REVIEW OF CHILD PARTICIPATION IN SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY'S PROGRAMMES

Final Review Report

June 2018

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Save the Children

ACRONYMS AND INITIALISMS

CAB   Children's Advisory Board

CFS   Child Friendly Space

CLDC   Child-led Data Collection

CP   Child Protection

CRG   Child Rights Governance

CSO   Civil Society Organization

DAC   Development Assistance Committee (OECD)

DRM   Disaster Risk Management

FGD   Focus Group Discussion

INGO   International Non-Governmental Organization

KII   Key Informant Interview

M&E   Monitoring and Evaluation

MEAL   Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning

MTR   Mid-term Review

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

NMFA   National Military Family Association

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OHCHR   Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

OPS   Operations

PDQ   Programme Development and Quality

PTA   Parent-Teacher Association

SC   Save the Children

SCI   Save the Children International

SCN   Save the Children Norway

SMT   Senior Management Team

TA   Technical Assistance

ToC   Theory of Change

UN   United Nations

UNCRC   United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

WASH   Water and Sanitation for Health

WWII   Second World War

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Save the Children defines Child Participation as the willing involvement and opportunity for all children to express their views and influence decision-making. This Child Participation is defined as an essential principle cutting across all programmes, and at all levels. For children, the aim of Child Participation is to improve skills, rights awareness, empowerment, and self-esteem. For other groups, such as parents, staff, programmes, and local communities, the aim of child participation is to improve factors such as awareness of and sensitivity toward children's rights and needs. Among different Save the Children members, Save the Children Norway has a relatively unique focus on Child Participation.

This report provides a review of Norad-supported child participation programming across the portfolio of Save the Children Norway. The report has a threefold purpose; to identify strengths and weaknesses in SCN approaches to Child Participation, to assess how Child Participation aligns with SCN programme goals, and to measure the impact of SCN's work with children and youth.

This review has used a mix of secondary evidence and primary data. Secondary evidence provided by SCN covered a wide tranche of its activities, including work in 16 different countries. Primary data was collected in three countries; Iraq, South Sudan, and Cambodia.

To structure the review, OECD/DAC criteria were used, with investigations framed around Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability. Methods include document and data reviews, along with focus groups, key informant interviews, and surveys conducted with various actors, including beneficiary children, beneficiaries' parents, stakeholders, and SC staff at various multiple levels.

Key Findings and Lessons Learned

The key findings and lessons learned across all analyses were many and diverse, and for clarity, it has been split according to into the OECD/DAC criteria. A fuller reading of the lessons learned can be found in the body of the report.

Relevance
- ***The inclusion of stakeholders remains paramount:*** The importance of stakeholder mapping is highlighted to ensure activities are ideally placed to improve the situation, ensuring that all relevant institutions, groups, and stakeholders can be effectively targeted in child participation initiative design.
- ***Distinguishing humanitarian and development context:*** Ensuring child participation approaches are well targeted to the context, particularly to account for distinctions between development and humanitarian contexts, was highlighted as important to ensure success of initiatives.

Effectiveness
- ***Training and sensitisation of local staff as long-term investment:*** The importance of ensuring sufficient and comprehensive support and training programmes is highlighted, to avoid potential frustration or reluctance. Short-term,

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or one-off training and capacity building were highlighted as key barriers to the effectiveness of child participation.

- **Child Participation will require mainstreaming across sectors:** Effective mainstreaming was another key area of importance. Challenges in effective understanding and implementation of this key approach to child participation was highlighted as an area of challenge. Another key area of priority includes defining 'mainstreaming', and documenting best practice and most effective approaches to mainstreaming across all SC's thematic areas, not just CRG and education.
- **Government, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Partners:** Building strong relationships at various levels (CSO, government, and partner) is another vital lesson in effectiveness. Whether with government partners, community organisations, or other stakeholders, strong relationships will avoid projects becoming superficial and short term in nature.
- **Field and home office harmonisation of Child Participation:** Adapting to local needs and culture is vital as well; this is closely related to building relationships and adapting to particular communities' needs to promote effectiveness. Proper understanding of 'child participation' another key lesson in effectiveness. Some field level stakeholders were found to have incomplete understanding of child participation, whilst in other projects where this was well understood, effectiveness was found to be greatly improved. Linked to this is the importance of ensuring stakeholders have realistic and managed expectations of what child participation will accomplish.
- **SC's country office buy-in as a priority:** Ensuring that Child Participation is central to leaders' priorities is another important element which can be improved. If Child Participation is a priority for SMTs or implementing staff, effectiveness will increase.
- **Linking Child Participation with outcomes:** M&E that emphasises impacts and outcomes, and not just outputs, was highlighted as an important area of focus. So too was ensuring that M&E is continuous and capable of linking short-term inputs to long-term outcomes.
- **Flexibility and evidence-based in programme design:** Iteration of programme design is vital for effectiveness. This means that projects should be flexible to suit the idiosyncrasies of different target areas, building on documented evidence of what works and what does not, to ensure effectiveness.
- **Documenting best practice:** Another key area of priority includes defining mainstreaming and documenting best practice and most effective approaches to mainstreaming across all SC's thematic areas, not just CRG and education.

Impact

- **Safe and child-friendly spaces demonstrates higher impact:** Clean and safe environments for children are vital for impact of child participation. This includes areas for play, congregation, and places for children to do what is important to them. The usefulness of religious spaces in Cambodia was highlighted for this, whilst in Iraq and South Sudan, limited availability of any such areas was noted.
- **Engaging local communities and leadership in schools:** Community projects engaging with children's opinions (e.g. school improvement plans) were noted to have positive outcomes.
- **Strengthening teachers' capacity in Child Participation:** Strong teacher training and continuous support of teachers through techniques were both found to provide strong foundations to achieve positive outcomes, particularly in education-focussed child participation.

- *Ensuring appropriate support for CSOs In child-led programmes:* Support for education-focussed committees and allocation of CSO budgets for child-led programmes were noted to help minimise reliance on aid to support programmes.
- *Ensuring expectations are managed:* As mentioned in the effectiveness section, misunderstanding of child participation principles inhibit programming. Ensuring managed and realistic expectations were also seen to have positive relationships with programme impact.
- *Distinguishing youth leadership from elite capture:* Elite capture was noted as a frequent characteristic of programmes, where projects attracted particularly bright and engaged pupils, whilst others potentially missed out. This was not, however, seen as a necessarily negative aspect of programming, but rather one that could be leveraged for improved impact.
- *Gender parity and its associated issues:* Whilst inclusion in programming was equal and considerate, traditional gender roles were noted to impact participation in cases of desire or interest, with boys going home to help support the family, and girls helping with domestic tasks. Promoting improved gender parity was seen to be important.
- *Humanitarian, emergency, and security considerations:* In contexts where humanitarian, security, and emergency considerations are paramount, child participation goals may need to be pragmatically adjusted to remain achievable in the context. This was particularly relevant in humanitarian contexts settings.
- *SC staff and institutional knowledge:* Staff turnover was seen as a challenge in some countries, leading to a loss of institutional knowledge and learning about successes in previous initiatives.
- *SC staff capacity development programmes:* Impactful capacity development programmes and systems were seen to promote long-term follow-up and ongoing mentorship of staff.
- *Institutional challenges were found to present a major challenge in fragile or emergency-affected states:* Corruption, legitimacy, administrative ambiguity, and ongoing security issues were barriers to impact of child participation.
- *Traditional and cultural norms:* Traditional attitudes toward children were seen to act as barriers to broader impact. Association of children offering dissenting opinions as a mark of disrespect was regularly noted; such attitudes limit programming impact.
- *Linkages with participating schools, teachers, and Child Participation:* Cross-programme implementation and organic child participation in programming was found to be particularly impactful.
- *Educational challenges in target schools were a major barrier to impact*: Teachers frequently had limited understanding of Child Participation, whilst children themselves had difficulty engaging in abstract concepts of rights and principles, preferring instead to repeat generic course descriptions.

Efficiency

- *Efficiency does not always equate to effectiveness:* Cost efficiency and resource restrictions, whilst important, have the potential to limit effectiveness and impact of programmes. Efficiency was frequently noted as a strength in programme design, particularly through mainstreamed approaches. However, such efficiency-driven integration, when inappropriately applied, can limit effectiveness and impact.
- *Internal efficiency and the relationship between outputs and inputs:* Several factors already mentioned (e.g. staff turnover, unclear alignments between inputs and outputs) have impacted internal efficiency, so that whilst some organisations

have strong internal relationships (e.g. Cambodia), others (particularly in fragile and emergency-affected states) face more substantial challenges in this area.

- ***Fidelity of Child Participation implementation was found to be uneven:*** Field-based operations could diverge substantially from SCN's designs, while others were seen to be stronger. Much of this was related to a combination of individual factors (e.g. strong proponents or implementers of delivery) and contextual factors (e.g. communications, resource availability, and local attitudes).
- ***Articulation and justification for additional resources:*** A range of resource requirements were highlighted by country teams, including money, staff, and vehicles. However, requests could at times be made with unclear rationales or justification, so it is difficult to identify how best to allocate additional resources.

Sustainability

- ***Continuity of institutions, governments, CSOs, and partners:*** Working with existing institutions, including government and community-based organisations, was found to be key in achieving lasting outcomes, and building on existing structures. Collaboration with other CSOs and NGOs was noted to allow for wider integration and participation, to ensure capacities are built effectively and sustainably.
- ***Expectation management and reliance:*** Driving an independent mindset in beneficiaries was found to be particularly effective in avoiding reliance on aid and SCI provisions.
- ***Monitoring and Evaluation, accountability and learning, and the linkages to sustainability:*** Seeing change as long-term was shown to be important for sustainability. M&E timelines which have limited scope and timeframe disincentivises long-term thinking during implementation, and thus risks reducing sustainability. Project timelines with long-term outlooks achieved better outcomes.
- ***Understanding contextual differences are important for sustainability***: Projects should be adjusted depending on the context to ensure long-lasting effects. For example in Iraq, population mobility is one of the biggest challenges to tackle when making child participation work sustainable, whilst in South Sudan, basic needs (e.g. food) and resurgent conflicts are the greatest challenges. Programmes must tackle these contextual issues.
- ***Short and Long-term linkages of child-centric programmes:*** As mentioned in previous sections, uneven understanding of child participation concepts and rationales was found, and this affects sustainability.
- ***Effective follow-up and institutional stability are both key to sustainability.*** Understanding of the linkages between short- and long-term activities are vital for sustainability. Frequently, medium-term linkages are designed on historical delivery, looking only as far as the end of the project. This can be a barrier to sustainability. Effective follow-up and institutional stability are both key to sustainability. Reliance on aid can be a limiting factor for sustainability; seeking to ensure greater independence among supported organisations and individuals can achieve more positive outcomes.

Recommendations

Recommendations sought to build on analyses and key lessons learned. As with the above section, recommendations too have been structured along the OECD/DAC criteria. This points below highlight some broader thematic areas; a fuller reading of the recommendations can be found in the body of report.

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Relevance Recommendations

- *Detailed stakeholder mapping of the humanitarian and development context:* Undertaking detailed stakeholder mapping, with a focus on rights bearers with influence and power, prior to programme design is a key recommendation.
- *Realistic planning:* Having detailed, and realistic, discussions regarding what is achievable within humanitarian contexts was a key recommendation. Designing interventions on this basis was also recommended.

Effectiveness Recommendations

- *Guidance, sensitisations, and long-term capacity building for Child Participation:* Undertaking a detailed review, synthesis, and targeting exercise of guidance notes and capacity building plans and material was recommended. Ensuring such approaches are targeted and contextually relevant was a key component in this area.
- *Building on local organisations and long-term relationships:* Building genuine, sustained, and horizontal relationships with local organisations and key stakeholders was highlighted as a key recommendation.
- *Strengthening M&E systems with articulable linkages to outcomes/output indicators and Child Participation through capacity building:* This recommendation included the following key components: adopt an action research approach to interventions; ensuring understanding and differentiation of outcomes and impacts versus outcomes; ensure all key stakeholders have consistent and effective guidance on appropriate use of indicators; understand that child participation outcomes & impacts can be difficult to define and measure; tracking M&E across multiple projects, years, outcomes and indicators, rather than limiting M&E cycles to individual projects; ensuring M&E accounts for misaligned incentives in reporting; and ensuring M&E effectively incorporates child participation in processes. The report recommends explicit programmatic modification and iteration on the basis of strong M&E, promoting continuous improvement of delivery.
- *Sensitisation and mainstreaming definitions for Child Participation:* Ensuring the definition of mainstreaming is well understood, and that best practice in this regard (not just in education and CRG, but across all thematic areas) is well documented and disseminated.
- *Management of expectations among stakeholders:* Children are more involved, and programming more impactful, where outcomes of their participation are both clearly articulated and understood by all stakeholders. Management of childrens' expectations in this regard is also important to minimise risk of disappointment resulting in attrition. As such, child participation as an end in itself might be avoided in future programming, with key stakeholders holding strong understanding of how to ensure outcomes are well defined, communicated, and achieved in all relevant programmes.
- *Learning from M&E:* The report recommends explicit programmatic modification and iteration on the basis of strong M&E, promoting continuous improvement of delivery.
- *Stakeholder understanding of Child Participation approaches* Ensuring key stakeholders have effective understanding of child participation approaches and philosophies, and how to implement initiatives, was another key recommendation.
- *Cultural norms, teaching and learning opportunities:* Within cultures that have more traditional views regarding the role of children in society, framing child participation as a teaching opportunity for adults, rather than a forum for children to lecture adults, was highlighted as a potential area of success.

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Impact Recommendations

- ***Tailoring to children's unique needs at varying levels and cognitive abilities:*** Having 'differentiated' outcomes for child participation may inform effective mainstreaming and implementation, ensuring that children of varied levels and cognitive abilities can substantively engage with child participation, and promote improved progress of individual outcomes.

- ***Child Participation and the outset of programme designs and interventions:*** Having open and honest discussions at the outset of programme design (both in SCN and at the country level) as to how systemic factors may be influencing the programming, and how such challenges can be concretely mitigated, might be impactful. The creation of an explicit planning, or risk assessment, exercise focussed on these levels of challenge – drawing on historic lessons of what was best about previous systems – might be a positive step in this regard.

- ***Gender difference and parity are unique to the context:*** Addressing gaps in male and female participation at the outset should be considered through child-led discussion and planning. This was highlighted as important.

- ***Identify and mitigate against physical risks, and ensure safe spaces in the targeted areas:*** It may be useful to think carefully about how spaces can be created or identified, and used (safely) to promote genuinely child-led initiatives independent of direct facilitation by SC or partner organisations. Designation of spaces outside school or SC supported activities might be helpful in this regard.

- ***Systematic sensitisation and guidance for children and their roles within the UNCRC and the UN 9 Child Requirements:*** It may be appropriate to revisit the degree to which child participation (and child rights programmes by extension) is able to achieve the following: teaching about children's rights within the UNCRC; teaching children realistic strategies and approaches for achieving these (without over-reliance on NGOs and governments); teaching children what their responsibilities are within the UNCRC framework, and how they have a responsibility to support their families, communities and governments achieve the desired end goals. Such responsibilities extend beyond advocacy and 'demanding' rights, but taking individual, achievable agency in moving themselves and their countries forward toward achievement of the UNCRC.

- ***Leveraging child leaders as ambassadors for Child Participation:*** It may be worthwhile for SCN and partners to undertake discussions as to the best way to leverage 'elites' in child participation to achieve wider participation.

- ***Focusing on pupil-centred teaching methodologies of the UNCRC:*** It also appears that child participation initiatives were more impactful where teaching staff were implementing 'pupil-centred' teaching methodologies. The approaches to teaching and child participation may be very well aligned in terms of their intended outcomes and behavioural changes. As such capacity building may achieve greater impact by focussing on these areas.

- ***Strengthening mentorship of SC Staff and stakeholders:*** SCN should endeavour to implement one or more of the following approaches (highlighted in discussion with key stakeholders at SCN and at the country level):
  - *Permanent Staff Mentorship:* Choosing skilled mentors at SCN, or in other country offices, to provide distance-based support to 1-2 mentees across the portfolio.
  - *Roving Mentor:* Hiring of a 'permanent mentor' to engage in 3-4 month rotations in 1-2 countries, supporting key country staff in the field on an ongoing basis.
  - *Country Mentors:* This approach necessitates a stakeholder in-country with sufficient understanding and expertise in child participation to be effective in

this role. Selection of an unskilled person, even with the expectation they receive a 2-3 week training session prior to becoming mentors, are unlikely to be effective (Antoniou & Mohan, 2016).

Efficiency Recommendations

- *Appropriate resources and prioritising Child Participation:* Seeking to ensure availability of appropriate resources for child participation, while ensuring that resource provision is well aligned to real needs, was a key recommendation.
- *Capacity building and continuing mentorships and relationships:* By building on mentorship and capacity building programme recommendations, it may be possible to improve fidelity of implementation, and sustainable outcomes. These recommendations endeavour to capitalise on the best elements of historic SCN programming – sustained relationships leading to more effective implementation of SCN priorities in supported countries.

Sustainability Recommendations

- *Theory of change and the M&E System:* SCN may wish to create a more detailed theory of change, building on and supporting the development of the M&E systems described above, laying out, in detail, the progression by which the end goals will be achieved, what actions must be taken when, and what evidence will be used to substantiate assessments of progress and attainment.
- *Rebuilding government institutions and CSOs that existed prior to interventions:* This support has the potential to promote substantial sustainability of outcomes. Such approaches minimise wasted additional efforts, duplication of effort, and resources involved in starting from scratch, while promoting the strengthening of those institutions with the best chance for success.

INTRODUCTION

Child Participation at SCN Background[1]

Save the Children Norway is a rights-based organisation which believes in a world where all children can enjoy their rights to survival, development, protection, and participation. Save the Children's (SC) theory of change (ToC) includes a specific focus on child participation:

Photo 1 – A primary classroom in Cambodia

- *SC will ensure that children´s voices are heard, especially the most deprived ones;*
- *SC will collaborate with children, civil society organizations, communities, and other institutions to share knowledge, influence others and build capacity to ensure that children´s rights are met.*

Save the Children Norway is a strong and active advocate for child participation in development and humanitarian aid programmes, seeking to mainstream child participation in international and domestic initiatives. The primary aim is to increase the influence of children and young people in decision making processes at both the local, national, and global level, thereby advancing child rights. Investments in this area are considered to be part of a long-term strategy to build stronger societies; greater youth participation provides the opportunity for children and young people to learn about good governance practices and leadership.

In the 2015-2018 Framework Agreement with Norad, Save the Children Norway (SCN) identified the need to further invest in strengthening the capacity of local civil society organizations in targeted countries, including the capacity of children and youth to be active and impactful participants in civil society.

In 2018, SCN will adopt a new strategy, which will govern its work from 2019 till 2021. To inform the development of the new strategy, and revisions to the Norad Framework Agreement, this study will consider the implementation of SCN's work so far on child participation in terms of quality, reach, and impact.

Purpose and Overview of this Review

Purpose

This document comprises a review of Norad-supported child participation initiatives across SCN's portfolio. The main purpose of the review is threefold:

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[1] This background section has been drawn from project TOR.

1. To assess SCN's approaches to Child Participation to identify what works and potential shortcomings in current policies and programmes. Included in this is a need to assess Country Offices' intent implementing Child Participation programmes, and the need to consider whether the initiatives had any additional unintended consequences.

2. To assess how Child Participation contributes to the achievements of SCN programme goals and responsiveness in development and humanitarian contexts.

3. To measure and document impact regarding SCN's work with children and youth, considering the effect of SCN's work and the role of different approaches in determining this. Looking to previous documentary evidence and case studies, consider the impact of our Child Participation work and to what extent the collaboration with SCN contributes to children's development and role in civil society.

Photo 2 – Participants in child workshops in Cambodia

The review considers the participation of child stakeholders in all types of programmes supported by Norad and is not limited to programmes set up with participation of children and youth as the main goal. Both development and humanitarian contexts are included.

The main audience for the review report is SCN, other Save the Children members, Save the Children International; SC's Advisory Group on Child Participation as well as the Global Themes directors and members of SCI Programme Strategy group. Secondly, the review is also important for influencing policies of donors such as Norad and NMFA, as well as sharing lessons learned with peer organisations and local partners.

The timing of this review is relevant as SCN goes through the process of submitting a new proposal for the Norad framework agreement. This review will provide lessons learned and actionable recommendations for the subsequent iteration of the framework agreement, and consider how the participation of child stakeholders can be further encouraged and institutionalised.

Geographic Scope

The team has undertaken extensive review of data and evidence submitted by SCN from across its portfolio; these comprise 16 countries: Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nepal, Guatemala, Laos, Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Palestinian Territories, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Iraq, while not yet part of the Norad portfolio, is expected to be included within the next year. Additional relevant evidence, from SCI and other key international partners, has also been incorporated as appropriate, even if these do not emerge from one of the countries within SCN's Norad portfolio.

