when the scale is out of 100 rather than 10
    - o Therefore, the results for this indicator and outcome should be treated with caution

- **Lack of counterfactual data:** results are presented in this report without consideration of 'what would have happened anyway'. A number of key counterfactual considerations are excluded:
    - o Attribution: to what extent is the change due to Leaders Plus? This was asked of the promotion question only.
    - o Deadweight: to what extent would the change have happened anyway? In reality, this could be measured by assessing a control group or comparing with appropriate benchmarks.
    - o Duration: the change should be measured over a longer time frame to assess extent to which it is sustained (or increased) beyond the programme.

- **One outcome is assessed differently to others**: all outcomes are assessed on a scale of 0-10 with the exception of 'Supported by mentors and inspirational role models': indicator 1. This question is measured using options of "Yes, No, Not sure". Success is measured as the proportion of respondents who answer 'Yes' at the start and end. As this question is asked using a more binary scale than the others, it is possible that it overestimates the likely change that has occurred.

- **Promotion question asked of small sample:** the question around whether beneficiaries achieved a promotion or not was only asked of the 5 beneficiaries who didn't attend the event because at the event Leaders Plus was surprised to learn how many individuals had been promoted and added the question on promotion into the survey for the Fellows that missed that session.
The remaining data on promotions has come from individual responses to an email a month after the last event asking for Fellows to disclose if they had been promoted. This is a very small sample and therefore difficult to draw conclusions from.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DELIVERY

- **Codify the peer network:** considering Leaders Plus' objectives, and qualitative feedback received, it is clear that one of the main outcomes of the programme has been the creation and sustainment of a strong peer network. According to one fellow, "it was a great to be part of a network of similar women, to go on a journey with them, to learn with them, and sometimes to cry with them." Another felt that the "chance to learn and share with peers was as important as workshops in some cases". It is clear that this was an aim of the programme, but the extent to which it has formed a key component of how impact has been created is worth exploring further.
Not only is the network worth continuing to codify and strengthen due to the impact it both creates and sustains (due to likely long term nature of relationships), but also the fact that it requires minimal input (and therefore cost) from Leaders Plus. Leaders Plus should look to strengthen its support for the peer network as the programme develops and understand how it fits in with the rest of the programme. For example, two fellows mentioned that more could be done to "invest in bonding the cohort early in the process" eg. before the House of Commons event. It also may be the case that the network is capable of achieving outcomes that core delivery cannot, leading to implications in terms of resource allocation.

- **Consider extensions to the peer network:** Building on the above, Leaders Plus could consider other forms of peer led intervention which could take place. Attending peer network meetings aren't always possible, so vlogs / blogs by Leaders Plus alumni who have successfully navigated specific situations could be beneficial. This could be provided publicly or through a confidential intranet depending on the nature of the topic. This could also link in to an additional income stream through an ongoing membership package.

- **Codify target population:** not only was Leaders Plus successful at achieving significant levels of change, but it was also successful at creating a network of like-minded individuals that were able to support each other. This is a very positive outcome and highlights the effectiveness of Leaders Plus' selection criteria. However, Leaders Plus should codify its inclusion and exclusion criteria more clearly as they look to grow and there is more interest in the programme. This is to ensure it works with the beneficiaries it can most effectively support, e.g.
    - What is the exclusion and inclusion criteria: for example, if someone is very confident in relation to the target outcomes, would they be considered as not needing the programme compared with others? Conversely, would there be a scenario whereby a potential beneficiary is in a position that the programme is not right for them and that they would more likely benefit from a different programme, such is the scale or depth of their need / disadvantage? At what stage of pregnancy / life planning can (potential) parents most benefit from the programme eg. a light touch pre-pregnancy programme?
    - Leaders Plus should consider these parameters as it designs the next programme. As it scales, it should consider how to create the most effective group i.e. When there is more than one cohort at the same time, by considering which types of beneficiary work best together in a group.
    - Specifically, what would be the ideal gender balance? Some fellows felt that the programme should reflect broader ambitions of sharing parental leave more evenly across men and women, and especially to shift assumptions amongst men who are still more likely to occupy senior positions. But others felt that mixing genders could upset the balance and openness to share. This is something Leaders Plus should continue to review.

- **Consider incorporating a residential offer:** looking at similar programmes, such as Clore, one fellow suggested Leaders Plus could offer a residential element of the programme to enable fellows to focus fully on some of the elements of the programme that are discussed during working days currently. This would also deepen the bond with peers. The residential could offer childcare facilities.

- **Consider programme duration:** some fellows felt the programme went very quickly. Leaders Plus could consider extending to 12 months to deepen the impact.

- **Consider extent of line manager / employer involvement:** considering Leaders Plus' business model, it is important that employers benefit from the programme sufficiently. Looking at the impact of the programme, it may be worth considering involving employers in the programme (slightly) more to ensure the embedding of any changes within organisations and specific relationships.
This could lead to a wider conversation that focuses specifically on retention, bearing in mind that some beneficiaries will make decisions around career progression (ie. Not planning to stay with the organisation for longer than 3 years) due to factors outside of the employer's control, but also creating the forum for factors in the employer's control to be discussed. Leaders Plus could also look at developing a specific programme for line managers, similar to a 'Train the Trainer' type model, to further enhance the ripple effect of any change.

