

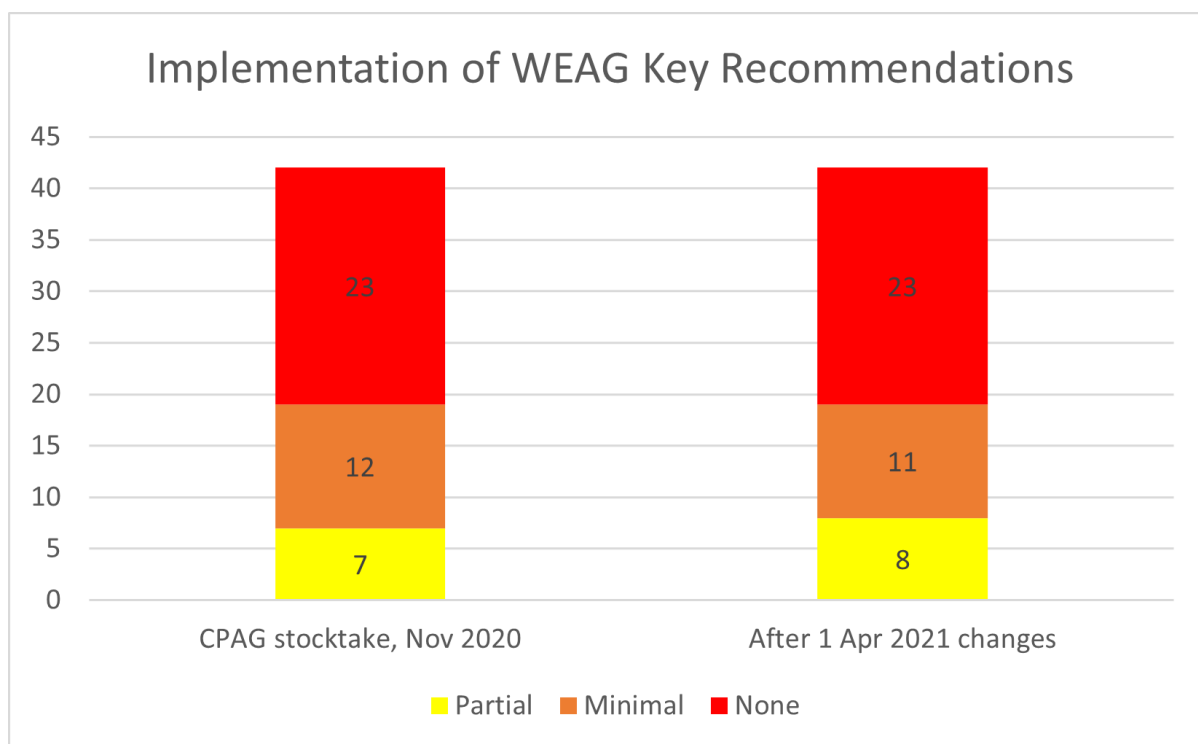
## No plan, no budget: Two years on from WEAG, Government continues to drag its feet

30 April 2021

Two years on since government-appointed experts recommended a complete overhaul of our welfare system, children, families, those with disabilities and people not in paid work are still waiting for a Government response to the recommendations, and a commitment to action.

In November 2020, CPAG released a stocktake charting implementation of WEAG recommendations, the results of which showed no key recommendations had been fully implemented. Since the stocktake, only one key recommendation moved from "minimal" to "partial" implementation. Of the 42 key recommendations, 8 have been partially implemented, 11 minimally implemented and there is no evidence of the remaining 23 recommendations being implemented.

**Spot the difference:** WEAG implementation progress since CPAG's stocktake in November 2021



At the launch of the WEAG report, Whakamana Tangata, in May 2019, former Children's Commissioner Professor Dame Cindy Kiro, WEAG chair said "We can't just tinker with the so-called social welfare system... it's just not going to cut the mustard." CPAG agrees.

"The government says it wants welfare reform to enable people to live in dignity with adequate incomes, and it asked WEAG for a plan to achieve this," says stocktake co-author Professor Innes

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Asher who served on WEAG. "But so far the government has delivered remarkably little of that plan."

"Fixing welfare is long overdue, and the government has now been sitting on the blueprint for essential work for two years. We need to turn the vision into reality with urgency."

[Read CPAG's Nov 2020 stocktake in full.](#)

**Progress since stocktake release: April 2021 changes**

WEAG Key Recommendation 20\* changed from Minimally implemented to Partially implemented when abatement thresholds for benefits were lifted on April 1, 2021. This means 8 Key Recommendations have been partially implemented (rather than current 7) and 11 minimally implemented (rather than current 12). 23 are not implemented. There will be no changes to Detailed Recommendations as a result of this abatement change.

*\*Recommendation 20: "Reform main benefits by:*

increasing main benefits by between 12% and 47% as set out in table 2, page 99

increasing the abatement thresholds for:

- Jobseeker Support to \$150 a week
- Sole Parent Support and Supported Living Payment to \$150 a week and \$250 a week."

**Future progress indicated: November 2021**

WEAG Key Recommendation 11 calls for the abolishment of eight obligations and sanctions. The November 2020 stocktake assessed the recommendation as being Minimally implemented with just one of the sanctions removed, (Section 192, sanctions for not naming the other parent). The Government has announced the Subsequent Child Work Obligation will be abolished November 2021. Notwithstanding this change, the assessment of Minimal Implementation remains, with no indication that any of the remaining 6 sanctions and obligations will be removed.