Further to the secondary evidence, the team undertook primary research in three countries: Iraq, South Sudan, and Cambodia. Each of these countries was anticipated to offer unique insights: Cambodia as a country with more maturity in participation initiatives, potentially with

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lessons to offer newer portfolio countries; Iraq as an emergency context where traditional models of participation may face substantial obstacles; and South Sudan held interest as a context which is transitioning away from emergency and into development, but faces substantial challenges in stability and institutional strength.

Principles and Standards Underpinning Child Participation

Defining Child Participation

Save the Children defines Child Participation in the following way:[2]

- *Participation is to have an opportunity to express a view, influencing decision making and achieving change.*
- *Children's participation is an informed and willing involvement of all children (boys and girls), including the most marginalised and those of different ages and abilities in any matter concerning them directly or indirectly.*
- *Children's participation is a way of working and an essential principle that cuts across all programmes and takes place in all arenas from homes to government and from local to international levels.*

Save the Children's definition, and to some extent focus, on child participation emerges from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children's participation rights are set out in Articles 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17 of the UNCRC (OHCHR, 1990):[3]

Article 12   **Respect for the views of the child**

Article 13   **Freedom of expression**

Article 14   **Freedom of thought, conscience and religion**

Article 15   **Freedom of association**

Article 17   **Access to information; mass media**

Photo 3 – Child participation workshop in Cambodia

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[2] Save the Children Practice Standards in Children's Participation (2005)
[3] These have been presented, and discussed, in more detail within the relevant section of the annexes.

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In 2009, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child undertook to operationalise child participation principles emerging from the UNCRC. This resulted in the adoption of a General Comment on Article 12 of the UNCRC: the 9 Basic Requirements for Child Participation (UNCRC, 2009; Lansdown, 2011). These are the standards that inform the design of much programming targeting children and incorporating child participation. Save The Children is among the actors undertaking to apply these standards to their work, and the bullet points below summarise SCI's and UNICEF's guidance in their implementation. These same standards will guide later assessments of effectiveness in SCN's child participation initiatives (UNICEF, 2017) (SCI, 2005), and have been described in detail in the relevant Effectiveness subsection.

Child Participation Operationalised

'Despite considerable progress in working to achieve children's rights over the past 25 years, very few countries have created child-friendly environments in which children are recognised as active agents in their own lives. In general, children continue to be viewed as passive recipients of adult care and protection, with legislative frameworks operating on a presumption of incompetence until children reach 18 years of age. Far too often, adults make decisions on behalf of children without any reference to children's own knowledge, experience or preferences.'

— A Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating CHILDREN'S Participation — Save the Children 2014

The scope and definition of Child Participation is broad, and the activities which define it are varied by intent, trying to achieve broad incorporation across all aspects of the work undertaken by SCI. 'Mainstreaming' is the primary means of implementation, with SCI endeavouring to ensure effective child participation in all elements of its work, regardless of sector (e.g. health, education, protection, etc.), or level of engagement (e.g. government, project, field, or internal SCI operations/planning). Some actors have undertaken to broadly define what child participation looks like on the ground, and have laid out four overarching (though not definitive) categories or types of activity (SCI, 2014):

▶ **Consultative**

Adult-led but seeks information from children to inform improvements for them (e.g. Focus Group Discussions facilitated by NGOs)

▶ **Collaborative**

Also adult-led, but allows for cooperation between adults and children and joint decisions at all stages. On example includes Children's Advisory Boards (CABs), which are groups of

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children selected to feed back to NGOs at regular meetings with them on key issues affecting Child Rights. Children can also choose which issues are covered.

▶ **Child-led**

Adults are merely facilitators in processes, initiatives and services that are fully owned by child stakeholders. Examples can include Child-led Data Collection (CLDC), whereby children design, pilot, implement and evolve their own research methodology to identify their everyday experiences, needs and priorities.

▶ **Capacity Building**

Upskilling key stakeholders – both internal and external – on delivering Child participation initiatives. For example: internally, SCN staff receive standard training packages; externally these would be delivered to teachers, government staff and partner organisations.

The different phases, and purposes, of these means of facilitating participation can come at different phases in programme delivery. Once again, child participation is intended to inform all activities and sectoral focuses, not just those with a focus on child rights governance or child participation (Lansdown & O'Kane, 2014):
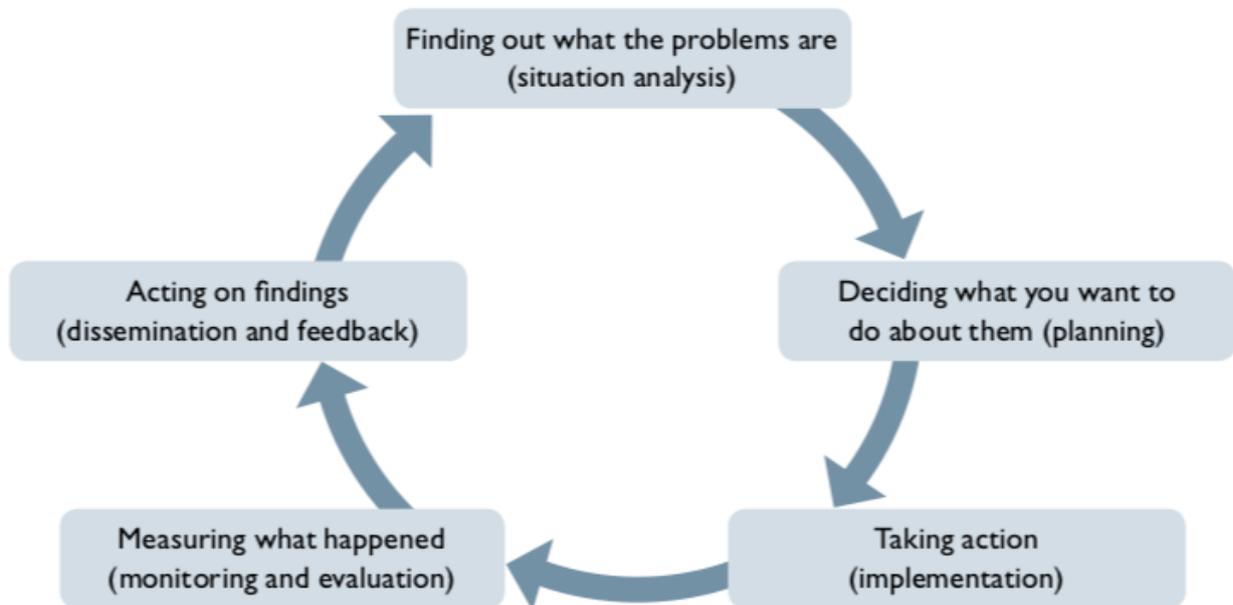
As defined by Save the Children and partners, such activities can undertake to achieve a wide variety of objectives (SCI, 2014):

▶ **Personal Outcomes**

These outcomes describe the impact that a programme's participation activities have

had on the people most directly involved or affected by it. Examples of such outcomes comprise:

↳ **Outcomes for Children**

- greater self-esteem and self-confidence;
- acquisition of skills (communication, problem-solving, negotiation, etc.);
- greater awareness of rights; and
- sense of efficacy and empowerment.

↳ **Outcomes on Parents' or Caregivers' Attitudes or Behaviour**

- higher level of awareness of children's rights and needs;
- greater level of sensitivity to children's rights and needs;
- improved quality of relationships with children;
- greater understanding of children's capacities; and
- willingness to consult children and take their views into account.

↳ **Outcomes on Staff Attitudes and Behaviour**

- greater sensitivity to children's rights and needs;
- improved quality of relationships with children;
- greater understanding of children's capacities; and
- enhanced commitment to strengthening participation.

↳ **Outcomes for Programmes Supporting Participation**

- change in organisational culture towards greater respect for children's rights;
- willingness of staff to reconsider power balances and relinquish control in favour of greater power sharing;
- children's participation built in to all programme areas as a common underpinning approach; and
- changes in programme activities to more accurately reflect children's concerns and priorities.

↳ **Outcomes within the Local Community**

- greater awareness of children's rights and more respectful attitudes towards children;
- improved status of children; and
- increased willingness to involve children in decision-making.

▶ **Wider External Outcomes**

These are outcomes which indicate that a concrete change has happened in the community, or at local or national level, as a consequence of children's participation.

↳ **Participation as a Goal**

In some programmes, participation itself is the desired outcome. if the objective of a programme was to establish a forum for children to influence decisions of the local municipality, the outcomes will be defined in terms of the extent and

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effectiveness of their participation – for example, the formation of a children's forum, access to municipal meetings on a six-monthly basis, or the local municipality's commitment to producing child-friendly versions of key documents.

↳ **Participation as a Means**

Other programmes may seek outcomes such as ending violence towards children or increasing girls' access to education. Here, the outcome is the realisation of a child's right to protection or education, using participation as the means of achieving it.

Norway's Cultural and Historical Relationship with Child Participation

SCN's focus on child participation is considered to be somewhat unique among members of the Save the Children movement, with only a handful of other countries taking such an active and early stance in child participation internationally. Discussions with stakeholders, and review of secondary sources, have identified some potential historical and cultural reasons for this. Discussion of these may be useful to discuss in brief, as not only do they provide insight into some of the reasons for SCN's relatively unique focus on this area, but may also provide a view into what SCN hopes to accomplish in supported countries.

Fostering future 'democratic participation' has been a key focus of Norwegian education for many years. One study undertook a broad survey of English and Norwegian school leaders, and found that where the English almost universally highlighted concerns with pupil achievement 'core' subjects and behaviour, the Norwegians were much more likely to cite concerns relating to the depth, quality, and impact of democratic practices and education at their schools (Gulestøl & Farstad, 2015). Indeed, this has been a core focus of the Norwegian curriculum, and teaching practice, since the end of World War II, and particularly since the 1970s (Børhaug, 2010).

Building on early focusses on democratic education and child participation, Norway held a key role in the development of the UNCRC, with a particular focus on those provisions relevant to child participation. Norway then ratified the UNCRC 8 January 1991, and has since sought to harmonise national legislation with the articles of that Convention; the Convention now forms part of the Human Rights Act of 21 May 1999, and underpins myriad other laws, regulations, and protections for children in the country (The Norwegian Forum for The Convention on The Rights of The Child, 2017). This legal harmonisation has both built upon, and in turn influenced, Norwegian attitudes toward children's place in society and culture, strengthening their role in decision-making at home, in school, and at the national level.

Photo 4 – Child refugees in Khanke camp near Dohuk in Northern Iraq

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In practice, the Norwegian approach to fostering democratic education and child participation is varied, and embedded throughout practices and subjects which, at first glance, may not appear to be linked. Examples can include:[4] the establishment of grade-level student councils, providing input on teaching, learning, or administrative concerns at the grade and school level; marking the quality of individual pupils' democratic participation as a specific competency; strong democratic institutions and participation in democratic processes, with Norway consistently ranked as the world's best democracy (Smith & Adams, 2017); Norway's record as a society which believes in non-hierarchical and informal decision-making; creation of youth councils and CSOs with genuine roles in national and local politics; treating parent's night at schools as a discussion between the pupil and the teacher, giving the child an opportunity to discuss their marks and feedback in a mature way, and hopefully offer a chance for genuine learning; and general attitudes toward children's role in society, namely that children are seen as human beings and are generally expected to be active, participating, and engaging in matters around them, expected to demand to play an active part in their surroundings, and challenge adults.

Such practice is indeed intended to ensure processes and decisions in education and politics are informed by young people; however, this is counterbalanced by an intent to teach young people how to behave as mature adults in a democratic society, teaching them the values that foster tolerance of opposing views, collaborative democracy, and maturity in their engagements with adults.

This considered balance between participation and genuine learning is what defines the Norwegian approach and is what may inform much of SCN's child participation focus internationally. Many interviewed Norwegians are quick to point out that their approach is far from perfect, and that their domestic practice is not the only (or even necessarily primary) factor informing their work abroad. Nonetheless, understanding the historical, educational, political, and cultural context from which SCN has emerged can offer useful insights onto what they are hoping to achieve across their portfolio.

Key Actors in International Child Participation Programming

Save the Children is broadly seen as the pre-eminent driver of Child Participation acceptance and implementation globally; SCN is recognised as a major component of this, driving Child Participation across many of their strategic priorities. UNICEF is another major actor in this field, often working in tandem with and referring to SC in the Child Participation context. Other agencies actively involved in this area are World Vision International, PLAN, and Oxfam, all of

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[4] Please note that the quality and depth of participation resulting from these can be unclear across the sector.

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whom implement many of their own programmes, and regularly publish guidance, toolkits, and research.

Beyond INGOs, national policy makers, ministries, schools, religious groups, youth organisations, community groups and families may already have Child Participation processes embedded in their practice and, of course, children themselves are ultimately the key actors in all Child Participation contexts; however, these actors are a challenge to map effectively, given they may not release the quantity of reporting, research, and advocacy materials published by the INGOs.
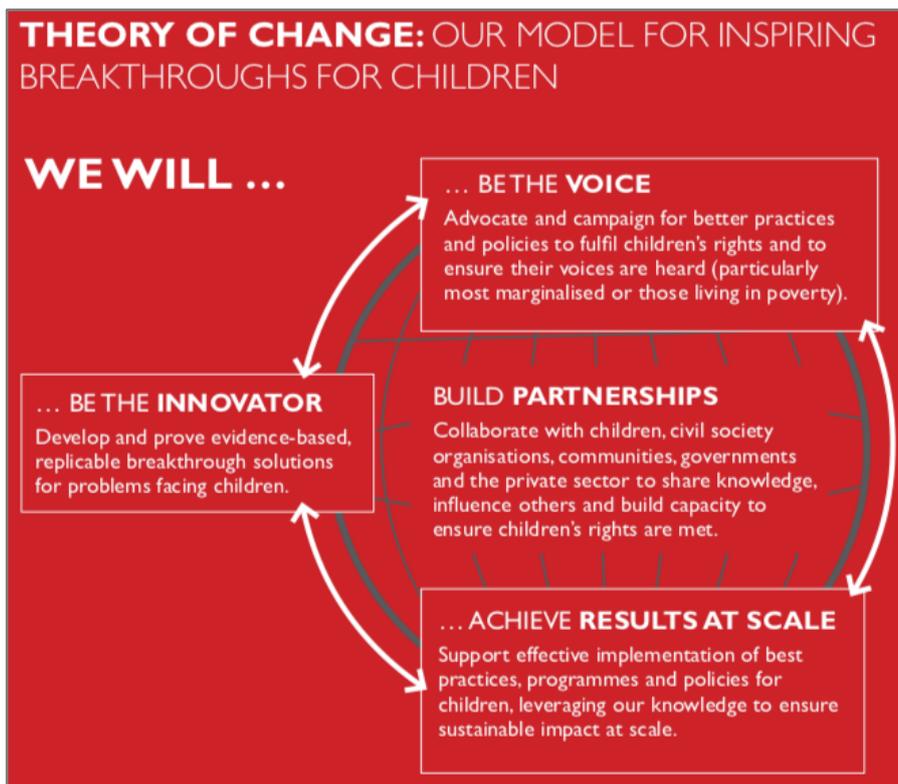
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RELEVANCE

Policy and Strategy Relevance

Establishing activity or initiative relevance to strategic or policy priorities is a substantial challenge, given these are intended to be guiding themes, rather than specific technical guidance or global outcome targets. Within this section on 'Policy and Strategy Relevance', the existence of relevant high-level policies and strategies is established, as well as the degree to which these can be seen to align with desired child participation inputs and impacts, and whether the activities and programmes as designed align to them. Given the nature of these targets and theories of change, this will be a highly abstract exercise, with more concrete discussions of these issues undertaken in the sections on '

Effectiveness' and 'Impact'. Nonetheless, this more abstract discussion will frame understandings of initiatives later in the report.

SCI Global Strategy - Ambition for Children 2030

Our Vision: A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Our Mission: Inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

Our Values: We will stay true to our values of Accountability, Ambition, Collaboration, Creativity, and Integrity.

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THEORY OF CHANGE: OUR MODEL FOR INSPIRING BREAKTHROUGHS FOR CHILDREN

WE WILL …

… BE THE **VOICE**
Advocate and campaign for better practices and policies to fulfil children's rights and to ensure their voices are heard (particularly most marginalised or those living in poverty).

… BE THE **INNOVATOR**
Develop and prove evidence-based, replicable breakthrough solutions for problems facing children.

BUILD **PARTNERSHIPS**
Collaborate with children, civil society organisations, communities, governments and the private sector to share knowledge, influence others and build capacity to ensure children's rights are met.

… ACHIEVE **RESULTS AT SCALE**
Support effective implementation of best practices, programmes and policies for children, leveraging our knowledge to ensure sustainable impact at scale.

At the global level, SC has identified child voice or participation as one of the key themes guiding its Theory of Change (ToC) ('Be the voice'); this strategy is intended to guide activity until 2030, while aligning with the principles enumerated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It appears this strategy has been kept as a broad guiding framework, allowing substantial flexibility to member organisations to achieve humanitarian and development goals that align best to the contexts and needs within their areas of focus. SCI has also committed to upholding and endeavouring to achieve the principles of the UNCRC, which provides some additional focus on 'child participation' (OHCHR, 1990). This high-level strategic framework, supported by the fact that limited global policy or strategic guidance on child participation has been released in recent years, requires further exploration of SCN and country office strategies and policies.[5] It does appear, however, that the overarching focus on child participation and voice, as discussed in later sections of this report, align with global theories of change and messaging.

Save the Children Norway Strategy – 2015-2018

SCN's 2015-2018 strategy included substantial additional attention on Child Participation, which overlaps substantially with SC' global strategy and policy documents building upon the TOC described above. Key relevant components of SCN's strategy have been presented below:

WORKING PRACTICES

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[5] Please note that SCI has released substantial documentation and guidance on effective implementation of child participation; this statement refers primarily to global strategic policies and guidance.

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The methods and approaches of Save the Children [Norway] and its partners depend on the local context. To achieve the best possible results, the elements in the theory of change may be weighed differently. The approach and choice of partners will be different in an authoritarian regime than in a country with democracy in development. Each country's internal revenue and resource distribution, and their policies and priorities for a more equal society will also influence the advocacy approaches for country programmes.

Our partners are included from the start. The partnership is a collaborative relationship and we learn from each other. Key partners for us include governments, civil society organisations – **particularly children and young people's organisations and their parents** [emphasis added] – business, institutions, religious and traditional leaders. We work long-term with the authorities and civil society to build structures that fulfil children's rights. In humanitarian situations we work increasingly with the UN and national governments so that we can respond quickly and ensure that children and their families survive, get help and protection.

SAVE THE CHILDREN [NORWAY] WILL

1. Strengthen advocacy work in country programmes, in SC national members in the South and in international political processes. Our advocacy must be based on analysis, experience and participation from the South.
2. Test out, invest, evaluate, analyse and document programme models that provide tangible and immediate results for children.
3. **Involve children and young people in our decisions, planning, implementation and evaluation of Save the Children's projects and programmes. Children and young people should hold adults accountable.** [emphasis added]
4. Maintain partnerships with governments and help them in taking the responsibility to fulfil children's rights.
5. Increase efforts to strengthen civil society, children's networks and children and young people's organisations.
6. *Strive to meet the particular rights of girls and boys, children with disabilities and other marginalised children in relation to the context.*

Photo 5 – School children, Cambodia

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In SCN's documents, more emphasis is placed on child participation than in global guidance; it is seen as both a means of ensuring local delivery is fit to local needs and contexts, and that children inform every stage of the programme cycle. The former necessitates a degree of local understanding and engagement to ensure the desired child participation outcomes, and the latter speaks more to internal processes. In both cases, as will be seen later, the evidence presents varying levels of successful implementation across the portfolio. Nonetheless, many activities do appear to align well with SCN's strategies and approaches.

Norad Strategies and Framework Agreement

Norad's global strategy makes limited mention of child participation, but SCN's framework agreement incorporates child participation as a 'crosscutting theme', intended to underpin all activity across the activities in focus for this review. An excerpt from the framework agreement has been provided below:

Child Participation as a Crosscutting Theme

Child Participation is essential in raising the awareness and the understanding of children's right to be heard and is also a right in itself. […] Child participation increases children's commitment to and involvement in themselves and the society, and is an effective way to build democracy and active participation in a society. Save the Children also need children's voice to ensure that children's interests are taken into consideration in all of its work and to continually improve our work as a human rights organisation.

Child participation as a cross cutting principle, has developed considerably during the last strategic period 2010-2013. […] During this strategic period, we have supported an increasing number of countries providing for active participation of children in all thematic areas, especially in education, CRG and child protection. […]

[in SCN's work] child participation is reflected through children influencing their family, school, civil society, and occasionally influencing on the national level. Save the Children Norway is continually working to ensure mainstreaming of child participation in the country programmes' various thematic areas, and to allow for children to influence the work of Save the Children. […]

[amended to emphasise key points and for brevity]

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Child participation comprises a much more explicit focus here than in many of the other documents, and has been characterised as a core focus of programming. As such, efforts to incorporate child participation programming across both implementation and internal processes can be seen as highly relevant to the framework agreement's requirements.