- **Refine the mentoring offer:** the results of the mentoring were generally positive as outlined above. However, there was some variation in this and not all fellows had a positive experience. In at least one instance, the mentoring relationship ended before the pre-agreed three meetings, which was disappointing for the fellow in question. Leaders Plus should review the mentoring offer and, for example, consider mandating more than three sessions to take place.

Training Fellows to drive change within the organisations: this could take the form of something similar to an MA style programme (where the Fellowship is the BA) for those wanting to learn more to be able to drive change further within their own organisations and the wider sector.

Refresh the Theory of Change: by undertaking a co-design process with beneficiaries, Leaders Plus could refine its programme through a user-led approach, by understanding which activities lead to which outcomes, and which of these outcomes is most important to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCH

The following recommendations are made for Leaders Plus' next programme in terms of data collection and reporting.

- **Track longitudinal data:** Leaders Plus should ensure that data is collected at baseline and exit in a way that enables assessment of number of beneficiaries that have improved or reduced across all outcomes.

- **Ensure consistency of questions:** all questions should use the same scales, where appropriate. Most simple and effective would be to use scales of 0-10 for all questions.

Counterfactual data: Leaders Plus should consider counterfactual data where applicable, including:

- o Attribution: assessing the extent to which any change is due to Leaders Plus. It may not be practical to do this for all questions, but possibly for certain outcomes, specific samples, or generally. This is specifically relevant for long term outcomes like promotions, where a question could be similar to "Has Leaders Plus made you feel more able / ready to take on a promotion (if one was available)?"
- o Deadweight: Leaders Plus should consider ways to assess change on a control group or find benchmark data for their outcomes.
- o Duration: Leaders Plus should continue to collect data from their first cohort for 3/6/12 periods after the programme has finished.

- **Consider which activities are most impactful for whom:** Leaders Plus should aim to understand which activities are having most impact, particularly for different kinds of fellows.

- **Collect data from all beneficiaries:** Leaders Plus should aim to collect data from all beneficiaries.

- **Collect data from other stakeholders:** Leaders Plus should consider collecting data from some/all of other stakeholders, such as employers, line managers, partners, etc.

- **Collect data on peer network:** considering Leaders Plus' objectives, and qualitative feedback received, it would seem logical to collect data from beneficiaries on extent to which they feel part of and have benefitted from being part of a peer network of people in a similar situation to themselves. It would also be useful to explore how exactly that network has supported them.

- **Consider wording on 'overcoming obstacles'**: Leaders Plus should consider the extent to which they have a wide understanding of what obstacles there are for parents. There could be potential to break this down into some more specific sub-questions.

- **Collect data on clarity of vision:** one of Leaders Plus' objectives is for beneficiaries to develop a "vision of what they want in their career and family life". Leaders Plus do not explicitly collect data on this and could consider whether to do so in addition to existing questions.

- **Collect data on perceptions around prestige of the programme**: one of Leaders Plus' objectives is that beneficiaries feel "part of a prestigious and pioneering programme". No data has been collected on this and Leaders Plus should consider extent to which this is sufficiently important for them to do so.

- **Collect data on how employers feel about the programme:** likewise, one of Leaders Plus' objectives is that employers are "associated with thought leadership and the launch of an innovative, high profile fellowship programme". Leaders Plus do not collect data on this and should consider whether it is relevant to do so.

- **Consider data collection on Board roles**: qualitative data has highlighted that beneficiaries took on Board roles as a result of engaging in the programme. Leaders Plus could consider collecting data on this, although it does not appear to be a core focus of the programme.

- **Collect data on negative outcomes:** Leaders Plus should consider collecting data on negative outcomes to understand extent to which any unexpected or unintended consequences have occurred.

APPENDIX 1. ACTIVITIES IN THE 2018 FELLOWSHIP

- **Leaders with Babies Panel Event at the House of Commons – 1.5h:**
Hear from high profile leaders who have combined ambitious careers with looking after small children. They will share how they have done it, what obstacles they have overcome and what they have learnt along the way.
- **Mentoring induction & matching – 2h:**
Find a mentor who combined a senior leadership career with raising young children. You meet your mentor at least 3 times during the programme. Mentors include for example Jane Green, partner at EY, and Laura Harrison, Director People & Strategy at CIPD.
- **Developing your leadership career as a parent – workshop part 1 – half day:**
Build on your existing strengths and identify new strengths gained as a result of becoming a parent to hone your career & life vision. You'll translate this into a holistic and highly practical plan to develop the career & family life you want.
- **Developing your leadership career as a parent – workshop part 2 – half day:**
Using latest research on barriers and enablers to career progression for parent leaders, this workshop explores practical tools you can use to accelerate in your chosen field. You will leave more able to achieve your goals within your organisational context.
- **Infant sleep: session with an experienced sleep consultant – 1h:**
Sleep is essential for good mental and physical health. This group session with a registered sleep consultant will support you to manage your child's sleep better.
- **Partners supporting each other – optional Saturday workshop for couples:**
This workshop gives couples the opportunity to explore what your joint vision is for your careers and family lives and how you will get there together.
Thriving in your career: working with your line manager to excel – half day workshop:P
Together with your line manager, you will discuss how to achieve your career goals. Your line managers will get access to the latest research on line management approaches to enable parents to excel in challenging careers.
- **Be the change – what's next?**
You will come together for a final time to reflect on and celebrate the work you have done as a group of fellows. Fellows who wish to continue their professional development will be offered opportunities to continue their engagement as a group. Senior leaders from the participating organisation will be invited to hear reflections and ideas from fellows.