Local Cultures and Needs

One key area of focus for this study was the establishment of local attitudes regarding child participation, and the degree to which it aligned with real needs in country. However, review of country reports, secondary literature, and even primary data made establishing real stakeholder views a substantial challenge. Certainly, at the international level and among international staff working in country offices, the relevance was clearly identified; however, discussions with national country staff, and government and community stakeholders, were challenging for a number of reasons. Across the available data, the relevance of child participation was appraised broadly positively; however, there is insufficient data to make much broader assessment beyond this.

'Children are the future of South Sudan, their opinions must be heard'

— GOVERNMENT LEGISLATIVE MEMBER, BOR

On the point of cultural relevance of child participation, this too is a substantial challenge to effectively establish. Local culture, particularly for foreigners, can be enigmatic and challenging to define and understand. It does appear that, in some national cases (possibly even a majority), child participation is a foreign concept, and may not align well with patriarchal or collectivistic cultures. Cambodia was one such case where cultural norms and values may not always align well with effective implementation of child participation initiatives as understood by international actors, while on the other hand Latin America was characterised as having more cultural alignment with relevant practices. Once again, establishing and quantifying these from a research perspective is a substantial challenge, and one which escapes the time and resources available to this research.

'Given the situation in South Sudan, the child participation programme has worked hard to ensure that the most people are reached in the most efficient way possible.'

— HEAD OF CHILD GOVERNANCE, JUBA

What may be useful in ensuring local cultural relevance however, is ensuring the concepts and principles underpinning child participation, as well as the overarching approaches to implementation and measurable benefits emerging from it, are well understood by local stakeholders. This can help ensure the concepts, approaches, and impacts are responsive to local cultural requirements, and are not an imposition by foreign actors on local stakeholders with limited understanding of what is being advocated; a collaborative, rather than an instructive approach, on the basis of concrete understanding has the most potential for positive outcomes. Effective understanding of child participation, and its potential consequences, is discussed in more detail in the effectiveness and impact sections.

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One key indicator of relevance is the degree to which country staff considers child participation to be useful. The online survey distributed to country offices included several relevant questions.

Figure 1 - How useful, if at all, do you consider child participation to be? (Online Survey)
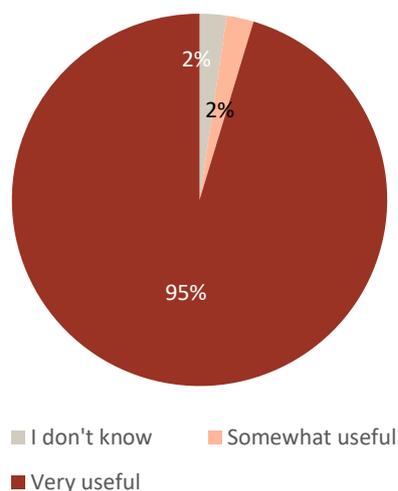
Table 1 - Why?

Ensures Work is in Children's Best Interests	13
It Has Positive Impact on Child Rights in Society	12
Keeps Children's Opinions in Mind	10
It Is a Right	8
Empowers Children and Builds Confidence	6
Increases Sustainability	5
The Basis of Projects	4
Increases Effectiveness of Projects	2
Increases Inclusiveness	2
Increases Accountability	2
Guarantees Direct Involvement of Children	1
Not Understood	1

95% of respondents indicated that they consider child participation to be very useful. While 2% of respondents indicated 'I don't know' and 'Somewhat useful', none of the respondents indicated that child participation was less than 'somewhat useful'. The three most commonly identified reasons for this were as follows:

1. Ensures that work is in children's best interest;

2. Has a positive impact on child rights in society; and

3. Keeps children's opinions in mind

Although 'has a positive impact on child rights in society' does not provide much insight, both 'ensures that work is in children's best interest' and 'keeps children's opinions in mind' indicates that respondents recognise the importance of children's perspectives, understanding the role that children can play in decision-making and that their needs are a relevant factor in the formulation of programmes impacting them.

While this data indicates that respondent stakeholders appear to understand the importance of child participation, ultimately it should be emphasised that understanding and actually implementing effective measures for the meaningful implementation of child participation in decision-making are distinct issues.

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The degree to which programmes are relevant to children's needs and views, however, can be established to some degree by their participation in programme targeting and design. Both the document review and online survey provided some quantitative insights to this effect:

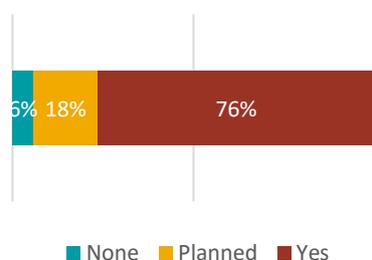*Figure 2 - Child Participation Informing Design (Country Document Review)*

Table 2 - Types of Child Participation

Previous data or mechanisms used (e.g. evaluations, needs assessments, ongoing consultations)	8
Identification of Requests or Needs - FGDs or Workshops with Children	7
CP Planned for Future Design/Planning Activity	4
Consultation Cited (unclear means)	2
Explore Existing Practice - FGDs or Workshops with Children	1

On review of all fifteen portfolio country documents, 76% of countries specifically cited child participation informing design of programmes. The most common means of this participation comprised use of previously collected data, or insights emerging from discussions occurring in previous programme activities (i.e. data not collected explicitly for the purposes of programme design). The next most-common response indicates that children were asked – either through FGDs or workshops – to identify their requests or needs.

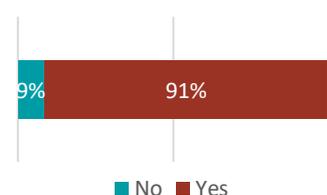*Figure 3 - Child participation informing country office work (Country Online Survey)*

Table 3 - Embedded Sectors

Child Rights Governance	40
Child Protection	41
Education	36
Health and Nutrition	25
Child Poverty	17
Media training	1
Advocacy	1
Accountability	1

In 28 of 46 responses child participation was cited explicitly as informing programme design, while in 15 of 46 it was characterised as informing ongoing implementation of programmes. In both of these cases, so long as action had been taken in response to requests in input provided by children, relevance of programmes to child needs can be seen as positive. However, the responses do not provide specific examples of how this child participation influenced the

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development and implementation of project activities. Assessments beyond this, however, are not possible with available data and evidence. This chart, and supporting qualitative responses, receives more attention in the Effectiveness section.

Children's Needs (Primary Survey)

A series of questions was asked to identify the priority needs among young people, and the key areas in their communities they want to change. This can be used as a strong indicator of programmatic relevance to child needs and views. The results of these discussions can be found below.

Children were asked: *What their major needs are; Who is acting to address them; and What changes they would ideally effect.*

*Photo 6 – South Sudanese children participating in a workshop*

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Table 4 - Biggest problems facing young people (frequency table - top 10) (Primary Survey)

Cambodia				Iraq				South Sudan			
Female		**Male**		**Female**		**Male**		**Female**		**Male**	
Accidents (cars and other) and disasters	15	Alcohol, gambling, and drugs	20	Poor security, war	28	Poor security, war, conflict	31	Early marriage	52	Poor education	20
Drugs and alcohol	15	Fighting	18	No problems	27	No problems	30	Lack of / poor education	34	Lack of food	17
Fighting	13	Accidents & disasters	16	Lack of / Poor education	15	Lack of / Poor education	22	Lack of food	33	Child labour	14
Domestic problems	13	Gangs	7	No play areas	12	No play areas	10	Domestic problems	24	Early marriage	12
Lack of / Poor education	12	Lack of / Poor education	6	Fighting	9	Fighting	9	Poverty	22	Domestic problems	11
Poverty	8	Domestic problems	6	Dirty / unhygienic, disease	7	Poverty, Livelihoods	8	Fighting, war, security challenges	16	Fighting, war, security challenges	10
Disease	5	Kidnapping	3	Poverty, Livelihoods	5	Domestic problems	7	Child labour	10	Poverty	8
Robbery	3	Robbery	3	Basic services (water, electricity, etc.)	5	Dirty / unhygienic, disease	5	Lack of clothing	6	Cars	4
Gangs, gun violence or threats	3	Poverty, child labour	2	Family problems / domestic violence	4	Basic services (water, electricity, etc.)	5	Lack of rights	5	Disease	3
Child labour	2	Dirty / unhygienic, disease	1	Kidnapping	3	Drugs and alcohol	4	Disease, hygiene challenges	7	Lack of water	3
Qualitative Findings				**Qualitative Findings**				**Qualitative Findings**			

Cambodia Qualitative Findings
- Safe Schools
- School Facilities
- Educational Opportunity (access and quality)
- Economic Security, livelihoods, and poverty
- Community Solidarity

Iraq Qualitative Findings
- Security
- Institutional Protections
- Education
- Psychosocial Support
- Nutrition & Health
- Gender Issues

South Sudan Qualitative Findings
- Living essentials (e.g. shoes, clothes, etc.)
- Hunger
- Schooling (primary and secondary)
- Health care
- Peace building and stability, violence
- Early marriage
- Career guidance
- Institutional strength and accountability
- Inclusion (disabled *and vulnerable children)*

These responses highlight variations in the problems facing young people in the three different locations where primary data collection was undertaken. While issues including 'poverty', 'fighting', and 'child labour' were identified across multiple locations – some of the challenges faced by young people appear to be very context-dependent. For example, 'alcohol, gambling, and drugs' was the most commonly identified issue by male respondents in Cambodia – but was not mentioned at all in either Iraq or Sudan. Similarly, 'early marriage' was frequently mentioned by both male and female respondents from South Sudan – but not in either of the other countries.

These results demonstrate that while there are some shared issue areas across all three locations, that the problems facing young people is often very context-dependent. This emphasises the importance of including the voices of children in identifying key issues, as well as in helping to develop relevant programming addressing child protection and other, related issues.

Figure 4, 5 & 6 - Is someone working to address these needs/challenges? (Primary Survey)
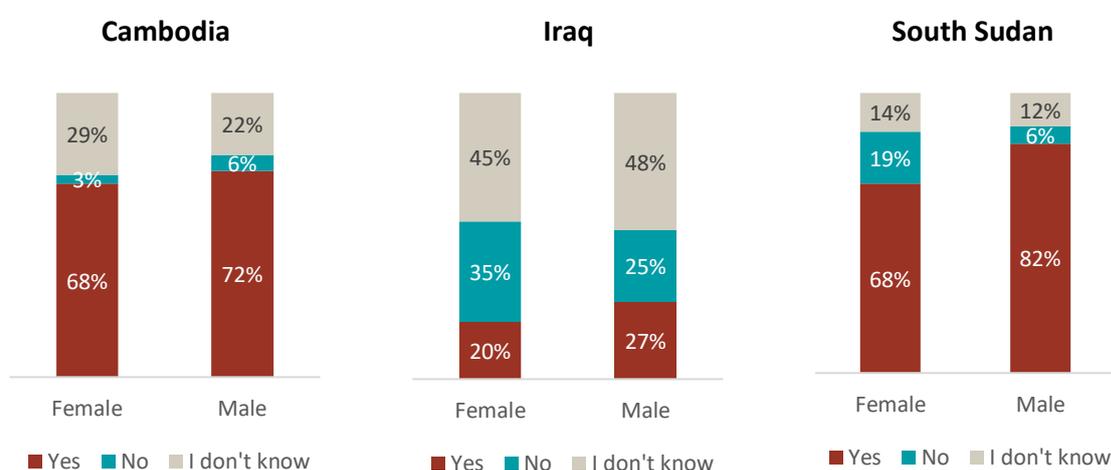
If yes, who?		If yes, who?		If yes, who?	
Police / Security	39	Aid Organisations	9	Save the Children	37
Teachers	33	Government	9	Family	35
Village leaders	33	Police / Security	7	Government	29
Neighbours	18	Other aid organisation	6	Teachers	21
Family	4	Camp Director	5	Windle Trust	11
Other aid organisation	4	Family	3	Child Protection Services	10
Children's Club / Committee	4	Community leaders	3	Missionaries / Church	7
Friends	3	Teachers	2	World Food Program	7
CWCC	2	Sanitation Workers	1	Village leaders	6
SCI	0	IMC	1	Friends or neighbours	5
		SCI	1	Various other orgs (<6)	26

In Iraq, only a minority of respondents indicated that anyone was working to address the needs/challenges of young people in their community. Although this should not be seen as a

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reflection on SCN's work – as it has not been added to the Norad portfolio yet – this does provide information regarding the issue worth bearing in mind moving forward. The responses to the question 'if yes, who?' indicate that aid organisations are already known as a source of this support; NGOs being recognised as a source of support may help improve the impact and relevance of SCN's work in the country. Moreover, information about what actors are known to be sources of support in this area could provide guidance for collaboration in future programme design and implementation – as well as understanding how to avoid overlap in services provided, improving relevance.

In South Sudan, over 80% of male respondents and just under 70% of female respondents indicated that someone in their community was working to address the needs/challenges faced by young people. Save the Children was the most commonly cited actor – suggesting that the programming SCN has provided in the country has been relevant and visible – closely followed by 'family' and 'government'. Given the importance of working with and developing capacity among local systems for ensuring the sustainability of child protection and child rights programming, considering ways to either reach out to or strengthen productive relationships with these sources – as well as the other organisations and individuals mentioned – may be a positive way to improve relevance as well as sustainability.

In Cambodia, around 70% of respondents overall indicated that actors in their community were working to address the needs/challenges faced by young people. However, none of the respondents mentioned SCI specifically, and only a minority of respondents mentioned other aid organisations as the source of this support. This could be a reflection of the strength of local systems – a positive indicator that respondents are aware of and have confidence in the support provided by local actors like teachers and the police. It may also be an indicator of the diversity of aid actors operating in that country. However, it could also be a reflection of low relevance and/or visibility in relation to SCN's work in the country; it is difficult to determine this from the data provided. Regardless, as with South Sudan, this data provides important information about the salient actors in this area operating within the country; working to establish or strengthen productive relationships with some of these actors may help improve the relevance and sustainability of programming.

Photo 7 – Cambodian children singing in class

Table 5 - What would you like to change in your community? (Primary Survey – generic statements removed – top 10)

Cambodia				Iraq				South Sudan			
Female		**Male**		**Female**		**Male**		**Female**		**Male**	
Safety/Security	11	Tackle alcohol / substance abuse	11	Safety/security, more peace	25	Safety/Security, more peace	41	Better education	51	Better education	24
Better education	10	Deal with hygiene and health challenges	8	Better education	15	More play space/equipment	16	Stop child marriage	16	Peace, reduced fighting	11
Tackle alcohol / substance abuse and gambling	11	Better education	8	More play space/equipment	12	Better education	15	Repair infrastructure	14	Protect children's rights	9
Tackle domestic abuse	9	Safety/Security	6	Better basic services (e.g. water, electricity)	18	Replace tents/buildings	5	Peace, reduced fighting	28	Provide clothing	6
Deal with hygiene and health challenges	10	less fighting / violence	6	Protect children's rights	6	Basic services (e.g. water, electricity, roads)	12	Protect children's rights	12	Stop child marriage	5
less fighting / violence, promote peace	8	Safer roads	5	Replace tents/buildings	5	More water	3	Access to healthcare	10	Improve infrastructure	4
Safer roads	5	Tackle gang problems	5	Deal with hygiene, health challenges	5	Protect children's rights	3	Safety/Security, gun violence, gangs	13	Access to healthcare	3
Better relationship between parents and children	3	Better relationship between parents and children	2	Better relationship between parents and children	1	Deal with hygiene, health challenges	5	Tackle domestic abuse	5	less fighting / violence	3
Tackle gang problems	3	Tackle domestic abuse	2	More support from NGOs	1	Better government	2	Hygiene and health challenges	1	Provide food	3
Repair infrastructure	2	More play space/equipment	1	Tackle domestic abuse	1	Prevent suicide	2	Stop child labour	1	Better cultural awareness	2

As with the question 'what are the biggest problems facing young people?' discussed above, the responses to this question highlight variations in the issues young people face within the three different contexts targeted during primary data collection. As before, some concerns were shared by respondents across the three locations, including 'safety/security' and 'better education', while others were more unique. In Cambodia, drug and substance abuse issues featured prominently; in Iraq respondents requested more play space/equipment; and in South Sudan child marriage featured again as a frequently mentioned issue. The distinctions between humanitarian (Iraq) and development (Cambodia) contexts were stark, and highlight the need to ensure delivery is relevant and targeted to such challenges where appropriate.

Again, these responses highlight the context-dependent nature of the issues faced by children in these – and any – locations. This emphasises the importance of making sure the voices of children are included in the formulation of relevant programming addressing the issues they themselves may be facing.

The above challenges and priorities highlighted by children are complex, and fall within the remit of various organisations operating in the countries studied (across primary research and secondary evidence). As such, programme targeting at local needs and child priorities (thereby improving relevance) is not as simple as choosing from the above list. Similarly, SCN (and SCI more broadly) is an organisation with a highly focused remit, and may not have the in-country capacity and expertise to address all highlighted priorities.

However, the above analyses do offer some insight into both programmatic relevance, and potential areas for improvement. First, that in many cases, SCN programming aligns rather well to local needs, but there may be some space for improved targeting building on child input. Second (and potentially most importantly), the range of stakeholders children indicate work to address challenges did not appear to be consistently engaged in

Photo 8 – Child participation workshops in South Sudan

child participation and relevant CRG programming. Some contexts, e.g. Cambodia and other more 'mature' SCN portfolio countries, seem to have had more success than others, but again this appears to be uneven on the basis of available evidence; in others, those working to address challenges (e.g. police, relevant government bodies, and the security apparatus) may not have been as substantively targeted for engagement and capacity building as could have been the case. Such findings may be instructive in future programming.

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EFFECTIVENESS

This section endeavours (as far as the evidence allows) to explore the degree of how well implementation of child participation achieves SCN's various standards and guidance, how well activities are achieving desired outcomes, and the standards to which supporting systems and processes are being implemented.

Embeddedness across Country Office Project Activities

These discussions will explore the degree to which Child Participation is embedded in SC country office beneficiary-facing activities. The next section explores the degree to which Child Participation is embedded in internal SC country office systems and processes.

The analyses have been disaggregated across those countries, which were managed directly by SCN ('Old') prior to the merger, and those that have been added since the merger and in the most recent Norad framework agreement ('New').[6] This disaggregation has been undertaken in relevant analyses to highlight key distinctions, which illuminate distinctions in effective practice and ongoing challenges. An additional key point to highlight comprises the return rate for the online survey – only c. half of portfolio countries participated in the online survey, and those individuals that responded tend to be more invested in child participation and securing more resources for it. There were few responses from SMTs. Consequently, any insights emerging from the online survey must be approached with this in mind.

Figure 7 - Estimated % of programmes in country incorporating child participation (SC Country Office Online Survey)
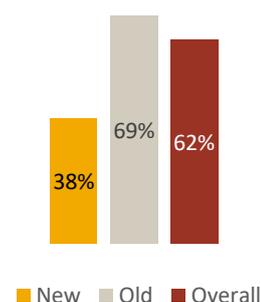
On average, the online survey respondents indicated that 62% of programmes in online-survey-responding countries incorporated child participation (across all thematic areas). There were distinction between historical SCN and new portfolio countries: while historical SCN portfolio countries indicated 69%, and new portfolio countries indicated 38% of programmes in their country had some component of child participation. Given this is the first engagement many new countries have had with SCN, this may not be surprising. Nonetheless, it does appear that child participation may not be fully mainstreamed in any country, with some catching up required for recent additions to the portfolio. Analyses of sectors incorporating child participation may offer some additional insights.

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[6] 'New' countries comprise those that have only been added to SCN's portfolio in the current FWA, while 'Old' countries predate the current FWA, and overlap substantially with direct SCN delivery in beneficiary countries.

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Figure 8 - Child participation or inputs
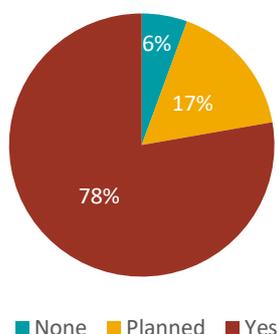informing needs assessments or
programme design (Country Document
Review)

Table 6 - Of yes, described approaches

Dedicated programme design workshops to solicit child views on needs or priorities	8
Previous data or mechanisms used (e.g. evaluations, needs assessments, ongoing consultations with child-led structures)	7
Some consultation cited (unclear means)	3
Discussions with children about previous delivery, but not necessarily oriented toward programme/proposal design	1

Review of country documents, through a coding exercise, highlighted the percentage of countries indicating child input informed programme or proposal design. 78% of countries indicated this happened prior to closing of the proposal, 17% indicated this was planned at later stages, and 6% highlighted no such inputs. The most common means employed comprised: dedicated FGDs or workshops (8 countries), 7 countries drew on previous discussions or engagements with children (e.g. insights gained during the regular meeting with child clubs or parliaments, or preceding evaluations), while others highlighted some participation but provided limited information on what this comprised. For those countries planning participation to inform delivery, not all of them reported such child participation in later documentation (see later discussions).

These findings highlight several points of interest: first, that child participation (in some form) does appear to inform programme planning, but SCN's views on the appropriateness of relying on preceding discussions (with limited direct consultation on programme design) remains unclear. And second, that in some countries, especially those indicating plans for participation but not demonstrating consistent delivery, and even those drawing on insights from previous child engagements, child participation may be a 'tickbox' country offices feel obligated to incorporate; the degree of commitment and engagement, on the basis of documents and also discussions with country-level and international stakeholders, remains occasionally unclear. The above discussion of embeddedness, as well as the next table may support this finding.

> *'The staff come every week, to train about how to teach our children and also ask about the teachers.'*

– 62 YEAR-OLD WOMAN, QUACH MENGLY TUOL BENG PRIMARY SCHOOL, KAMPONG CHAM

Figure 9 - Child participation activity planned or described in proposal (Country Document Review)
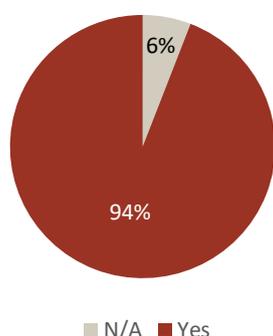
Table 7 - Embedded Sectors

|	
CRG & Advocacy	15
Education	12
Child Protection and Psychosocial Support	6
General Humanitarian or Development Programming	4
DRM	1
WASH	1
Environmental Protection	1

Child participation activity was planned in all proposals submitted, with the activities broadly (though not comprehensively) described as:

CRG & Advocacy	Engagements with policymakers, child parliaments, or community advocacy activities (by children) seeking to address key child rights and participation issues**.**
Education	Generally participation in schools clubs, or creation of spaces for schools and teachers to solicit child views on school management or policy.
Child Protection and Psychosocial Support	One of the most common activities was peer-to-peer psychosocial support, or general mentoring and skill-building by children.
General Humanitarian or Development Programming	Commitments to embed or 'mainstream' child participation across all activities undertaken for the projects. Extension beyond SCN's funded activity was unclear in many cases.
DRM	Community mobilisation to minimise accident and disaster risk, as well as child-led identification of challenges.
WASH	This generally comprised discussions with children regarding overarching WASH needs, or identification of locations for specific infrastructural improvements (e.g. sanitation facilities).
Environmental Protection	Community mobilisation to raise awareness about environmental issues, tree planning initiatives, and lead clean-up initiatives.

These activities overlap substantially with SCN's focus areas (education, child protection, and CRG); given this rather limited focus, it is a challenge to establish the degree to which SCN's

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influence in child participation extends outwith its primary areas of focus (which is not as heavily focussed on child health & nutrition or child poverty). This analysis is supported by the online survey, where respondents were asked to describe the sectors/activities in which child participation is embedded:

Figure 10 & 11 - Sectors in which child participation is embedded in field activity (SC Country Office Online Survey)
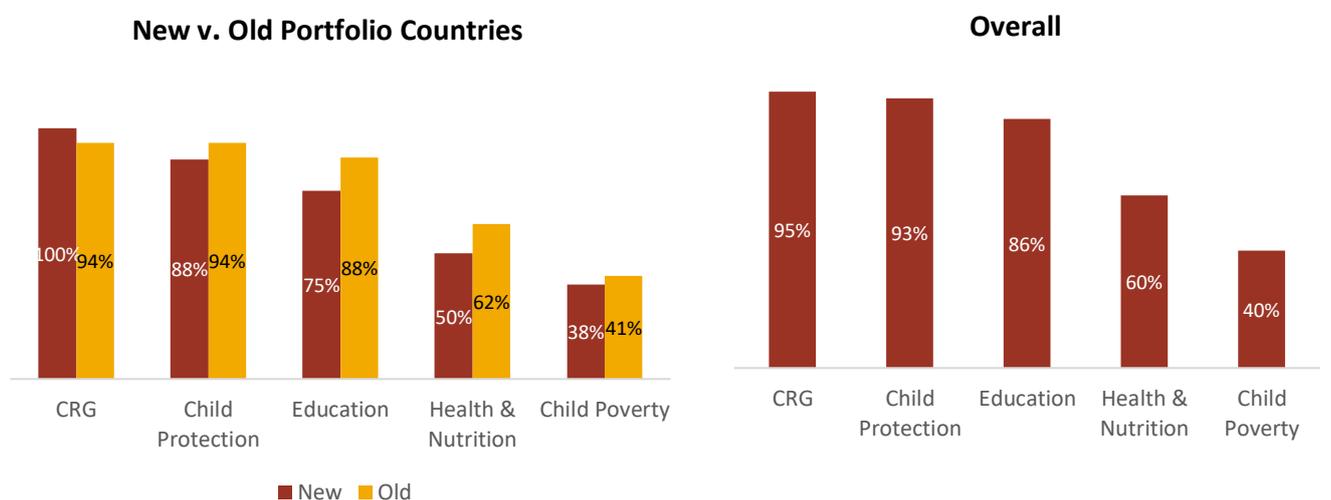
Child participation is more often embedded within CRG, child protection, and education, but in health & nutrition (60% overall) and child poverty (40%), participation was characterised as being less common. This may highlight challenges in effective 'mainstreaming' of child participation, and support a view that child participation is incorporated largely on those projects where SCN's inputs are most substantive. The reasons underpinning 'New' vs 'Old' portfolio country differences are a challenge to establish with certainty; drawing on the primary research undertaken in Cambodia and South Sudan, it may be the case that new portfolio countries are still working out the best ways to incorporate child participation, or may have provided themselves time to ramp up participation in some programmes, endeavouring to minimise overly ambitious targets.

*Table 8 - Approaches to child participation described in the Online Survey and Country Documents*

Country Document Review (15 Countries)		SC Country Office Online Survey (46 Resp.)	
Child activities (e.g. clubs, parliaments, tree planting)	11	Children Consulted in Planning Phase	22
Advocacy, awareness, acceptance of child rights	9	Accountability (suggestion boxes, feedback, etc.)	19
Governance & policy participation	9	Children Consulted in Implementation Phase	9
Child-led M&E, supplementary reports	6	Children involved in Local Community Organisation	9
Child input into internal SCI planning and operations	5	Awareness and Advocacy Events	7

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Adult training and capacity building (e.g. teachers, government officials, etc.)	4	Child-led Groups	6
Child-informed needs and priority identification	4	Children Involved with Situational Analysis	5
Provision of opportunities to inform school operations and policies	2	Child Parliament	4
Provide training and other opportunities to build confidence, soft skills, and resilience	2	Children Report Issues	4
Working to change attitudes in the community	1	School Governance	3
Policy outcomes	1	Capacity Building Training	2
Collection of child feedback on delivery	1	Psychosocial Support	1
Ensuring participation of marginalised and vulnerable youth in child participation initiatives	1	Exchange Visits	1

The approaches cited also support previous analyses, indicating that much child participation (if not most) focuses largely on traditional CRG activities, followed closely by child protection and education. It is worth mentioning that discussion of other sectoral activities was rare, with only 1-2 mentions of activities in WASH, health, DRM, and environmental protection across all available data.

Another key data source comprises annual and mid-term review reports (MTR) to Norad; these provide insight to the degree child participation is a focus of regular monitoring and reporting. A brief overview of inclusion of child participation is provided here, but the M&E section goes into more detail about specific focuses and contents.

Figure 12 - Other country documents, child participation included or reported (Country Document Review)
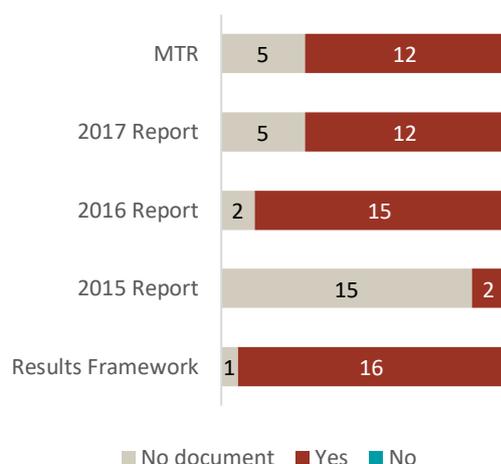
Child participation receives attention in every single regular reporting document submitted. This indicates that, at the very least, some efforts are being taken to ensure it is subject to regular reporting and monitoring. The quality and depth of this reporting is uneven across the portfolio, and may offer additional insights into potential strengths and challenges. The M&E section provides more detailed analyses.

Across this subsection on 'Embeddedness across Country Office Project Activities', it appears that child participation informs much activity in the field, and is subject to regular reporting; however, the degree of embeddedness outside of SCN's areas of direct focus, as well as the quality and depth of reporting, remains unclear. Linking to previous discussions on local relevance, many of the approaches taken appear to be broadly standardised; the degree of modification to local

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contexts is also unclear, and difficult to extract from reporting documents. However, qualitative discussions with international- and country-level stakeholders has indicated that challenges in local understanding of child participation, as well as challenges in country office priorities, may underpin a degree of standardisation and 'box ticking', which may impact on the effectiveness of child participation. These, and other relevant issues, are discussed in greater detail in other sections of this report.

Photo 9 – Children participating in a research workshop

'Culture differs from one country to another, people have different views on child participation. In African cultures the practice has been that children are to be seen not heard; a lot of work is needed to change that.'

– JUDAS MASSINGUE, CHILD PARTICIPATION ADVISOR, SAVE THE CHILDREN

Embeddedness in Internal SCI Activities and Systems

The team also undertook to establish how, and if, child participation informs internal processes at SCI (e.g. planning, monitoring, accountability exercises, etc.).

Figure 13 - Does your country office incorporate child participation in internal processes and activities? (e.g. planning, monitoring, accountability exercises, etc.) (SC Country Office Online Survey)
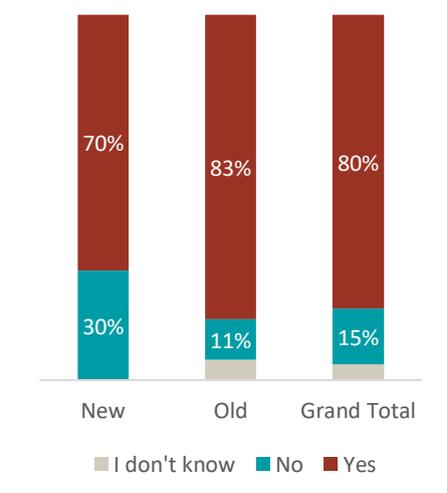

Table 9 - If yes, please describe what this looks like

Children Consulted in Planning Phase	22
Accountability (suggestion boxes, feedback, etc.)	19
Children Consulted in Implementation Phase	9
Children involved in Local Community Organisation	9
Awareness and Advocacy Events	7
Child-led Groups	6
Children Involved with Situational Analysis	5
Child Parliament	4
Children Report Issues	4
School Governance	3

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Unclear	3
Capacity Building Training	2
Psychosocial Support	1
Exchange Visits	1

The online surveys demonstrate a relative degree of uniformity: c. 80% across all locations highlight the inclusion of children in internal systems and policies. It must, however, be recalled that respondents to this survey are likely to be more committed and engaged in child participation, resulting in something of a biased (in a positive direction) sample. Most of their responses relate to some inputs in planning, implementation, monitoring, and supplementary reporting. However, previous discussions about sectors in which such activity is embedded highlight questions about the degree and breadth of embeddedness; it appears that a high headline figure uses **some form** of child participation to inform internal processes, but this may not be applied to all sectors of activity, or with a great degree of depth. This finding was supported by discussions with international and country-level stakeholders, who highlighted concerns that much child participation can be tokenistic in nature, and that SCI staff at the country level can struggle to effectively incorporate child participation in internal processes and systems, particularly when work involves partner organisations; later findings on the degree to which partner organisations have received relevant capacity building ('Effectiveness') are insightful in this regard.

'We are conscious about the issue of things becoming symbolic, tokenistic, ticking boxes. Real participation requires time to go through things in detail'

– GUNNAR ANDERSEN, AREA DIRECTOR FOR ASIA, LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN, SAVE THE CHILDREN

'Child participation is more expensive, more time-consuming, there are challenges with reliability of data, triangulating the data sufficiently. It requires more resources. Another challenge is that it becomes tokenistic, they want to tick off boxes; it often happens in education.

– NORA INGDAL, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, SAVE THE CHILDREN

Those stakeholders that indicated child participation does not inform internal processes and systems were asked why this was the case:

Table 10 - If your country office does not incorporate child participation in internal systems and processes, why not? (SC Country Office Online Survey)

Seen as a Low Priority	3
System Requires Improvement	3

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Not Enough Resources	2
Not Enough Personnel / Expertise	2
Adults do not Respect the Input of Children	1
Outside Official Channels	1
Not Always Enough Time	1

The survey findings reflect many of the qualitative findings, with limited prioritisation, insufficient resources, and limited buy-in cited. One area where the online survey did not provide much focus was on challenges in effective understanding; this was highlighted both by international stakeholders, and also by the researchers during primary research. In both Iraq and South Sudan, and to a lesser extent in Cambodia, challenges in effective understanding of child participation (among field staff, children, and concerned adults) were seen as a substantial challenge to effective implementation (across internal processes, and external project delivery). Such challenges may have impacted on the accuracy of preceding results, and will receive more attention in later discussions.

Figure 14 - Within internal processes, has your office made any changes, or taken direct action, on the basis of children's inputs or opinions? (SC Country Office Online Survey)
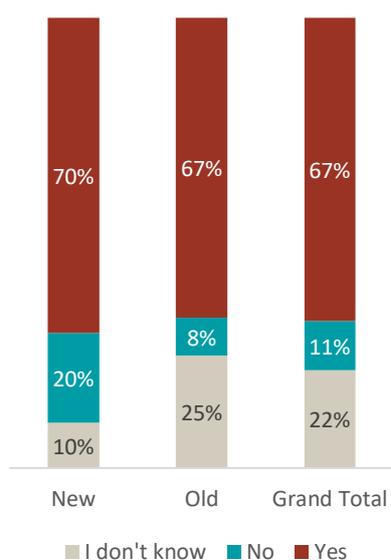
Table 11 - If yes, what changes have you made?

Involved children in programme design, informing later delivery	13
Support for child-led projects and programmes arise from consultations	7
Greater investment in children's issues	6
Children were involved in projects delivery	6
Community groups received more attention for strengthening	5
Children monitored programme delivery, with appropriate action taken	5
Accountability mechanisms incorporate child inputs	5
Greater awareness raising efforts undertaken	3
SC teams encourage and act on child parliament inputs	2
Construction of playgrounds was undertaken building on their inputs	1
More support with accessing hospitals provided, especially for the disabled	1

67% of all offices indicate regular response to child input, with many of the same themes and activities highlighted in previous analyses. When asked why an office does not implement response to child inputs, respondents to the online survey had the following to say:

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Table 12 - If your country office does not take action in response to child input, why not? (SC Country Office Online Survey)

There has been limited attempt to implement child participation guidelines	2
Adults do not respect the input of children	1
The implementation has been limited in scope	1
No effective participation	1
Considered a low priority by the country office	1

The answers in this coded table are consistent with those in Table 10, highlighting continued challenges in prioritisation, implementation, and understanding.

Approaches to Capacity Building

The team also undertook to explore approaches to capacity building for child participation, both internal to SCI and for external stakeholders. The online country office survey asked about budgets allocated to capacity building:

Figure 15 - Does your country office dedicate any resources to capacity building in child participation for staff or partners? (SC Country Office Online Survey)
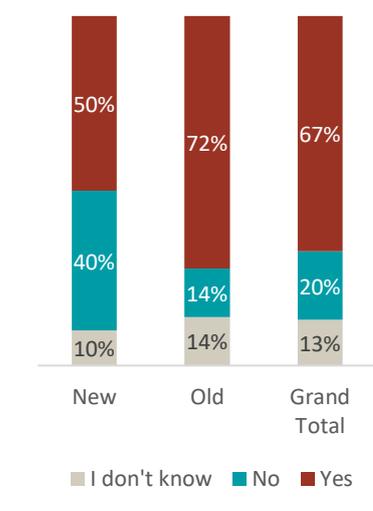
50% of new portfolio country respondents indicated no such resources were available (many qualitative discussions highlighted a lack of prioritisation), and only 72% of historic portfolio countries indicated this was the case. The USD totals are somewhat confusing, as it appears that some offices may have understood any budget allocated to child participation activity, and others for capacity building for internal staff specifically; budgets for staff training seem to be 'pooled', meaning the office has a discretionary training and capacity building budget, which can be used for whatever training the office sees fit. It appears that resources outwith project-specific allocations (many totals appeared to align with SCN portfolio budgets) are limited, given preceding discussions about a lack of resources, and building on qualitative discussions with international and country-level stakeholders, many of whom cited limited budgets impeding effective implementation and capacity building. Pooled training budgets appear to face some political challenges, with those subject to SMT priorities; if child participation is not considered a priority, then ensuring resources are dedicated to it may be a

Table 13 - Estimated USD

New	$1,750
Old	$288,383
Overall	$261,085

substantial challenge.

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Table 14 - What is this budget for? (SC Country Office Online Survey)

Old		New	
Staff Training	17	Child Training	3
Child Training	14	Staff Training	2
Financial Support for School Projects	6	Feedback Meetings	2
Support for Community Organisations	6	Support for Community Organisations	2
Creation / Purchase of Learning Materials	5	No Funds Available	2
Policy / Procedure Development	5	Creation / Purchase of Learning Materials	1
Count of Why not?	5	Children's Clubs	1
Psycho-Social Support	4	Policy / Procedure Development	1
Children's Clubs	4	Health programming	1
Feedback Meetings	4	No Staff Available	1
No Funds Available	2		
Has Not Been High Priority	2		
Purchase of Furniture	1		
Disability Aids	1		
Establishment of CPCs	1		
Don't Know	1		

In support of the preceding discussion surrounding confusion of budget types and sources, many activities cited direct-implementation approaches, rather than staff capacity building; the English-language skills of some respondents may have underpinned some of this confusion. Nonetheless, it does appear that most resources, when employed for child participation, focus on staff training, or training for partner and community entities.

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| I don't know | No | Yes |
| New | Old | Grand Total |
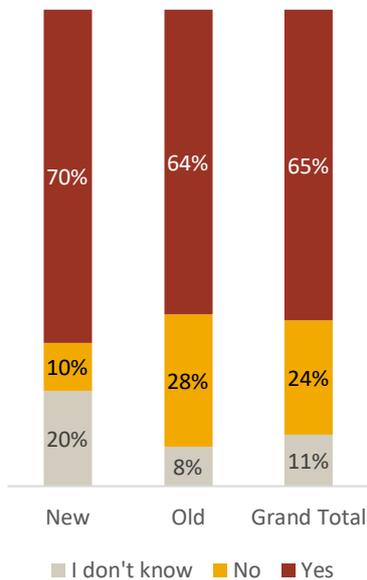
Table 15 - Description of available resources

Old		New	
Internal Staff Training	8	CRG / SCI TA / Advisor Support	4
Support Materials Available	4	Internal Staff Training	1
CRG / SCI TA / Advisor Support	4	General Child Participation Materials Available	1
Child Rights / Protection Training	3	Child Rights / Protection Training	1
SCN Framework	3	Most Only Available in English	1
Training for Children	2	Online CSP Officer	1
Training for Families	2		
Training in Importance of Participation	1		
Monitoring Tools Available	1		
Feedback Tools Available	1		
Government training	1		
Not Understood	1		

64% to 70% of offices indicated availability of these resources, with a broad spread of supporting qualitative responses covering SCI's various guidelines, training materials, and even TA support. That only 65% of respondents, many of whom held roles central to SCN's child participation strategy, are aware of relevant materials may be a point for further consideration.