APPENDIX 2. WHO IS IT FOR?

- Leadership: interest & potential to advance to senior leadership roles in the long term.

- Programme relevance: we are looking for candidates who demonstrate how the programme will be useful to them.

- Commitment to peer support: willingness to support other leaders with young children and engage in peer support during workshops.

- We will ask for a recommendation by line managers. However, if the line manager is not supportive this will not necessarily exclude candidates.

- Successful candidates will have significant childcare responsibilities for at least one child under two. They may be on parental leave.

- Candidates will be selected through an application form and a phone or skype interview.

APPENDIX 3. THEORY OF CHANGE OF THE FELLOWSHIP

INPUTS – OUR KEY ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES AS A RESULT OF THE PROGRAMME	DESIRED IMPACT
Facilitating the workshops in a way that supports peer networks	Creating a self sustaining powerful peer network	Fellows have access to a powerful peer support network that enables them to overcome barriers and challenges beyond the programme end.	More leaders with young children in senior leadership roles, addressing the gender pay gap Making it possible for both men and women to combine an ambitious career with caring for young children. Bigger gender equality in senior leadership roles at exec level across all industries
Allowing Fellows to take babies along	Fellows have a sense of possibility about combining a baby and an ambitious career	Fellows find their personal approach to successfully combining a leadership career with looking after young children.	
Access to inspirational role models, e.g Leaders with Babies Event	Fellows have access to a wide range of role models who each have different but successful approaches to parenting young children whilst having a senior leadership career.	Fellows have a sense of possibility when it comes to their vision for their own career, they believe that having a child doesn't mean they can't strive high.	
Workshops to support Fellows to be a champion for change within their organisation	Fellows feel empowered to take concrete ideas for change to their organisations	Line managers support Fellows to overcome barriers working parents face and support them to progress their careers	
Workshop with line managers	Line managers know how to support leaders with young children to continue to thrive in their careers	Some organisations implement concrete suggestions made by their Fellows to support leaders with young children to continue to progress.	
Career development skills workshops	Line managers understand the structural inequalities and feel motivated to address those	Some organisations implement concrete suggestions made by their Fellows to support leaders with young children to continue to progress.	
Sleep consultant session	Fellows know how to network strategically, know how to manage workplace politics and are aware how to develop sponsorship relationships.	Fellows are using the tools for career progression	
Access to trained counsellor for wellbeing support if needed	Fellows have reflected on what they want to achieve in their careers and have tools on how to achieve it. Fellows feel more confident to manage baby sleep and sleep better themselves, which has a positive impact on their mental health	Improved levels of wellbeing of senior leaders with families	

APPENDIX 4. BASELINE SURVEY

1. How supportive do you think your line manager is at the moment?
Scale of 1-10.

2. How confident do you feel in balancing your career with looking after your young children?
(scale 1-10 not confident – very confident)

3. How likely do you think it is that your parent role will impact on career progression?
(very unlikely to impact – highly likely to impact scale 1-10).

4. How confident are you in influencing the senior leaders in your organisation internally to support working parents?
(not confident at all – very confident 1-10)

5. How supportive are senior leaders in your organisations of career progression of working parents?
(very supportive – not supportive at all 1-10)

6. How likely do you think it is that you will stay in your current organisation for the next 3 years?
(highly unlikely – very likely 1-10).

7. How easy do you think it is in your organisation for working parents to progress?
(1-10 – not easy at all to very easy)

8. How confident are you in overcoming any barriers in balancing childcare and career development?
(not confident at all – very confident – 1-10)

9. Do you have a senior person who is giving you opportunities, opening doors for you or who is advocating for you when you are not there to other senior leaders? I.e. do you have a sponsor?
Yes, No, not sure.

10. How confident are you that you have the knowledge and ability to develop your career?
Not at all – Very 1-10

11. If applicable, how supportive is your partner of your career goals at the moment?
Scale of 1-10

12. How much are you currently contributing to support other parents with career ambitions at your workplace and beyond?
1-10 Not very much - a lot

APPENDIX 5. EXIT SURVEY

LEADERS PLUS FELLOWSHIP IMPACT EVALUATION

Thank you for completing this survey.

1. Tell us about your family:

☐ I am expecting my first child ☐ I have two children

☐ I am expecting my second child ☐ I have three children

☐ I am expecting my third child ☐ I have four children

☐ I have one child ☐ I have more than four children

2. Where are you at the moment?

☐ About to go on maternity/ shared parental leave

☐ Have returned to work less than 6 months ago

☐ On maternity/ shared parental leave

☐ Have returned to work less than 1 year ago

☐ Have returned to work less than 3 months ago

☐ Have returned to work more than 1 year ago

Other _____

3. What ethnicity do you identify as?

_____

4. Are you:

☐ A single parent ☐ Cohabiting

☐ Married ☐ Other (please specify below)

_____

5. What is your sexual orientation?

_____

6. Do you have any additional needs or do you have a disability?

_____

7. Did your employer fund or part fund your space on the programme?

Yes
No

8. How would you rate the impact the Fellowship programme has made on you:

Highly positive impact
Positive impact
No impact
Negative impact
Highly negative impact

9. How confident to you feel in balancing your career with looking after your young child/ children?

Scale 1 (not confident at all) to 10 (very confident)

10. How supportive do you think your line manager is at the moment?

Scale 1 (not supportive at all) to 10 (very supportive)

11. How likely do you think it is that your parent role will impact negatively on your career progression?

Scale 1 (highly likely) to 10 (not likely at all)

12. How confident are you in influencing the senior leaders in your organisation internally to support working parents?

Scale 1 (Not confident at all) to 10 (very confident)

13. How supportive are senior leaders in your organisation of career progression of working parents?

Scale 1 (not supportive at all) to 10 (very supportive)

14. How easy is it for working parents to progress in your organisation?

Scale 1 (very easy) to 10 (not easy at all)

15. How likely do you think it is that you will stay in your current organisation for the next 3 years?

Scale 1 (highly unlikely) to 10 (very likely)

16. Do you have a senior person who is giving you opportunities, opening doors for you or who is advocating for you when you are not there? i.e. Do you have a sponsor?

□ Yes

□ No

□ Not Sure

17. How confident are you in over coming any barriers in balancing childcare and career development?

Scale 1 (not confident at all) to 10 (very confident)

18. "I have a strong professional network that supports me to develop my leadership career while balancing looking after your family"

Scale fro 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree)

19. How much are you currently contributing to support other parents and carers ambitions? For example, at your workplace, in your community or beyond?

Scale 1 (not at all) to 10 (a lot)

20. How confident are you that you have the knowledge and ability to develop your career?

Scale 1 (not confident at all) to 10 (very confident)

21. If applicable, how supported do you feel by your partner in achieving your career goals while balancing your responsibilities as a working parent?

Scale 1 (I do not feel supported) to 10 (I feel highly supported)

22. Please rank the sessions which you feel have had the greatest impact on you continuing to progress your career from 1 – 6 (1 = greatest impact, 6 = least impact and N/A if you haven't attended)

House of Commons event

Relationship with Mentor/ Sponsor

Career development workshops

Sleep consultant session

Workshop with Line Manager

Workshop with Partner

Other, please specify

23. Would you like to make any other comments about the impact of the Fellowship?

MENTOR/SPONSOR EVALUATION

24. Please rate how much you agree with this statement: "I have been finding it easier to overcome barriers because of my mentor/sponsor".

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Unsure

25. How would you rate the impact of the mentor/ sponsor relationship on being able to progress in your career?

- ☐ Very High Impact
- ☐ High Impact
- ☐ Some Impact
- ☐ No Impact
- ☐ Unsure

26. How would you relate the impact of the mentor/ sponsor relationship on your ability to combine parenthood with work?

- ☐ Very High Impact
- ☐ High Impact
- ☐ Some Impact
- ☐ No Impact
- ☐ Unsure

27. Has your relationship developed into sponsorship?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Somewhat

28. How strong was your relationship with your mentor?

- ☐ Very strong
- ☐ Strong
- ☐ Somewhat strong
- ☐ Not strong at all
- ☐ Unsure

29. How many times have you met with your mentor?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ More than 5

30. Will you continue to stay in touch with your mentor?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

31. Do you think Leaders Plus should continue to have mentors in this format?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

32. Do you have any ideas for the mentoring/sponsorship element of the programme going forward?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation survey.

APPENDIX 6. ABOUT THE FOUNDER

Verena Hefti is the founder of Leaders Plus, a social enterprise to support leaders with young children to continue their leadership careers.

Before that she designed and ran highly successful leadership development programmes for ten years in Switzerland, Denmark and the UK, most recently as South East Director at Teach First.

As part of her MA in Social Anthropology at Manchester University, she studied gender equality in depth. In her spare time, she volunteers as Chair of Trustees at Lewisham Citizens Advice.

After giving birth to baby Naira, Verena decided to help more new parents stay on the leadership trajectory and founded Leaders Plus.

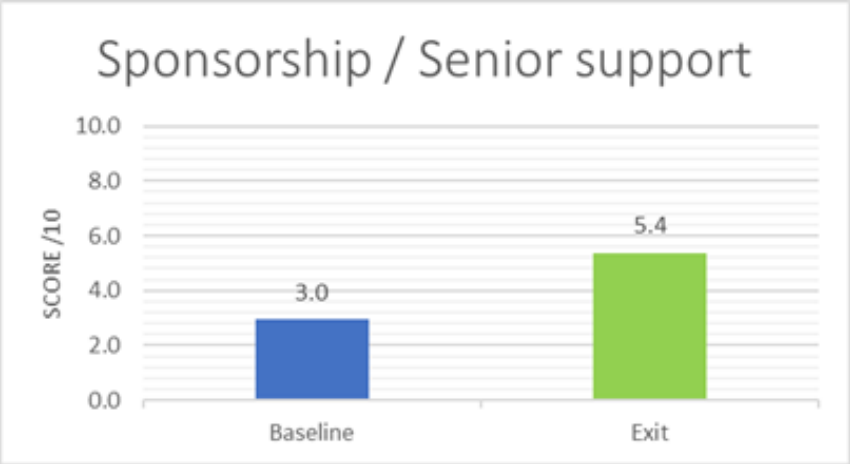
APPENDIX 7. STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE RESULTS