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Figure 17 & 18 - What percentage of staff have accessed internal resources or capacity building [on child participation]? (SC Country Office Online Survey)
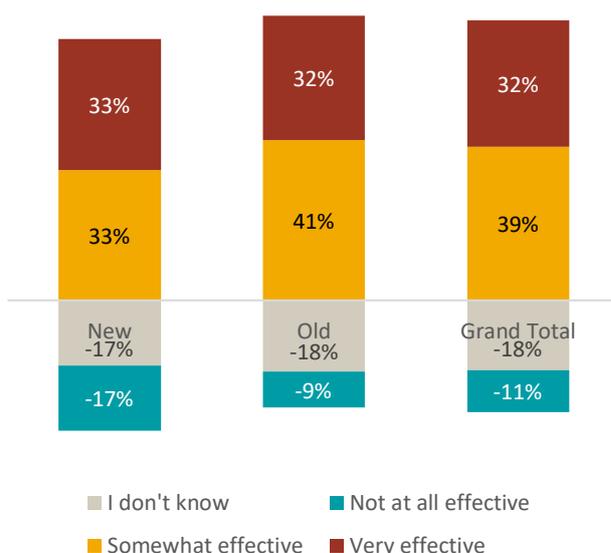
Comparing New and Old

Legend: New, Old

- SMT: New 38%, Old 52%
- Thematic leads: New 60%, Old 67%
- Partner staff: New 31%, Old 52%
- Field staff: New 38%, Old 61%

Overall

Legend: Grand Total

- SMT: 50%
- Thematic leads: 65%
- Partner staff: 48%
- Field staff: 57%
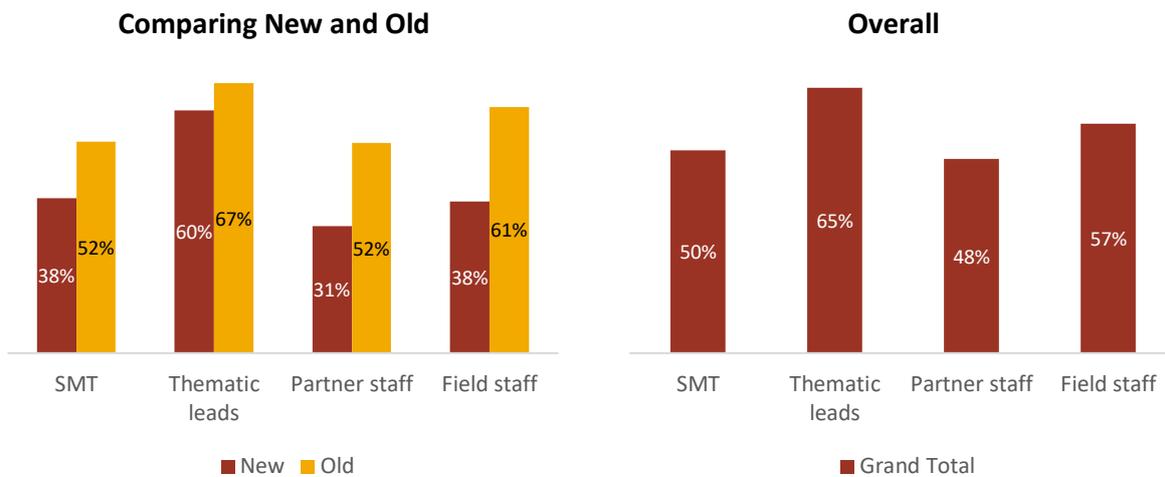
Reported rates of access were higher across all historic portfolio countries, while new countries underperformed by c. 10%-20% in nearly every metric. SMTs and partner staff were the least likely to access resources, c. 50% in either case. Both are potential challenges: in the case of SMTs, because it may feed earlier challenges cited in lack of prioritisation; and in the case of partners, because SC (and particularly SCN and Norad) have placed substantial emphasis on strong partnerships for better sustainability.

Figure 19 - How effective are these training resources? (SC Country Office Online Survey)

- New: Very effective 33%, Somewhat effective 33%, I don't know -17%, Not at all effective -17%
- Old: Very effective 32%, Somewhat effective 41%, I don't know -18%, Not at all effective -9%
- Grand Total: Very effective 32%, Somewhat effective 39%, I don't know -18%, Not at all effective -11%

Legend: I don't know, Not at all effective, Somewhat effective, Very effective

The effectiveness of the resources, when accessed, were relatively positively appraised, with 66% of new portfolio countries, and 74% of historic countries indicating they were either somewhat or highly effective. However, the relatively high percentage of respondents indicating 'Somewhat effective' (39% overall), 'I don't know' (18%), and 'Not at all effective', highlight some potential for improvement. Reasons for these appraisals were also solicited in the online country office survey:

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Table 16 - Why [have you given this effectiveness rating]?

Positive[7]		Negative[8]	
Enabled Staff to Support Children	5	Not Monitored	3
Provides Children with Additional Tools	4	Needs Specific Evidence and Evaluation to be More Effective	1
Increased Staff Capabilities	3	Involves the Regular Participation of Children	1
Involves the Regular Participation of Children	3	Dispersed Workforce	1
Clear, Helpful Support	2	Participation of Children Still Not Considered Important	2
Helps Make Stakeholders Accountable	1	Staff Do Not Have Time To Complete Training	1
Accessible to Marginalised Children	1	No Single Resource for Staff	1
Developed from Experience	1	Further Training Required	1
Response / Feedback Mechanisms	1	Only Available in English	1

In the positive appraisals, general statements about improved capacity, understanding, and accountability as they relate to child participation were highlighted. One interesting case highlighted how their teams had created their own resources, drawing on experience, to improve the effectiveness of training programmes. This may be an interesting point for further exploration moving ahead.

On the negative appraisals, a range of challenges was highlighted, from insufficient staff time or resources, to limited multi-lingual support, and limited follow-up. These will receive more discussion in subsequent analyses.

Table 17 - What are the most and least effective means of capacity building in child participation? (SC Country Office Online Survey)

Most effective (top 10)		Least effective (top 10)	
Establish Child Participation Platforms, create spaces for engagement with children, training with kids	18	Training or tools given without follow-up, or means to ensure sustainability	18
Training for Staff (General)	25	Not Enjoyable, boring, overlong, repeated, or without practicality	14
Peer Guidance / Mentoring, working	13	When training is insufficiently targeted,	12

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[7] Somewhat & very effective
[8] I don't know & not at all effective

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with experienced staff		or well-structured to needs	
Strengthen Existing Platforms or networks or providers	11	Adult-Centred Approaches, insufficient inclusion of children	12
Training for Families	7	Inadequate resources dedicated (staff, funds, time)	4
Encourage Change in Cultural Outlook	7	Webinars	3
Child Participation Guidelines	6	Training Staff	3
Document Good Practices, keep records of activities and successes, can incorporate children	6	Not Inclusive	3
Webinars	5	Does Not Promote Child Rights	2
Recruit / Train dedicated Staff	5	Creating Dependencies	2
Include Child Participation in Standard Methodology	5		

Respondents to the online survey were asked to give (in open response format) their views on the top 5 most and least effective means of capacity building. Working with existing platforms

and providers (rather than starting from scratch), ensuring capacity building incorporates child participation, and general provision of training featured highly.

Photo 10 - First school day in Iraq

In the ineffective means section, training without follow-up, online-only (e.g. skype) training, or tools sent with no explanation, were the least effective means highlighted, followed by boring, repetitive, or cookie-cutter (contextually inappropriate) trainings. Highly theoretical training, highlighting in broad terms the benefits, focuses, policies, or obligations associated with child participation and child rights, were also highlighted as frustrating, and less than effective.

Building on this, qualitative discussions and analysis of the SCI staff development systems highlighted additional challenges, which were not discussed in the survey. SC staff at the country level is required to attend many trainings and meetings; this was characterised as frustrating for some, detracting from their ability to work on things they consider to be more important. In fact, during one FGD with staff, one member of staff stated: 'no more trainings, please!'. Such challenges must be borne in mind when endeavouring to increase capacity for child participation at the country level; if child participation becomes another obligatory training, among the myriad others, it is unclear the desired outcomes will be achieved. A more targeted approach may be appropriate, focusing heavily on mentoring and embedding of expertise at the country level; various research papers have highlighted how such on-the-job

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and mentorship training models are the most impactful with regard to increasing capacity (Marnoch, 2017).

Primary Survey Insights

The primary data collection exercise undertaken by the consultants across Cambodia, Iraq, and South Sudan has some insights into the effectiveness of delivery. It must be noted that Iraq is not yet a Norad portfolio country, but may nonetheless offer insights into general challenges in humanitarian/emergency contexts, as well as support SCN in targeting its future support. Cambodia is meant to serve as an example of a country whose child participation initiatives are relatively mature, and South Sudan of a country relatively new to SCN.

Figure 20, 21 & 22 - Child survey respondents indicating they received some form of SCI support (Primary Survey)
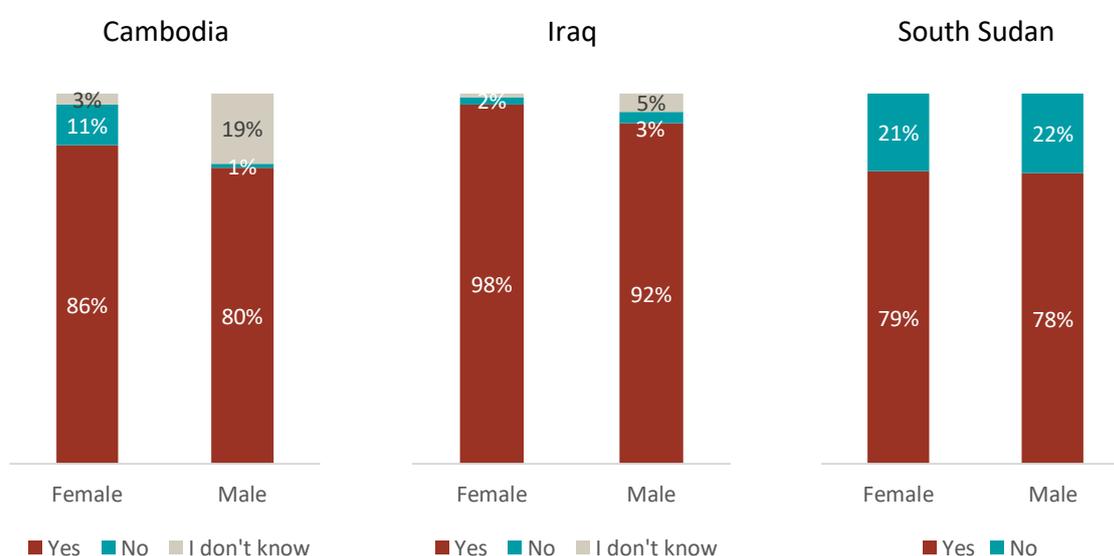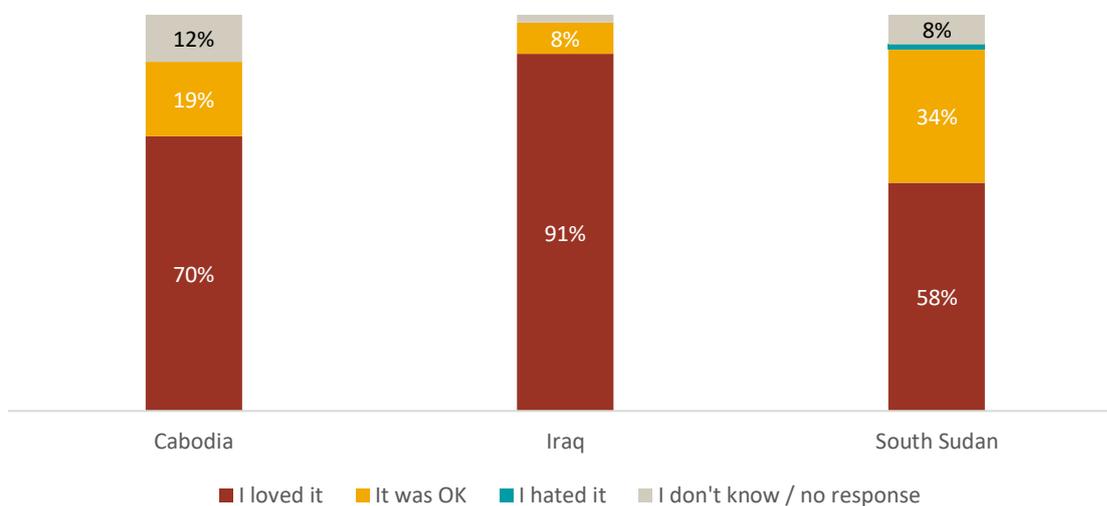

Table 18 - If yes, what?

If yes, what?		If yes, what?		If yes, what?	
School supplies	74	Education	182	School supplies	91
Support Kids	35	Language	52	Infrastructure	41
Awareness	29	Math	26	CRG and clubs	13
Education	15	Infrastructure	22	Hygiene	13
Infrastructure	11	School supplies	21	Awareness	10
Activities	6	Activities	21	Education	7
I don't know	5	Strengthening	19	Activities	5
		Awareness	6		
		Flexibility	3		
		Support Kids	2		
		Hygiene	1		

Among survey respondents, education-focused support was most common; this is perhaps unsurprising given most surveys were collected around schools; schools may not have received only SCN support, but a collection of support from other SC initiatives.

Figure 23 - Child evaluations – quality of provision (Primary Survey)
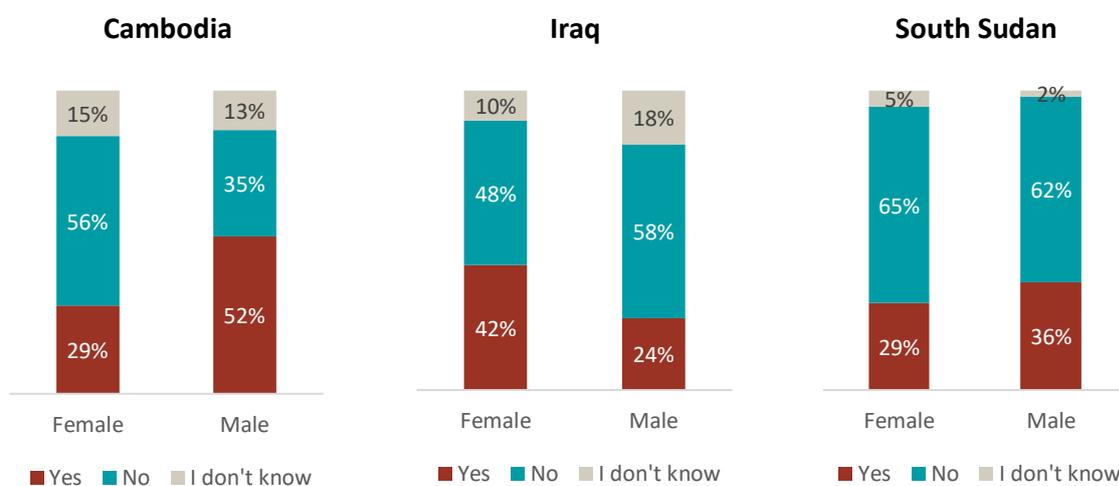

Cambodia	Iraq	South Sudan
What were the best parts of SCI's provision?	What were the best parts of SCI's provision?	What were the best parts of SCI's provision?
Key themes that emerged from this question included: Education facilities, books and materials, children's clubs and events**.	Children reported that the best parts of the SCI programme concerned education, such as the courses offered (particularly language education and mathematics), the games and activities available, the awareness training on hygiene, health, and safety, and other training courses. Limited mention was made of child rights or child participation programming, as in the other contexts studied.	In South Sudan, school facilities, supplies and general education support were most often mentioned, as well as CRG and child club programming.

When asked whether they liked the programming delivered by SC, appraisals were broadly positive. 70% of child respondents in Cambodia indicated they loved programming, though 19% indicated 'it was OK'. In Iraq, appraisals were more positive (91% indicating they loved it), which may be a consequence of the more challenging conditions faced by children in that country (at

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least in the visited locations) and the degree to which SCI's provision is a rare and welcome respite. In South Sudan, some potential challenges were highlighted, with only 58% indicating they loved the programming. In South Sudan, reach of delivery was something of a challenge, with the limited resources available to SC not achieving the depth of coverage many stakeholders desired. As a measure of effectiveness, child perceptions of the programmes may be a useful indicator, and highlight potential areas for improvement moving ahead. It may be the case that improved engagement with children, endeavouring to understand how to improve delivery for all children (not just those with substantial engagement in child clubs) may be an appropriate way forward. The degree of engagement across survey respondents is highlighted in the next chart.

Figure 24, 25 & 26 - Child respondents indicating SCI has asked their advice or opinions about something (Primary Survey)

If yes, about what?	If yes, about what?	If yes, about what?
Most children reported that they were asked about their courses, school, and study materials, and what support they require in their education.	Advice was solicited about courses, about how to improve their learning, how to best prepare for exams, how to select and understand materials, and behaviour-support-related questions.	The most common advice comprised suggestions surrounding education, and what school supplies or infrastructure children need, followed by discussions of child rights and peacebuilding.

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Photo 11 – Children sit on stairs in the refugee camp

In Cambodia, rates of engagement with SC were high relative to the other countries (29% female and 52% male), while South Sudan indicated 29% female and 36% male, and Iraq indicated 42% female and 24% male. Cambodia's relative performance may well emerge from its status as a more mature country in SCN's portfolio, with qualitative findings indicating children are engaged more often in community-level structures independent of SC's support (though many received support in the past). In South Sudan, however, qualitative discussions with children and other stakeholders indicated engagement with children, and the solicitation of their views, was rarely undertaken outside SC-led activities and structures, and the same in Iraq; This may indicate that SC's provision is one of the few mechanisms that engage directly with children in Iraq and South Sudan, and that local structures and institutions may require substantial additional capacity building.

All three of these charts highlight a potential challenge: much participation, and those activities that may inform design of programming, may draw on the views of a very limited subset of children (those directly participating in child clubs or SC-driven activities). Such approaches may be impacting on child views of programming presented in Figure 23.

Another challenge was also identified: the relative rates of consultation between boys and girls. Gender parity, even with the relatively mature country of Cambodia, may be an area of focus moving ahead.

Approaches to M&E

Approaches to monitoring and evaluation were also explored, both through the document review, and through discussions with country-level and international stakeholders.

Figure 27 - Child participation indicators in results framework (Country Document Review)
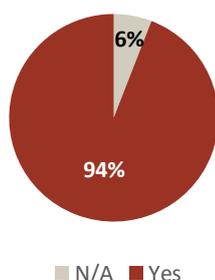

N/A **Yes**

Table 19 - Sectors covered

|	
CRG and Advocacy	15
Education	13
Child Protection	5
Health, WASH	4

All countries submitting a results framework had indicators relating to child participation; these were largely embedded across education and CRG, with some having child protection and health/WASH indicators (five and four countries respectively).

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|	
Child supplementary reports completed and submitted	12
Children included in governance/leadership exercises (e.g. community council meetings, parliament meetings)	10
Establishment of school clubs or councils, or number of meetings/participants of these	10
Policy outcomes (school, community, or national government, budgets, etc.)	7
Qty. of advocacy, promotion activities incorporating children, or quantity of children participating in these	7
Participation in training by children (e.g. psychosocial support, protection, workshops, PFA, skills education, etc.)	5
Participation in internal planning or projects	4
Marginalised, vulnerable participation in child protection	3
Improved knowledge, skills or capacities (life skills, confidence, protection, CR, etc)	3
Child-informed research or M&E undertaken, or quantity of children participating in these	2
Children consulted in school operations or policies (either qty. of consultations, or quantity of children participation, or policy outcomes – e.g. good conduct policy)	2
Policy implementation by governments or schools	2
Creation of or participation of youth participation outlets after graduation	2
Adult training (participation, psychosocial, etc.)	2
Teachers or schools incorporating child participation, or pupil-centred teaching methods	2
Participation in CR events (e.g. child parliament conventions)	1
Creation of child reporting or feedback mechanisms	1
Improved reporting of safety and wellbeing, or reduced bullying	1
Reporting incorporating child views (usually qty. or percentage of reports)	1

What is striking about most of these indicators is their focus on outputs, rather than outcomes. Some discussion to this end was held with international stakeholders (generally SCN staff, or experienced internationals in some country offices), and has been observed by the consultancy team on other assignments, regarding country team understanding of the distinction between outputs and outcomes/impacts. The below table breaks down the above indicators according to their status as an output or outcome indicator:

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Figure 28 - Percentage of all logframe indicators comprising outputs of outcomes/impacts (Country Document Review)
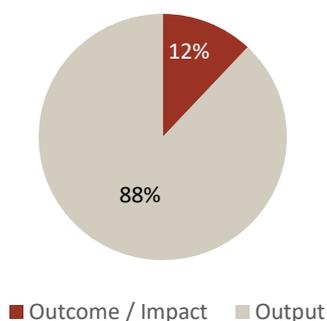
88% of coded logframe indicators were output focused, while only 12% were focused on impacts and outcomes. Additional analysis was undertaken to understand whether there were any patterns across countries in this regard, with the following results.

Figure 29 - Country-wise breakdown of logframe indicator types (Output v Outcome / Impact) (Country Document Review)
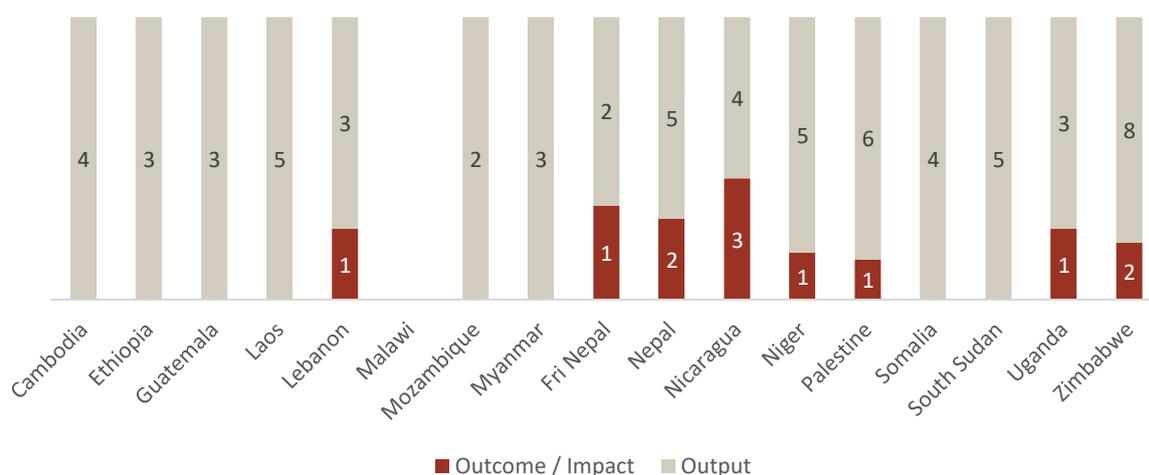
Nine countries in the portfolio had child participation indicators, which were entirely output driven. A number of challenges may result from this: first, that an output focus may limit the degree to which implementing stakeholders are focused on achieving long term impacts (INTRAC, 2015); this has been highlighted as a challenge in a range of relevant literature (Perrin, 2012). Second, this may obfuscate challenges and limited impact arising from provision, limiting the degree to which real learning can emerge from M&E activities.