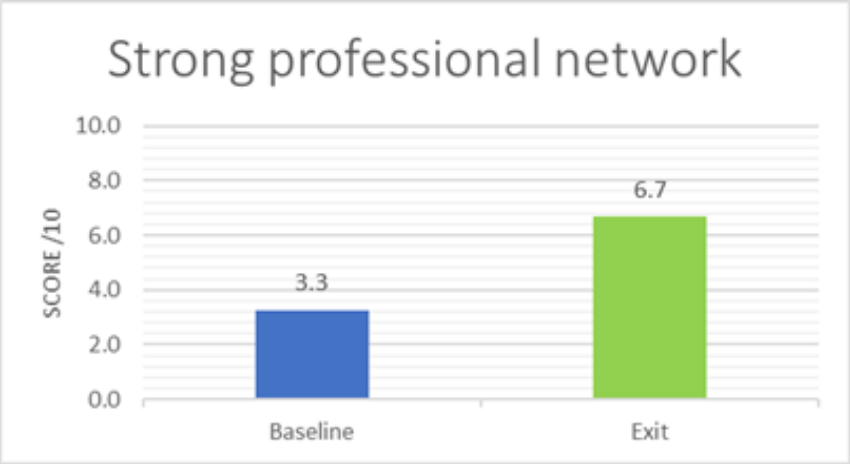
Outcome	Indicator	Sample size (baseline / exit)	Mean at baseline	Mean at follow-up	Change	Paired t-test p-value*	Stat. sig.	Scale
Supported by mentors and inspirational role models	"I have a strong professional network that supports me to develop my leadership career while balancing looking after your family"	27 / 26	3.3	6.7	3.4	< 0.0005	Yes	1-10
Find your personal approach to managing your work life balance	How confident to you feel in balancing your career with looking after your young child/ children?	27 / 26	4.1	7.9	3.8	< 0.0005	Yes	1-10
Confident about overcoming obstacles that may be faced as a leader with young children	How confident are you in overcoming any barriers in balancing childcare and career development?	27 / 26	4.4	6.8	2.4	< 0.0005	Yes	1-10
Supported by partner	If applicable, how supported do you feel by your partner in achieving your career goals while balancing your responsibilities as a working parent?	26 / 25	8.0	8.6	0.6	> 0.0005	No	1-10
Empowered to continue career development	How likely do you think it is that your parent role will impact negatively on your career progression?*	27 / 26	3.1	6.3	3.1	< 0.0005	Yes	1-10
	How confident are you that you have the knowledge and ability to develop your career?	27 / 26	6.0	7.9	1.9	< 0.0005	Yes	1-10
Employer supports parent to progress career	How supportive do you think your line manager is at the moment?	27 / 26	7.3	7.6	0.3	> 0.0005	No	1-10
	How supportive are senior leaders in your organisation of career progression of working parents?	27 / 26	5.4	7.0	1.6	< 0.005	Yes	1-10
	How easy is it for working parents to	27 / 24	5.0	6.4	1.4	< 0.025	Yes	1-10

Retention of top talent	**How likely do you think it is that you will stay in your current organisation for the next 3 years?**	**27 / 26**	**6.4**	**6.0**	**- 0.4**	**> 0.0005**	**No**	**1-10**
Influencing employer to support working parents	How confident are you in influencing the senior leaders in your organisation internally to support working parents?	27 / 26	4.9	7.4	2.5	< 0.0005	Yes	1-10
Supporting other parents to progress career	How much are you currently contributing to support other parents and carers ambitions? For example, at your workplace, in your community or beyond?	27 / 26	4.5	6.7	2.2	< 0.001	Yes	1-10