The potential consequences of this focus are explored in more detail in the section on child participation's '**Error! Reference source not found.**'.

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Even in those indicators, which are focused on outcomes/impacts, there can be challenges. In some cases, indicators are subject to somewhat vague wording and unclear methods of measurement and calculation (e.g. a standard Norad indicator: '% improvement in a sense of safety and wellbeing'), or unclear means of substantiation (e.g. indicators looking at government implementation of policy). This can pose further challenges in effective M&E even when indicators are at least nominally focused on impacts and outcomes.

Photo 12 – Children Playing in Kirkuk

9 UN Requirements for Child Participation

As discussed in the introduction, the nine UN Requirements underpin much of the work SCN implements in this area. These requirements are enumerated in detail below:

Req. 1 **Transparent and informative**

Children must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views freely. Their views should be given due weight, and they should be informed about how this participation will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact.

Req. 2 **Voluntary**

Children should never be coerced into expressing views against their wishes and they should be informed that they can cease involvement at any stage.

Req. 3 **Respectful**

Children's views have to be treated with respect and children should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities. Adults working with children should acknowledge, respect and build on good examples of children's participation, for instance, in their contributions to the family, school, culture and the work environment. They also need an understanding of the socio-economic, environmental and cultural context of children's lives. Persons and Organisations working for and with children should also respect children's views with regard to participation in public events.

Req. 4 **Relevant**

Opportunities must be available for children to express their views on issues of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities. Children's participation should build on their personal knowledge – the information and insights that children have about their own lives, their communities and the issues that affect them.

Req. 5 **Child friendly**

The approaches to working with children should be adapted to their capacities. Adequate time and resources should be made available to ensure that children are adequately prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views. Consideration needs to be given to the fact that children will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities.

Req. 6 **Inclusive**

Participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination and encourage opportunities for marginalised children, both girls and boys, to be involved. Children are not a homogeneous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds. Programmes also need to ensure that they

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are culturally sensitive to children from all communities.

Req. 7   **Supported by training**

Adults need preparation, skills and training support to facilitate effective child participation. They need to be equipped with listening and collaborative skills that enable them to effectively engage and work jointly with children in accordance with their evolving capacities.

Children themselves can be involved as trainers and facilitators on how to promote effective participation. They require capacity-building to strengthen their skills ineffective awareness of their rights, training in organising meetings, raising funds, dealing with the media, public speaking and advocacy.

Req. 8   **Safe and sensitive**

In certain situations, expression of views may involve risks. Adults have a responsibility towards the children with whom they work and must take every precaution to minimise the risk of violence abuse and exploitation of children or any other negative consequence resulting from their participation.

Actions necessary to provide appropriate protection will include the development of a clear child protection strategy which recognises the particular risks faced by some groups of children, and the extra barriers they face in obtaining help.

Children must be aware of their right to be protected from harm and know where to seek help if needed. Investment in working with families and communities is important in order to build understanding of the value and implications of participation and to minimise the risks to which children may otherwise be exposed.

Req. 9   **Accountable**

A commitment to follow-up and evaluation is essential. For example, in any research or consultative process, children must be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and, where necessary, they must be provided with the opportunity to challenge and influence the analysis of the findings. Children are also entitled to clear feedback on how their participation has influenced any outcomes. Wherever appropriate, children should be given the opportunity to participate in follow-up processes or activities. Monitoring and evaluation of children's participation needs to be undertaken, where possible, with children themselves.

Please note that exploring the degree to which child participation initiatives meet the nine requirements is a substantial challenge, given that country reporting rarely touches on these matters in substantial detail (only one document made any mention of these), and establishing them quantitatively lies outside the resources available to this research. As such, many of the below discussions are qualitative in nature, drawing on the observations of the consultancy team, analyses in other sections of this report, and the qualitative discussions as appropriate.

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Req. 1   **Transparent and informative**

This standard is particularly challenging to establish; if SC's guidance is being implemented as designed, then it is likely this standard has been achieved. However, analyses in other parts of this document cast some doubt over the degree to which such guidance is effectively disseminated and implemented at the ground level. Furthermore, challenges in effective understanding of child participation (on the part of children, implementing partners, and other key stakeholders) poses further challenges in this regard; transparency necessitates understanding.

The most that can be said about this standard, with available data, is that it is achieved unevenly across the portfolio, with understanding and effective capacity building comprising the basic necessities (though not necessarily indicators of) achievement.

Req. 2   **Voluntary**

This standard another one to challenge with a high degree of certainty, and at best available evidence indicates achievement will have been uneven. Qualitative discussions with international and country-level stakeholders as well as the team's experiences in the field support this. Some concerns highlighted include use of incentives to encourage children to participate, or (in the case of South Sudan) some perceptions that teachers may select pupils to participate in relevant activities; many children who had potentially limited understanding of the purposes underpinning the activities (see standard 1). On the other hand, the Cambodian case was one where participation did indeed appear to be voluntary. The degree to which these cases are representative of the portfolio as a whole is questionable. Nonetheless, a redoubled focus on ensuring understanding and implementation of the nine requirements maybe important moving ahead.

Req. 3   **Respectful**

Inasmuch as children's views are solicited, this appears to have been the case in all available evidence and documentation; the views of children tend to be respectfully engaged with, even though some have characterised this engagement as somewhat paternalistic at times; this was observed by the consultants in relevant engagements, and was highlighted by some SCN stakeholders during discussions.

Req. 4   **Relevant**

Relevance of activities does appear to broadly be accomplished (as far as the data allows such an assessment). However, some discussions (particularly in the relevance section) highlight that activity could be somewhat better aligned in some contexts.

Req. 5   **Child friendly**

Once again, child friendliness of activities does appear to broadly be accomplished (as far as the data allows such an assessment). However, some discussions (particularly in the relevance and other discussions in the effectiveness sections) highlight that activity could be somewhat better aligned to child friendliness. In some cases, the creation of a purpose-designated child-friendly space may not be possible, requiring the development of effective strategies to bridge the gap between children's needs and the adult-focussed

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context can be important. One stakeholder recounted challenges faced in bridging this gap in Mozambique, where SC worked to provide the child parliament opportunities to engage with the national parliament on a range of child-centred issues. The format was characterised as highly formal, rigid, and not typically 'child friendly', but that staff guidance, effective preparation, and strong support bridged this gap to ensure child participation was undertaken with relative effectiveness. In other cases where such challenges are faced, the Mozambique case may be instructive.

Req. 6   **Inclusive**

Inclusivity does appear to reinforce much of the policy and programme design underpinning SC's child participation initiatives. However, relative rates of male-female engagement and participation highlighted elsewhere may indicate this is an area that could use a redoubled focus.

Req. 7   **Supported by training**

As highlighted in the section on approaches to capacity building, it does appear much activity is supported by training for adults and children; however, the effectiveness and appropriateness of these may be a challenge in some cases. It may be appropriate to revisit approaches to training in light of some of those findings.

Req. 8   **Safe and sensitive**

It does appear that relevant policies and strategies for protection exist in all countries, indicating that at the very least the framework for the achievement of this standard exists. However, some challenges in this regard have been highlighted (e.g. children being left on their own, with limited supervision in adult-oriented meetings, or potentially unsafe learning spaces in some contexts). Different cultural understandings of child safety may also underpin relative challenge. Once again, revisiting of these approaches, and the degree to which policy effects on-the-ground implementation may be appropriate.

Req. 9   **Accountable**

Preceding challenges in M&E and incorporation of children in planning and implementation link closely to this standard. Such challenges pose barriers to effective accountability, and may require a revisiting of how accountability is implemented.

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Outcome Achievement

This section endeavours to explore the degree to which child participation initiatives are achieving their targets across the portfolio. This section makes heavy use of submitted programme documents.

Figure 30 - Review of country documents reporting on logframe indicator achievement (Country Document Review)
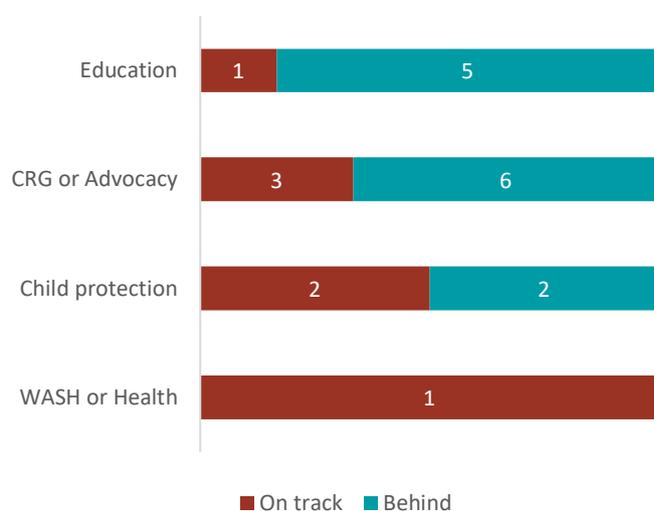
Table 21 - Rationale for why 'behind'

| On track | Behind |

Staff turnover	6
Volatile environment	6
Budget reassessed	5
Priority changes (SCI)	4
Community attitudes	3
Child labour	3
Politics	2
Poverty	2
Absenteeism	1
Far distance to school	1
Initial delay in launch	1
Partnership change	1
Child marriage	1

Across the submitted reports, CRG outputs and education outputs were the furthest behind. Though other programmes faced similar challenges. It must be noted these figures incorporate the most recent data available, meaning that some reports are from as far back as 2016; it may be the case that the pace of implementation has accelerated.

The reasons underpinning delayed accomplishment of indicators comprised staff turnover, environmental volatility, reallocation of budgets across priorities, and priority changes. Also important to child participation, community attitudes toward programming may underpin some delays, as well as local political environments. These are challenges which may be useful for discussion and re-visitation in future delivery.

Earlier discussion regarding alignment of indicators with outcomes and impacts deserve some additional attention here; even in many of those output indicators that can be characterised as relatively 'easy' to achieve, delays and challenges were faced. Re-alignment of outcome targets to focus on impact may face even more substantial challenges in accomplishment given some of the findings described here.

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IMPACT

This section endeavours to explore what evidence exists for the impact of mainstreaming child participation in programs supported by Save the Children Norway, and what types of impacts are most often highlighted in the various sources of evidence.

Nearly all portfolio countries showed some form of impact in their annual, midterm, and/or other reviewed reporting that there had been an impact from child participation.

Figure 31 - Countries where SCN reports described the impact of child participation (Country Document Review)
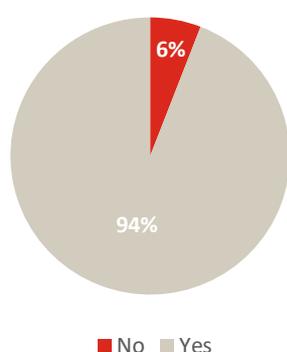

No Yes

Table 22 - Description of impacts cited

Development of children's networks, clubs, councils	12
Successful advocacy	12
Improved soft skills (confidence, teamwork, 'ability to advocate for own rights', etc.)	12
Improved education	10
Change in community attitudes about CP	9
Government implemented child recommendations	7
Child involvement in government	6
Increased resources	5
CP guidelines implemented	4
Improved accountability	4
Training given (psychosocial, CP, rights)	4
Child reports submitted	3
Acceptance of inclusion	3
Not specifically mentioned	1

However, as the data in the chart above suggests, when these reports describe the impact of child participation they are mostly detailing the outputs of child-focused programming (e.g. development of children's networks, clubs, councils; improved soft skills; improved education) rather than the impact of children's participation in decision-making and programme development. These findings link with other discussions in the Monitoring and Evaluation section of this report.

One key exception to this is the response 'successful advocacy', which appears to engage with the increased voice of children in advocating their positions – although the response does not

provide insight about what or to what source of authority (NGOs, parents, government, etc.) the children were advocating, nor how success is defined.

While outputs like the development of children's networks, clubs and councils, as well as improved education are positive developments, they do not directly represent an impact from child participation and the programmes in which it is embedded. However, many of the indicators for this programming are geared more towards facilitating and measuring such outputs rather than the actual impact of child participation. Moreover, the real impacts of child participation – including active and meaningful engagement of children and youth in decision-making and legislation or policies directly attributable to this involvement – are impacts that can only really be understood and fully measured over the long-term, while the time scale of this review and associated programming is much more short-term with limited additional evidence on long-term impact available (aside from case studies whose representativeness can be a challenge to argue) (Denscombe, 2010).

Some policy outcomes (and potential impacts) appear to be more directly attributable to child participation (e.g. local governance structure budget modifications, or acceptance of policies), which can be a positive indication of impact. However, national-level policy and governance changes happen within complex systems, with multiple engaged stakeholders and organisations; direct attribution to child participation is a substantial challenge, and one for which there is insufficient evidence to state definitively. Nonetheless, in many reports and country documents, any changes in complex national systems are occasionally attributed to child participation initiatives with limited justification.

Figure 32 - How impactful do you consider child participation to be at each of the following levels? (Online Survey)
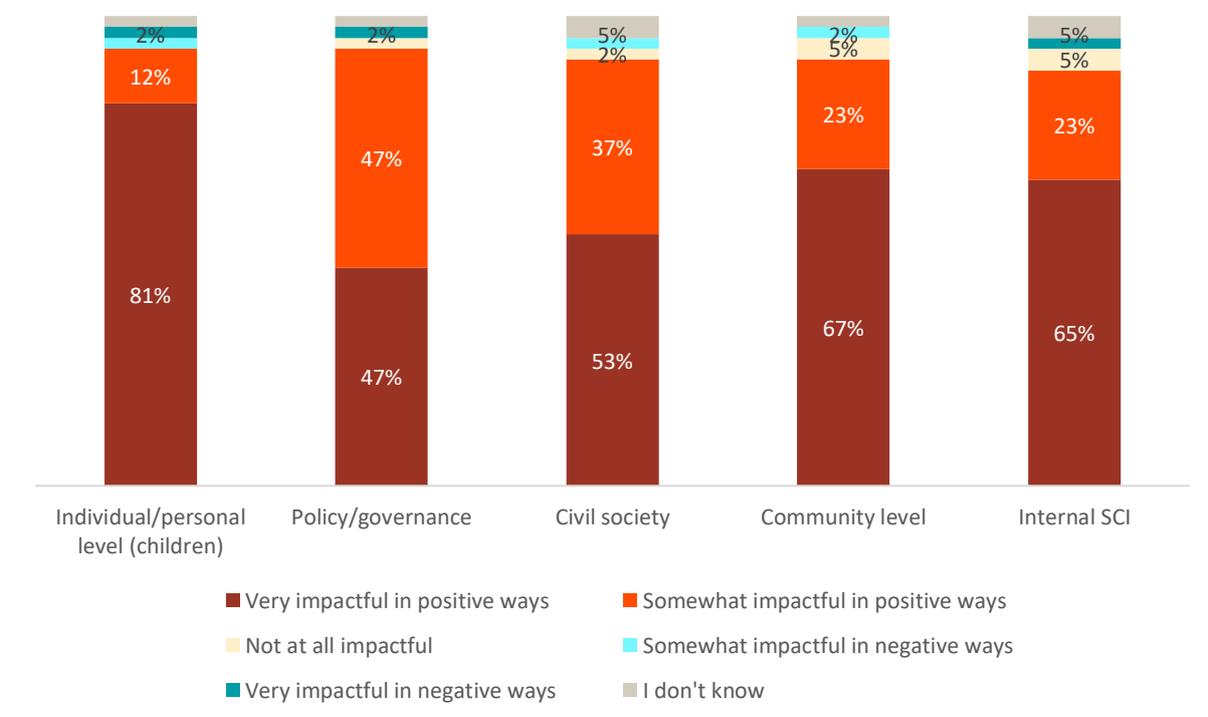
Overall, respondents were more likely to consider that child participation was very impactful in positive ways in relation to the 'individual/personal level (children)' and least likely to consider

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that child participation was very impactful in positive ways at the levels of 'policy/governance' and 'civil society'. Once again, the respondents to this survey largely comprised those who have a vested interest, and personal stake, in the impact of participation initiatives and the programmes in which it is embedded, and must therefore be approached with a degree of caution.

It is possible that this difference is connected to the distinction between short-term and long-term impacts of child participation as discussed above. The impact of child participation on the power and capacity of children would likely be much more immediate with regard to individual, smaller-scale decision-making. However, creating the capacity for and community acceptance of child participation in issues of policy, governance, and civil society would likely take years of building up institutions and working to change community mindsets with regard to this area. Similarly, the creation of a cadre of engaged, empowered youth is a long-term exercise, outside the capacity of much monitoring activity to effectively establish. It may therefore be the case that the above assessments relate to smaller-scale, and shorter-term impacts which have yet to be strongly linked to longer term outcomes and impacts; the results of the below table appear to support this.

'We are being included in political processes, we tell ministers our opinions, but we don't know what they are doing about it, or if they are really taking us into account.'

– YOUNG PERSON, SRI LANKA

'We don't want to get on a moving train, we want journey with you.'

– YOUNG PERSON, SOUTH AFRICA, MEMBER OF THE SAVE THE CHILDREN UK GLOBAL PANEL 2011

Stakeholders were also asked to highlight the ways in which child participation is impactful; the results of this open question were coded and placed in the below table.

Table 23 - How, if at all, has child participation had an impact at the 'individual/personal level' for children? (Online Survey)

Empowers Children	7
Builds Confidence	4
Positive for Education	4
Develops Leadership Skill	2
Positively Affects Behaviour	2
Children Have an Open Mind	1
Peer Education More Effective	1

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Improves Life Chances for Marginalised Children	1
Positive for Future Employment	1
Create Life Projects	1
Force for Change	1

These results suggest that the initiatives intended to increase child participation in decision-making seems to have laid the groundwork – at least on the individual level, if not at the institutional-level – for increasing children's meaningful participation in decision-making. Results like 'empowers children' and 'builds confidence' can be seen as positive.

However, it is unclear these impacts would be assessed effectively (see previous discussions on approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation). It may be the case that respondents – as SCI employees engaging with initiatives aimed at improving child participation – provided responses in-line with associated 'buzzwords' and expected outcomes without substantial proof that such changes actually occurred. This possibility – a fundamental flaw of the style of questioning and sample of respondents in this particular case – should be kept in mind.

Primary data collection in Cambodia highlighted an area to consider with regard to impact on the individual/personal level for children. This issue will be discussed in greater detail elsewhere within this report, but the primary takeaway is that the tendency of child participation initiatives to attract bright and motivated students may create a sort of 'elite capture' to the exclusion of the concerns, needs, and perspectives of children from other, less-represented groups. Ensuring that the positive elements of programming described above – empowerment, leadership skills, etc. – are available to and (as much as possible) benefit all children in a community may be an important consideration in the development and implementation of relevant programming in the future.

Table 24 - How, if at all, has child participation had an impact at the 'policy/governance level'? (Online Survey)

Positive		Negative	
Children's Views Inform Policy	8	Poor Implementation	2
Influences Budget Allocation	2	Lack of Child Participation Guidelines	1
Promotes Good Governance	2		
Improves Quality of Life	1		
Children Protect Their Own Rights	1		
Participation of Children from Different Institutions	1		

The most common 'positive' response was that 'children's views inform policy'. However, again, while smaller-scale or more local policy impacts appear to be better supported, national-level changes remain a challenge to link directly to child participation. The 'negative' responses appear to be more concrete, pointing to issues that could be addressed and improved upon during future programming in this area: 'poor implementation' and 'lack of child participation guidelines'. These two responses can be seen as related to one another; a lack of child participation guidelines may negatively impact implementation, limiting potential impact. These

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two areas represent areas of weaknesses that likely could be targeted and improved upon during future programming.

Issues regarding corruption, nepotism, and institutional strength and legitimacy – as well as other contextually-specific issues regarding governance and policy-making – raise barriers to the achievement of change to, and through, policy and governance. These factors may be exacerbated further by ongoing conflict or other security concerns, and should be considered in programme design, and in endeavouring to ensure programme targets are realistic and contextually appropriate.