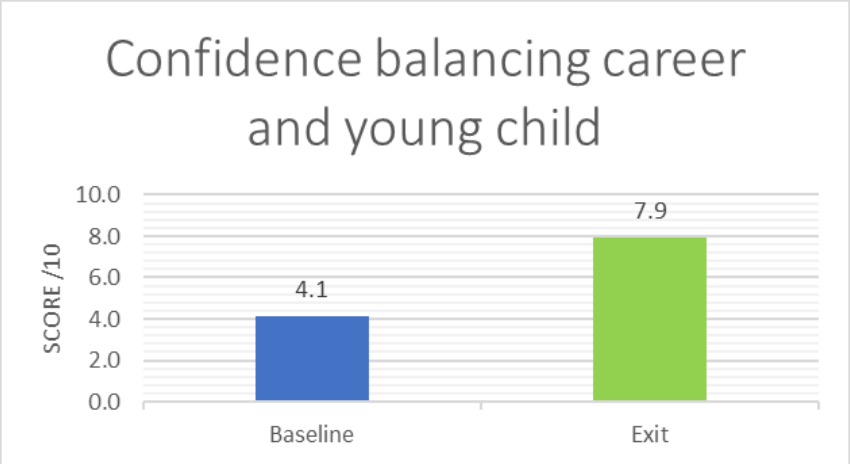
APPENDIX 8. OUTCOMES FOR BENEFICIARIES

Outcome 1: Supported by mentors and inspirational role models

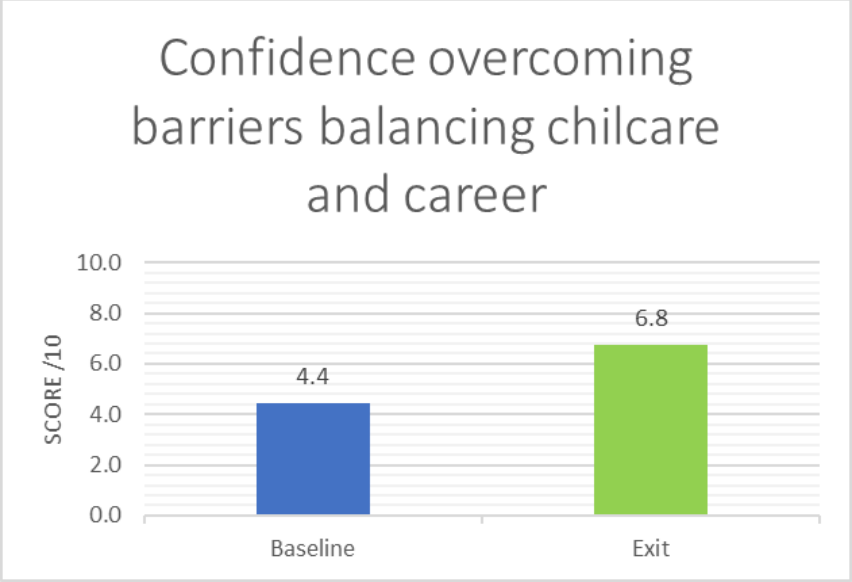




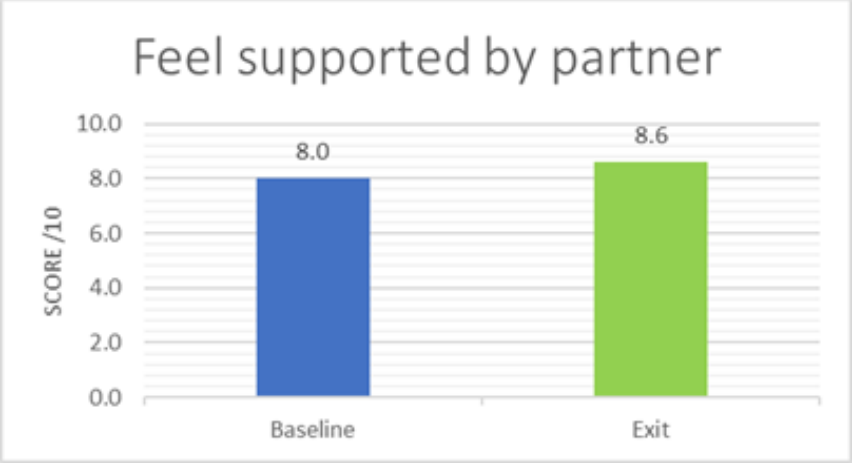
Outcome 2: Find your personal approach to managing your work life balance



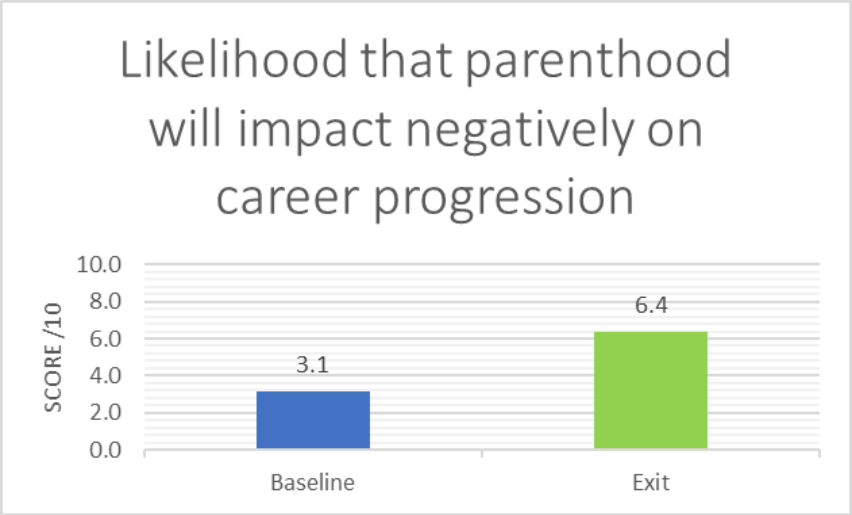
Outcome 3: Confident about overcoming obstacles that may be faced as a leader with young children