Table 25 - How, if at all, has child participation had an impact at the 'civil society level'? (Online Survey)

Positive		Negative	
Influences Organisations	3	Lack of Commitment	1
Participation Required for Effective Functioning	3		
Increases Accountability	2		
Changes Perception of Children	2		
Advocacy	2		
Informs Programming	1		
Better Family Relationships	1		
More Aware of What They Can Do	1		

The 'positive' impacts described by respondents in relation to the civil society level can be relatively vague, referring to 'influence', 'accountability', and 'perceptions'. Overall, these suggest that while respondents may have felt that there was positive impact in this area, that they could not provide strong evidence to how or why this happened; such challenges were further highlighted in the country document review. However, this is in line with the previous discussion regarding long-term and short-term impact, as building the institutions for, and capacity of, children to participate meaningfully in decision-making at the civil society level would likely take a concerted effort over years – which is beyond the capacity of this review to address.

The one negative response in regard to impact at the civil society level refers to 'lack of commitment', which appeared to refer to a lack of commitment to child participation approaches and principles on the part of local CSOs.

Table 26 - How, if at all, has child participation had an impact at the 'community level'? (Online Survey)

Positive		Negative	
Creates Empowered Citizens	3	Communities Not Fully Engaged	1
Protects Child Rights	3		

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Children Influence Social Norms	2
Changes Perception of Children	2
Community Members More Active	2
Capacity Building	1
Work with Community to Find Solutions	1
Children Raise Awareness of their Issues	1
Active Participation	1
Improves Life of Marginalised Children	1

Respondents were more likely to indicate that child participation had been very impactful in a positive way in relation to the community level than the policy/governance or civil society levels. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the smaller scale of 'community' impact as compared to something more large-scale like government policy or civil society. Again, it is also more likely that the impact of child participation in decision-making could be seen in the short-term and therefore more appropriate to measure in relation to this review.

Photo 13 - Children play among ruins

The 'positive' explanations for perceptions of positive impact appear to be more focused on individual factors like creating 'empowered citizens' like those discussed previously in relation to impact at the individual/personal level. Rather than referring to the impact that child participation has had on community-level decision making, these impacts appear to refer more to the outputs of SCN's work to empower and build capacity for children – and organisations run by children – rather than direct impact on community-level decision-making itself. In sum, it refers to the impact of laying the groundwork for future impactful participation, but there is limited scope (within short project and M&E timeframes) for linking shorter-term impacts to the grand vision of change child participation initiatives endeavour to achieve.

Again, this does not imply that the initiatives were not impactful at helping children participate in decision-making processes at the community level (or any other level). Rather, it points to the output-driven nature of the indicators, as well as the short-term nature of the programming and available evidence. It is very possible that the impact of programming on empowering children to raise awareness of issues could, in the medium- or long-term, have an impact on community- and even national-level decision-making, but there was simply insufficient evidence to establish this linkage with any degree of certainty.

The only negative response reported, 'communities not fully engaged', was only mentioned by one respondent; however, emphasising community involvement, and ensuring relevance and cultural appropriateness of interventions, may be important to remember in relation to future programme design and implementation.

One relevant issue (which may have relevance to other countries) was observed in South Sudan during primary data collection. To summarise, traditional attitudes regarding children's roles in society and capacity to contribute effectively are sometimes curtailed – and 'appropriate' attitudes and interactions between children and adults are narrowly defined. This emphasises the point made above that child participation must not only be taught to children, but also normalised to adults if children are to have a meaningful role in decision-making at the community level. In this vein, some stakeholders indicated a focus on the teaching and child developmental components to these stakeholders (framing adults as teachers of children, rather than recipients of input) may be a useful means of 'getting a foot in the door' with child participation.

Table 27 - How, if at all, has child participation had an impact at the 'internal SCI level'? (Online Survey)

Positive		Negative	
Informs Programming	5	Not Fully Mainstream	1
Informs Policies	4	Just Beginning	1
Increases Ability to Change Lives	2	Lack of Management Commitment	1
Ensures Accountability	1		
Better Informed	1		
Capacity Building	1		
Advocacy	1		
Children Respected by Staff	1		

Respondents indicated that child participation was very impactful in a positive way at the internal SCI level about as frequently as they indicated this was the case at the community level. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that SCI interact with communities at the community level. However, one might expect the rates at which this was considered very impactful to be higher at the internal SCI level given Save the Children's focus on child participation and development of programming meant to increase child participation in decision-making.

Overall, the positive impacts of child participation given for the internal SCI level are far more concrete and seemingly experience based (if not evidence based); they recall earlier discussions regarding a lack of evidence in this regard, or that not all countries may engage in such practice. Respondents pointed to the impact of child participation on informing programming and policies, which indicate actual impacts rather than results of outputs (empowering children, etc.). The negative points mentioned appear to be in line with areas where this emphasis on child participation is just beginning or has not yet been fully integrated. Ensuring that there is a

commitment from management to mainstream child participation moving forward may help ensure that child participation continues to be taken seriously and used to inform policy.

One thing to bear in mind with trying to maximise the impact of child participation with regard to the internal SCI level was highlighted during primary data in Iraq – and has been discussed elsewhere in this report. Some staff at the field level appeared to face challenges understanding the meaning and intention of child participation, including what effective child participation would look like. This issue is likely not isolated to Iraq – although levels of understanding likely vary from country to country or even office to office – and could stymie impact as well as long-term sustainability of integrating child participation. Ensuring that all involved staff members are well-informed in the rationale and methods of meaningful child participation could be important in regard to long-term impact (building on previous discussions of effective capacity building).

As a caveat, again, these responses may reflect answers that respondents know to be in line with SCI's policies in this area – rather than what is actually happening with regard to meaningful participation of children in decision-making at the SCI internal level. Ensuring that stated policies and approaches are effectively implemented into practice is and will remain a key component of building child participation on the SCI internal level.

Primary Survey Insights

In keeping with SCI's efforts to incorporate child views in its work, it may be appropriate to review their views of programming impact. Many of the findings from primary research with children reflect this.

Figure 33, 34 & 35 - Child respondents – Has your life changed as a result of SCI programming? (Primary Survey)
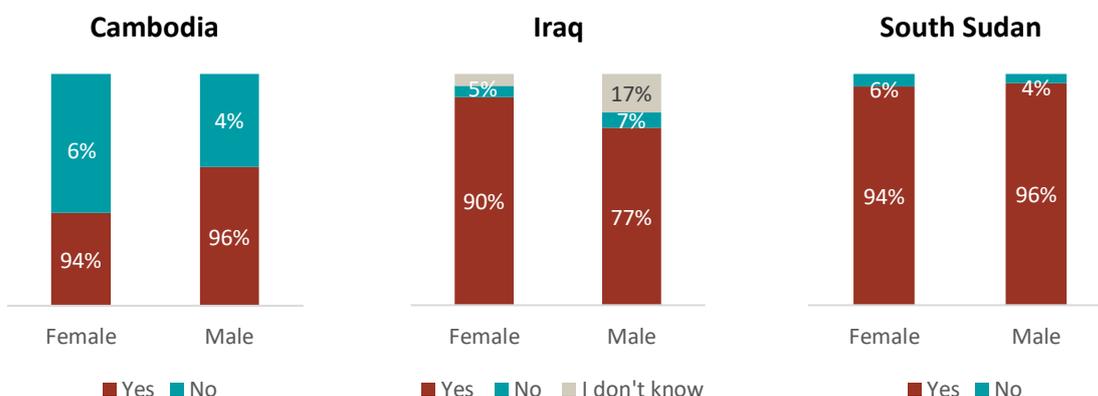
Across all locations, a large majority of child respondents indicated that their life had changed as a result of SCI's programming. This rate was somewhat lower in Iraq, particularly for male respondents. While Iraq is not yet in SCN's Norad portfolio, these findings may provide insight for future programming.

Within the primary survey, children were also asked to explain why they considered programming to be impactful (or not), with the most common themes comprising:

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Cambodia

Provision of generic aid and support was by far the major cause cited, but education and awareness (of child rights issues) were also felt to be important by many respondents.

Iraq

The main areas in which respondents saw their lives change were the following (listed in the order of their importance): education, better behaviour, improved mental health, increased their future aspirations, and facilitated better social relations.

South Sudan

Improved school facilities and school supplies, impacting education were frequently mentioned. The improved quality of education itself was also felt to be a significant driver of this change, followed by a greater awareness of child rights. As with the effectiveness data, this awareness is not necessarily separate from educational components and together these are likely to be significantly driven by Child Participation activities.

Once again, many of these impacts appear to be shorter-term in nature, but do align with the overarching targets and goals of SCN provision.

Parents were also asked whether SCN programming has impacted on their children, with the following results:

Figure 36, 37 & 38 - Have you seen any changes in your children as a result of SC programming?
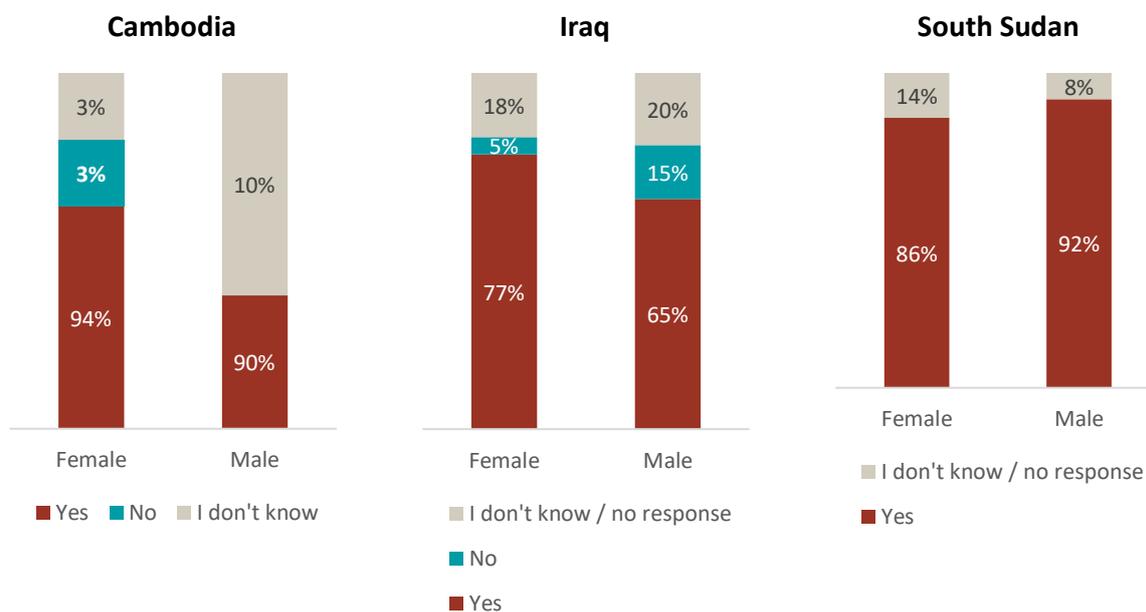
Consistent with the results provided by children (see above), the majority of adult respondents indicated that their children had changed as a result of SCI programming. Again, this rate was somewhat lower in Iraq, and may offer an area of focus in future programming. Parent responses to how their children had changed broadly comprised the following:

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Cambodia

Mothers noticed greater independence whereas fathers noticed a marked improvement in behaviour, while many parents cited greater interest in schooling.

Iraq

The majority of parents said they witnessed an improvement on the education of their children, particularly that they have better English skills. Some claimed this is visible in their grades and in the fact that they speak more English words at home. Most also say children are better behaved as a result, since they are more respectful, more ambitious, more confident, have better manners and show desire to go to school. Some mentioned better hygiene, and improved health.

South Sudan

Both fathers and mothers attributed nearly all changes to a shift in education – some of which includes physical changes such as infrastructure and supplies as well as financial aid, but fathers saw the quality of education as a factor. Mothers cited behavioural changes.

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Summary of Highlighted Impacts and Outcomes

Drawing on the results of qualitative discussions with child and adult stakeholders, a range of additional impacts and outcomes were highlighted:

Psychosocial Health, Wellbeing, Resilience, Improved Engagement

The programmes, and embedded child participation, genuinely did appear to have positive relationships with improved psychosocial health and wellbeing, particularly in areas where child consultation and engagement informed a broader set of relevant activities undertaken by the organisation. Such outcomes are not to be undervalued, and may be particularly useful in contexts like Iraq where the psychosocial health of children is particularly vulnerable, or where children have limited opportunities for fun, play, and to engage with other children in a healthy, structured format.

High-Level Champions

Child participation had high-placed advocates and champions, keen to drive wider implementation and impact of child participation. This was particularly true in places like Iraq and South Sudan. Concrete steps appear to have been taken to achieve these ends, with stakeholders citing a positive shift in policies and approaches in the country offices, though some additional work may need to be done; availability of resources was one area where challenges were highlighted.

Psychological and Behaviour Changes

KII, FGD and survey data broadly indicated that participation initiatives had heightened reported confidence levels in children. Children were further reported as being more articulate, well-behaved, and civic-minded, with parents and commune leaders alike suggesting that they had observed such changes.

Community Solidarity

Improved community cohesion and 'harmony' was cited as a key outcome of child participation initiatives, particularly in Cambodia. Child engagements with, and efforts at advocacy to, communities, parents, and religious/community leaders were cited as one of the primary drivers of this. As a result, children have reported how parents were kinder to them, how teachers were more supportive, and how children became more inclusive.

Broad Acceptance in Community-based Governance and Discourse Institutions

In Prey Veng, Cambodia, stakeholders reported that of the 200 people who attend the local public forum, 50 are children; this serves as both an indicator of the degree to which child participation is accepted as part of the local governance system, but is likely also a potential indicator of the degree to which children feel such participation can be impactful. Other countries highlighted similar local governance successes.

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Inclusion in School Improvement Programming, with Demonstrable Account Taken of Child Inputs

Some school improvement programmes involved child participation, with children holding a core role in multiple level of the process from needs assessment, to implementation, to design; it appears that SC may have achieved outcomes with regard to encouraging selected governments to actively (and independently) solicit the inputs and views of children in these processes; Cambodia is one key case of this.

School Enrolment Improvements Building on Both Advocacy and Community Financial Supports

Child participation interventions appear to have resulted in improved enrolment in schools in some countries (though, in the absence of clear control groups, this cannot be stated definitively), with relevant child participation initiatives identified in KIIs and FGDs as key drivers of improvements across child welfare and protection practices, as well of schools being safe, clean and appropriate learning spaces. There was also discussion of how child participation and advocacy may have informed community efforts at providing financial and social supports to those children who might otherwise not be able to attend school for reasons of economic or other hardships (particularly in Cambodia). While such practice appears to predate and operate somewhat independently of child participation initiatives, there did appear to be interaction between community advocacy and needs assessment undertaken by children and the specific approaches and actions undertaken by these broader community mechanisms.

Wider Recognition of Initiatives, Participants, and Outcomes

Children involved with some of the child clubs have had the opportunity to have their contributions taken to the international stage. In Cambodia, members of one supported student group won an award for best documentary film, which was then disseminated to international audiences, while in South Sudan, a former beneficiary independently led the country's youth UNCRC supplementary report; it is worth mentioning that the national government did not meet its obligation in this regard, and this youth supplementary report is the only one engaging international audiences. Once again, these cases may not be representative of child participation initiatives as a whole, but are nonetheless encouraging.

Violence

While not linked completely to child participation initiatives, such initiatives as a component of the broader delivery strategy were broadly credited in qualitative interviews and some survey responses with reduction of domestic violence affecting children and families in target areas.

Grades

In Cambodia and South Sudan, teachers, parents, student leaders and commune leaders (not to mention the testaments of children themselves) stated that children's grades had improved as a result of child participation and CRG initiatives. Independent of enrolment numbers, stakeholders indicated that teaching practices had been improved to not only improve pedagogy, but also understanding and implementation of child protection and participation principles and approaches in the classroom. These were considered to have not only raised standards of instruction, but also with making schools places where children can feel more safe, secure, and involved in their learning.

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Awareness of, and Advocacy for, Rights

KIIs and FGDs identified changes in children's awareness of their rights, and their willingness to advocate for them with parents and other stakeholders; UNCRC rights featured highly in this regard, and were a common feature of discussions with child beneficiaries and government representatives alike. Most stakeholders interviewed similarly expressed a desire for national development toward achievement of the UNCRC. It must again be highlighted here that awareness of rights does not necessarily indicate achievement of them, but is still an encouraging indicator.

Improved Understanding of Needs and Priorities

Engagements between youth groups and government, across multiple countries, was credited with promoting improved transparency and mutual understanding. Government representatives indicated they gained substantial clarity on the real needs and challenges facing many of the young people in their jurisdiction, while youth gained a stronger understanding of the challenges facing the local government officials in seeking to drive change through institutional means. For youth, this may have resulted in a clearer understanding of what is possible to achieve, and what must be done to drive further progress toward achieving the principles codified by the UNCRC. However, beyond 'understanding' it is unclear the degree to which these engagements have impacted on individuals or countries more broadly.

Girls' Education, and Inclusion of Those with Disabilities

Improved access to education for girls and those with disabilities was highlighted as a key focus of child participation initiatives, with cases of success highlighted. Girls were said to have achieved greater inclusion through community advocacy campaigns by relevant child groups, while other groups undertook to reduce stigma associated with disabled children in the target areas. Other discussions in Effectiveness cast some shadows on this finding, given the uneven participation of girls and boys in relevant programmes, and there exists limited evidence to substantiate these claims empirically. Nonetheless, this finding may be a positive indicator of child participation's outcomes on the ground.

Harmful Traditional Practices

Community advocacy by child groups, and through child-led processes, was further credited with achieving impacts on harmful traditional practices like facial scarring and early/forced marriage. Stakeholders indicated this was achieved both through educating children about their rights, so they could serve as forceful advocates on their own behalf when confronted with such challenges, and also through seeking to address broader attitudes in the community through direct engagement and advocacy by children's groups. Once again, however, beyond anecdotal accounts, these changes remain difficult to establish with a high degree of certainty.

Change in Law and Policy

A number of legal and policy changes were identified as key successes, with examples including ratification of the UNCRC, and the creation of a national policy to go beyond those rights specified in the Charter. Such outputs demonstrably align with many of SCN's strategic aims, but it was difficult to link child participation directly to these changes. As mentioned previously, national policy and government is subject to varying, competing interests and voices, and the

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degree to which child participation was able to achieve the desired impact in this area remains unclear.

Creation of Active and Vocal Youth Fora

Child participation initiatives have come to establish a few key, and highly active, fora for youth engagement with the government and other civil society organisations. While SCN cannot be completely credited with the establishment of all the larger and more active groups across the portfolio, they certainly have contributed to components and activities that have driven relative success in this area. One strong example of this included the national youth forum's completion of a national report on South Sudan's progress toward achievement of the principles of the UNCRC for submission to the UN, while the government has yet to complete any such report; their report is now driving much of the conversation around child and youth rights in South Sudan among both national and international bodies.

Linking to previous discussions, many of these impacts are output-focused, short-term in nature, of face challenges in linking input to longer-term or larger-scale impacts. Nonetheless, the positive appraisals and anecdotal evidence supplied provide some positive indications. However, it appears SCN and partners could strengthen its approaches to collection of strong evidence for impact, supporting both advocacy and fundraising across its portfolio.

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Impact Case Study – South Sudan Youth Organisation

Only in 2015 (4 years after becoming independent) did South Sudan sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) becoming the 195th State party to do so.

Child participation initiatives work to give children the chance to be heard in an adult-led world where their voices are often ignored or devalued. National and local leaders often overlook the perspectives and experiences of children, perceiving of them as irrelevant to decision-making or incapable of substantive contribution to discussions of policy and governance. However, in making decisions which affect everyone, the voice of all involved should be heard and earnestly considered in the decision-making process. In many cases, children are better positioned to understand their own experiences and challenges than adults, who may have only incomplete knowledge or an outsider's understanding.

Photo 14 – An advocacy group from a primary school in South Sudan sings songs to an audience of more than a thousand people to mark Child Health Day.

The following is a story of a child in South Sudan (Juba). He was 10 years old when he became involved in relevant programming after NGO activities came to his school and community, many of which incorporated youth clubs and child parliaments. Over the years, his interest and engagement in these programmes grew, with him taking on roles of greater leadership in South Sudan's youth parliament. The skills he gained through these initiatives, and the opportunities offered by SCI to attend various capacity buildings and African youth parliament congresses, have continued to strengthen his role as a youth leader.

Most recently, he has founded his own local organisation, with appropriate permissions (no small feat), and drawing on SCI's support, is now working to support other young people to realise their potential as active advocates for their rights in the country. This organisation has most recently moved to address the gap in national government focus on child rights, drafting the national Child Supplementary Report on the UNCRC, incorporating the input of children from across the country. The end aim of this report is to support the realisation of child rights in South Sudan.

This report is the first of its kind, and the only such report on the UNCRC emerging from South Sudan, as the national government did not meet its obligation to release such a document. The report will be submitted to the UNCRC Committee in the coming months. As such, the work of this young man, and the youth he leads, are having an outsized impact on international understanding of the Child Rights situation in South Sudan.