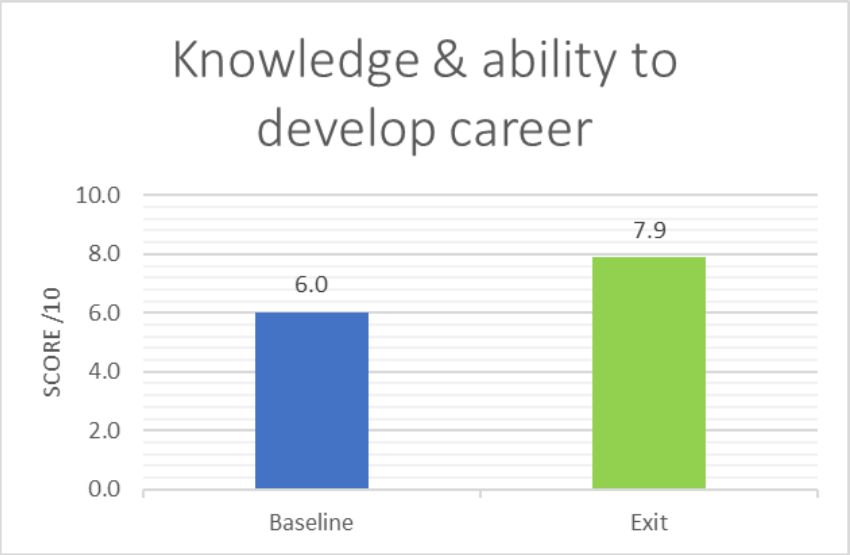
Outcome 4: Supported by partner



Outcome 5: Empowered to continue career development

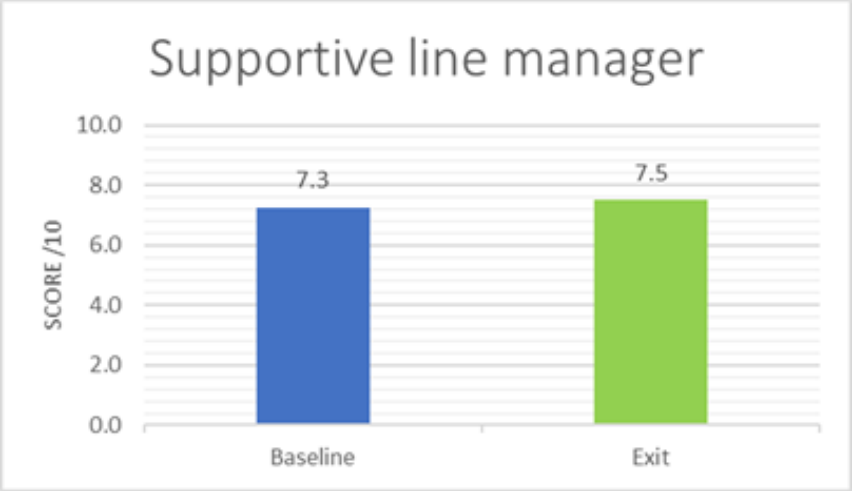


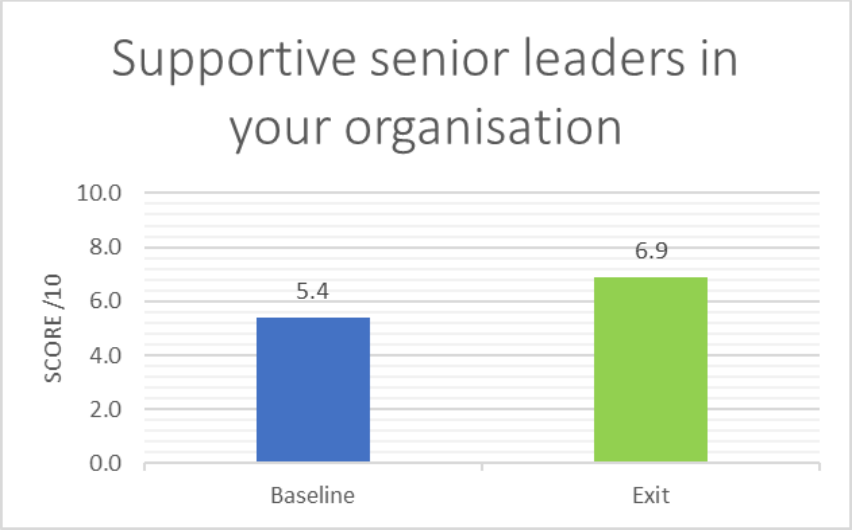
Nb. Negatively scored

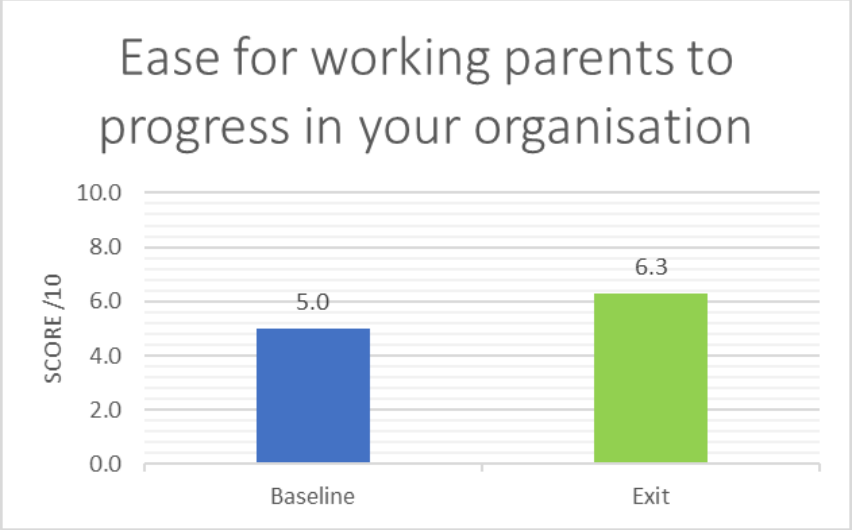


APPENDIX 9. OUTCOMES FOR EMPLOYERS

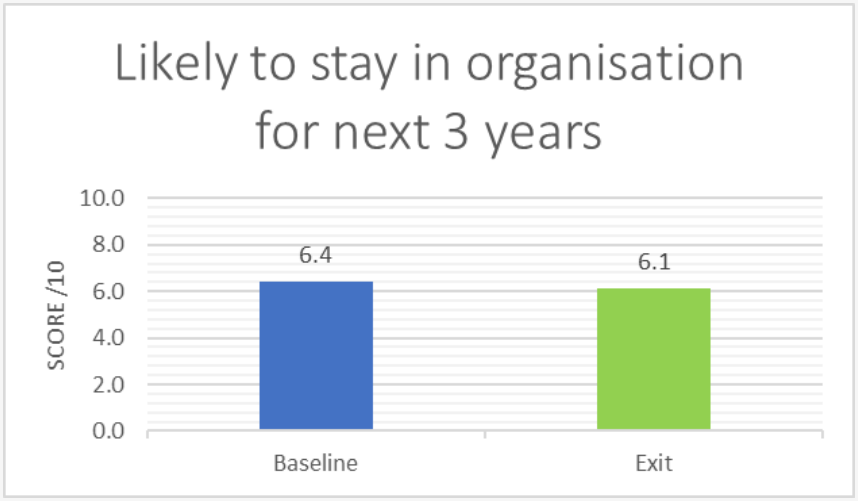
Outcome 6: Supported by employer to progress career



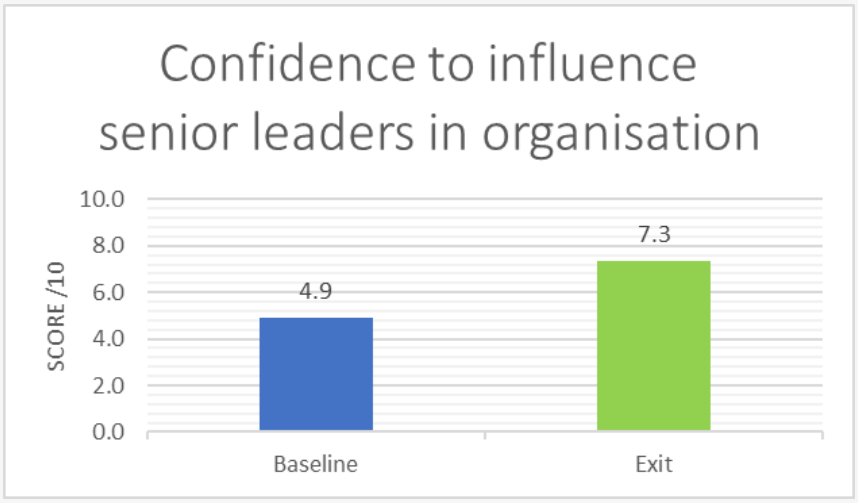
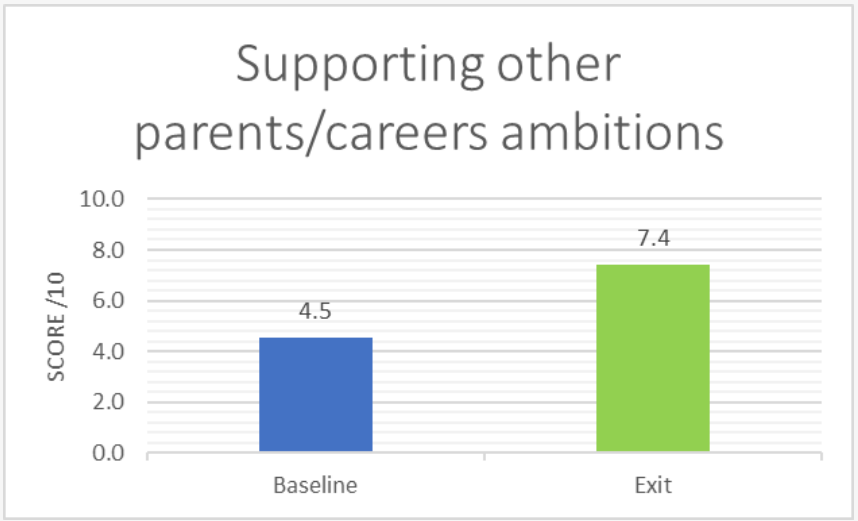




Outcome 7: Retention of top talent



Outcome 8: Influencing employer to support working parents



Outcome 9: Supporting other parents to progress career