Such accomplishments would not likely have been accomplished without the support of SC, and this success is a positive indicator of what child rights programming (and the child participation informing it) can achieve in fragile states. This case may also provide a practical example on how

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support to child participation initiatives can strengthen national civil societies, and children's role in it.

EFFICIENCY

'Efficiency is difficult to understand, as it is dependent on what the specific goals are of the programme and to determine results/impact. However, in terms of cost efficiency; the initiatives installed are cost efficient. This is because these programmes directly work with children to strengthen capacity.'

— HEAD OF CHILD GOVERNANCE, PHNOM PENH

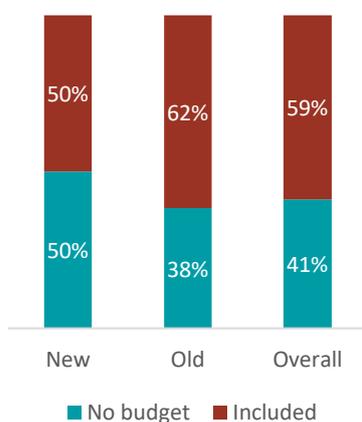*Figure 39 - CP Explicitly Included in Budget (Country Document Review)*

Table 28 - Budget Amt.

New	$700,970
Old	$263,504
Overall	$372,870

Establishing unit costs for child participation interventions is a substantial challenge. The primary obstacles to such analyses comprise: integration of child participation initiatives across multiple activities and budget lines; staff assigned to deliver child participation activities also undertaking work across other interventions (in fact, few if any are allocated directly to child participation activity); and overhead costs at the SCN and country office level are difficult to assign to specific activities.

Nonetheless, the average budget values presented in the above table are marginal relative to total budgets provided by SCN. As an example, Mozambique received c. $60m USD in the most recent grant agreement with SCN, of which the average child participation budget in Table 29 comprises c.0.6%. Discussions in the capacity building section highlighted how limited additional budgets are available for internal SC activities, further highlighting the degree to which child participation is not a funding priority in many budgets.

Further to this, 50% of new portfolio countries and 62% of historic portfolio countries had no budgets at all dedicated to child participation in the SCN grant agreement. This further highlights both the degree to which funds are constrained, and supports the assertions made in both the Effectiveness section and by myriad international and country-level stakeholders regarding limited available resources. Such limitations are seen to constrain the degree to which child participation can be effectively implemented.

Success of 'mainstreamed' child participation (an approach with theoretically positive cost efficiency implications) is predicated on effective mainstreaming and implementation; however, the effectiveness section detailed several challenges in this regard; namely, that mainstreaming

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may not be happening to the extent desired, and that child participation and CRG activities often faced the most delays in implementation (often as a consequence of budget revisions and shifting priorities). As such, the efficiency implications of mainstreaming will almost certainly have been limited throughout implementation.

The efficiency question has been touched on indirectly throughout the wider document, and in this section. The key takeaways vis-à-vis the efficiency (internal and external) of child participation, linking directly to the research questions across this and all other sections, and have been enumerated in the relevant section of this document.

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SUSTAINABILITY

'We have shown that child rights club can do a lot without any money'

– 12 YEAR OLD CHILD RIGHTS GROUP MEMBER – AGER GUM PRIMARY SCHOOL, RUMBEK

The country documents submitted to the team were reviewed for discussion of sustainable impacts. The results of this exercise were coded, and placed in the table below.

Figure 40 - Countries describing sustainability of child participation in reporting (Country Document Review)
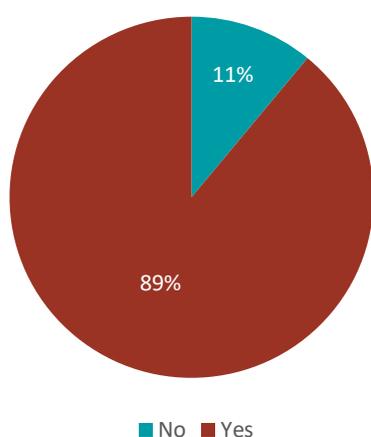
Table 29 - Areas Highlighted

No ■ Yes

Stakeholder capacity built (typically partners, adults, teachers, and children)	9
Government belief in importance of child participation increased	8
Empowering children	7
Supported the achievement of other sectors' outcomes	6
Development of child-led clubs	6
Education standards or access improved	6
Training on child's rights and child participation delivered	6
Encouraged ownership of project by stakeholders	5
Change in government policy	4
Advocacy undertaken	4
Changing attitudes towards child participation	3
Communication	2
Fundraising was successful	2
Continued assessments undertaken or planned	1
Inclusion of vulnerable children's voices	1
Creation of resources or tools in local languages	1

89% of countries submitted documents speaking to sustainability of outcomes. The most common of these comprised generic increases in capacity or training delivered, shifting beliefs by powerful stakeholders regarding the importance of child participation, children's empowerment, the establishment of clubs, or improvement of educational standards. However, many of these sustainable outcomes face the same challenges in output and outcome confusion discussed in the section on monitoring and evaluation, or make assertions of long-term outcomes

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and change largely on the basis of anecdotal evidence. Very rarely are sustained outcomes, emerging from prior programmes or rounds of delivery mentioned, making actual evaluation of sustainable outcomes a challenge.

Several key sustainability themes emerged in analysis of the evidence emerging from this assignment; these have been discussed both in this section, as well as throughout the preceding document.

Key lessons learned in Sustainability have been enumerated in the relevant section of this document.

Photo 15 – School children, South Sudan

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HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

To provide a full systems analysis of Save the Children, it is valuable to provide some historical background to fully contextualise the current arrangement of Save the Children, and the impact this has on the actions of national Save the Children (SC) organisations (and consequently child participation initiatives). Though founded in the UK in 1919, it did not take long for Save the Children to take an international turn, with the foundation of the Save the Children Fund International, less than a year later in 1920. Over time, more and more national Save the Children organisations appeared, and particularly after the Second World War, these groups increasingly worked quite independently, with some national SC

Photo 16 – Early SC supporters (1922)

organisations focusing on internal reconstruction after WWII, whilst others had particular global areas where they focused, such as SC UK often working in Commonwealth countries, whilst SC USA often focused on the Americas (Lux, 2013, p. 2).

This organisational system (or lack thereof), was effective for a time, but by the 1960s and 1970s, other organisations with greater centralised coordination caught up with Save the Children. An indicative example is that of the 1976 Guatemala earthquake, where 10 SC organisations responded simultaneously, of which 6 sent staff into the field, with minimal co-operation or even awareness of what the other organisations were doing (Lux, 2013, p. 3). Shortly after this incident, CEOs of SC national organisations began a forum, meeting once a year to minimise the risk of such challenges arising in the future. In 1993, this forum developed into the Save the Children Alliance, based in Geneva, although the exact role of the Save the Children Alliance was never clearly defined (Lux, 2013, p. 3). Over time, Save the Children offices appeared in 30 different countries, each running its own programmes, and following its own agenda (Rawstone, 2015).

The process of changing this status quo might be said to have started in 2002, with the arrival of Barry Clarke as board chair of the Save the Children Alliance, and under his leadership to have become public in 2004, when a new global strategy was announced in Hong Kong, outlining an intended move toward closer co-operation between national SC organisations. Significant actors appearing later include Peter Woicke, who arrived as SC Alliance board chair in 2008, and Charlotte Petri Gornitzka, who became CEO of SC Alliance the same year.

Reasons for change

Although the Guatemala example provides a clear example of where the disconnected structure of SC caused challenges, it is valuable to examine in more detail the structural challenges arising from the Alliance approach. The main issues caused by this un-centralised structure may be

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summarised into four broad categories; inefficiency, inconsistency, unnecessary competition, and external confusion.

Perhaps the most obvious challenge caused by the old structure was inefficiency. This was shown very clearly in the Guatemalan earthquake case, and another anecdote told by Barry Clarke further illustrates the extent of the problem when, in Hanoi in the 1980s Clarke passed four different SC offices almost next door to one another before finally finding the SC UK office he was looking for (Lux, 2013, p. 2). Limited or non-existent communication between different SC organisations led to nominally similar organisations running parallel administrative, operational, and logistical operations which to the external observer seemed unnecessary and potentially wasteful.

In addition to inefficiency, inconsistency was also problematic. Not only were there no common professional standards between different SC organisations, different SC organisations even had different ideas on best practice to meet children's needs. This lack of cohesion whilst working under the same name left all SC organisations open to reputational risks from any individual member. It also meant that even if different SC organisations had been capable and keen to co-operate, they differed in priorities and approach, leading to challenges in effective coordination.

Worse than losing out on potential efficiency savings through parallel operations and unreconciled practical approaches and standards, the unconnected nature of SC organisations also meant that different SC bodies also ended up competing with one another. Whilst as described above SC organisations had previously found different areas of global focus, this was not always the case, and when SC organisations found themselves working in similar areas, they competed for limited funds, attention, and human resources. Competition came perhaps most clear when competing for funding, but additionally in implementation, factors such as access to stakeholders in particular countries became a field in which different SC organisations competed to the disadvantage of each other (Lux, 2013, p. 4).

These three factors show the various lost opportunities and active disadvantages caused by different SC organisations working independently, but it is also valuable to consider the external viewpoint. The existence of multiple separate organisations working under the same name, and frequently in the same locations made it difficult for external bodies to understand. Charles McCormack noted that this confusion was shared by 'peers, partners, government interlocutors, and donors' (Lux, 2013, p. 4).

As a final note on the problems with the old, ununified format of Save the Children where national SC organisations faced challenges in cooperation, or even competed with one another, one may consider this warning from its founder, Eglantyne Jebb, who wrote that 'Members of the movement must be prepared to act not as representatives of their own nation but as representatives of mankind' (Lux, 2013, p. 2).

Challenges faced by reform

Once the new global strategy had been announced in Hong Kong in 2004, a significant number of challenges faced those who wished to make this reform happen. In fact, as we shall see, many of these challenges did not fully disappear after the unification process was complete, and

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remain to some extent today. The main challenges encountered by the new global strategy may be split into four groups; the practical challenge of bringing together organisations with differing structures, the challenge of merging organisations of vastly differing size, the unwillingness of individual SC organisations to give up their independence, and the problems with bringing together SC organisations with very different focuses.

The challenge of unifying organisations with very different structures helps to explain why the process of restructuring begun by the announcement in 2004 was only formally completed in 2013. Governance and corporate structure varied considerably between difference Save the Children national organisations, which caused challenges both in building an agreed upon structure for SC International, but also in easing the legal process of transition. This was further complicated by differences in funding structure. One SC country director reported that whilst their organisation was funded from multiple donors, each attaching particular requirements to their contribution and obliging direct reports on operations, other national SC organisations were funded exclusively by their national government, and enjoyed relative freedom in how they chose to spend this funding. These significant differences posed clear challenges to the integration process.

Beyond this practical challenge, the three further hurdles to creating a true SC International were interconnected, and all three arguably remain significant today. The first was the challenge of merging organisations of vastly different size. Before integration, the largest SC member had over two hundred times the revenue of the smallest, and differences in staff numbers were similarly striking. This differing size led to differing levels of influence, and this was noted by Peter Woicke, who, becoming SC Alliance board chair, noted how strangely the board acted in comparison to others he had been a member of. Eventually it became clear that true decisions were made informally outside the boardroom by the 'big four' (Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States) (Lux, 2013, p. 6). Finding a happy medium between ensuring representation for all SC member countries and recognising the disproportionate presence and contribution of some remains perhaps the greatest internal challenge faced by Save the Children.

Added to this challenge of merging organisations of greatly differing size was the inclination of many organisations to defend their independence. Charlotte Petri Gornitzka noted that 'every large member organisation [sic] wanted to ensure that its way of working was retained or that its view was well represented' (Lux, 2013, p. 7). There were practical reasons for this, as funding for Save the Children was – and continues to be – routed through national SC organisations. Gornitzka recognised that national SC groups needed to justify how their donors'

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Photo 17 - First school day in Iraq

money was spent, and given the origins of funding, donors may have particular expectations of cultural or best practice approaches to work with children, which they expected to be fulfilled when their money was spent. This is no less true with Norwegian focuses on child participation.

In addition to these practical issues which inclined SC organisations to defend their independence, there was a more fundamental barrier to full integration between different national SC groups. As has been mentioned already, as they developed independently different SC organisations established different approaches, standards, best practices, and focuses when it came to providing aid to children. Some SC groups focused on child rights advocacy or child participation, whilst others concentrated on service delivery. Some groups emphasised the importance of education, whilst others centred on child health. Naturally, when given in broad strokes different SC groups' interests were comparable, but these differing concentrations and approaches became significant points of friction during the integration process, especially when considering the above factors of differing size and funding of different SC groups, and the elements encouraging organisations to defend their independence. Some feared that a united Save the Children would simply never be able to effectively co-ordinate strategy across the widely disparate focuses, priorities, and personalities.

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Despite these challenges, the move toward global integration continued, and 2009 marked a significant milestone, when, during a meeting in Reading, 28 of 29 organisations voted in favour of moving forward. In a process supported considerably by the Boston Consulting Group, between 2009 and 2013, Save the Children Alliance morphed into Save the Children International (Rawstone, 2015). This change process was a dramatic shift in power and accountability structure. To put it in the simplest terms, SC International took over operational control and direction of field programmes from national SC bodies, whilst fundraising and domestic programme responsibilities in donor countries remained as they were.

Attempts to find a balance between recognising the disproportionate size and contribution of the 'big four' whilst ensuring the voices of other members were not lost is shown in the composition of the SC International board. This consists of 14 members, of whom four were from SC USA, three were from SC UK, two were from SC Sweden, and one was from SC Norway. Three further members were elected by other members, and the board itself elected two independent external board members.

During this transitional period as SC Alliance transformed into SC International, a temporary arrangement existed in countries receiving SC aid. In this stop gap measure, one particular SC national organisation – for example Norway – took responsibility for representing Save the Children in that country. This provided a short-term solution to the confusion and inefficiency

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encountered by Barry Clarke in 1980s Hanoi, whilst allowing time for independent country centres to be fully established.

Once the establishment of country centres had been completed, national SC organisations withdrew from their temporary position as central mouthpiece and representative from the global SC group within particular countries, and SC International centres within countries receiving support were able to begin their intended role, taking over operational control and leading direction of field programmes.

As it stands today, Save the Children works in 120 countries, out of seven regional offices – down from 20, another example of a streamlining decision which caused significant tension. This incredibly diverse work is contained within one management structure.

The advantages of this change may be summarised as twofold. Firstly, co-ordination has been comprehensively improved. Whether it concerns priorities, operation, and advocacy, SC's voice has been made clearer and louder, and its efficacy and advocacy during emergencies has improved in quality. Additionally, Save the Children is now better able to attract the most capable and promising staff, by offering a career path, which promises to involve its recruits in programmes of a truly global scale and complexity (Lux, 2013, p. 16).

Present challenges following reform

As suggested above when discussing the obstacles to reform, even once the integration process was completed, these issues were not entirely resolved, and the challenges which persist today share significant links with those initial hurdles.

One important downside following international integration is the reduction of small scale control, and the difficulties experienced by different countries wishing to focus on different approaches. A report by the Maxwell School at Syracuse University noted how national SC bodies were caught in the middle, unable to fully control how their donors' money was spent, whilst trying to continue advocating for the approaches which donors wished to see employed. As an example, the report noted that:

> *'…for SC Norway and Sweden, organizations that are membership-based, the challenge was to manage their members' perception of how the new SCI would affect principles important to them. How would the Scandinavian members continue to advocate for rights-based approaches?'*

(Lux, 2013, p. 14)

Linked to this is a continuing concern that smaller SC members may get squeezed out, as larger members enjoy greater clout in deciding what approaches to favour, and how and where to spend money. This concern was felt early on during recruitment for SC International, where there was some feeling among smaller members that SC UK and SC USA staff were disproportionately favoured for recruitment into SC International as these two organisations were the largest before integration, and so their staff had the most experience in operating an organisation with a global scale and reach.

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In many cases, SC country operations underwent substantial downsizing (one stakeholder estimated 20% of staff were laid off), with many duplicated roles eliminated in the name of efficiency. However, in addition to duplicated roles, 'niche' roles, not well aligned to new global strategies, were often cut; among these niche roles were those child participation specialists and advisors which had driven much relevant SCN programming.

Finally, a report by the Humanitarian Futures Programme at King's College London reports a different challenge faced by Save the Children since its global centralisation; the challenge of strategic governance (King's College London, 2012, p. 11). In an interview conducted as part of the report, one SC country director reflected that Save the Children seemed hesitant to invest in innovative ideas: 'We have a very sorry background on risk-taking…I have to be accountable to the bearers of the money now and that's one of the problems that we have.' (King's College London, 2012, p. 11). The KCL report noted that during their research gathering on Save the Children, the question of the relationship between SC governance and strategic leadership was a recurrent issue raised during interviews. This issue of providing decisive leadership in a global organisation is a huge challenge, and one that is related to the next section of this historical and systems analysis; a discussion of how strategic project delivery methods within NGOs have developed over time.

Project Strategy and Impact Measurement

In addition to briefly charting the development of Save the Children, it is also valuable to consider how delivery and evaluation of projects has developed. There is some evidence to suggest that the quality impact assessment stands to be improved, and has become weakened by a status quo which discourages truly rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

Photo 18 – Child participation workshops in Cambodia

One may chart the beginning of a 'boom in establishment of evaluation units' in the 1970s and 1980s, during a period in which the 'Reagonomic and Thatcherite governments' 'general distrust of government institutions' not only 'stimulated the rise of governmental aid activities' to be 'seriously questioned' (Sasaki, 2006). This era saw the beginning of agencies conducting evaluation on their projects, beginning down the path which development programmes have continued to this day.

However, whilst rigorous evaluation and monitoring are certainly preferable to nothing, they are not in themselves a panacea to the threat of ineffective aid. In an article in the Journal for Policy Reform, Lant Pritchett of Harvard University drew on his experience at the World Bank to question the efficacy of evaluations in NGO development programmes (Pritchett, 2002).

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Pritchett begins by noting with surprise that 'few public sector actions, even those of tremendous importance, are ever evaluated to the standard required of even the most trivial medicine' (Pritchett, 2002, p. p.252). To explain this, Pritchett notes that 'advocates' for any given issue work to two motives. On the one hand, advocates wish to ensure their programme or project is as effective as possible, and 'evaluations help to improve program efficiency' (Pritchett, 2002, p. 252). On the other hand, 'evaluations have a potential downside if they reduce political support for a larger budget for their program' (Pritchett, 2002, p. 252). This factor of advocates shying away from thorough evaluation for fear of budget reduction is echoed in a report from the Congressional Research Service (Lawson, 2016). This report quotes a 2001 survey of USAID workers which 'revealed that staff felt more pressure to produce success stories than to produce balanced and rigorous evaluations' (Lawson, 2016, pp. 16-17). One survey respondent put it extremely plainly: 'if you don't ask [about results], you don't fail, and your budget isn't cut' (Lawson, 2016, p. 16).

Pritchett further breaks down this issue. At the simplest level, one may have an advocate who is confident both of the issue they wish to address, and the instrument they wish to use to address it. At this level, an evaluation offers nothing except the potential loss of political (and thus budgetary) support. In another circumstance, a group may be working together, agreed on the issue at hand, but perhaps debating the ideal instrument to solve the issue. Here an evaluation may offer a potential answer to the second question, but the threat of losing political support remains (Pritchett, 2002, p. 253).

The most complicated scenario is also the one most threatened by thorough evaluation. Here, a large group or diverse coalition may be assembled around a broad objective, but there are internal differences not only over the best instrument to use in tackling the problem, but even on the most pressing issue to address within the broad objective. Here, efficacy not only of evaluation but project implementation itself may be threatened, as the fear of losing political support pushes these 'advocates into uneasy coalition that supports ignorance in which efficacy of budget use is sacrificed to maintain budget size' (Pritchett, 2002, p. 253). Given the extremely broad objectives of Save the Children, its recently federated structure, and the diverse opinions of different national groups on the most pressing issues within the sphere of child support – be it child participation, service provision, rights advocacy or other things – it is clear which of the three groups Save the Children might most readily be placed into.

Beyond incentivising poor evaluations, it is clear to see where further corners may be cut in this status quo. One way of avoiding poor evaluations is to set objectives trivially low to ensure they are achieved. Another route is to set short term objectives in easily measurable criteria. This allows evaluations to be written demonstrating project success, but avoids true engagement with larger, long-term issues which are at the heart of what projects should be aiming to tackle, but are much harder to measure impact on, and thus more difficult targets on which to deliver convincing evaluation reports. To return once more to the USAID survey discussed by the Congressional Research Service, it is noted that 'few observers consider risk taking and accepting failure as a necessary component of learning to be hallmarks of USAID or State Department culture' (Lawson, 2016, p. 17).

It is important here to make clear the centrality of the public sector and Government donations to this issue. The reports discussed above all locate the issue within the space of the public

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sector, and government funding; it is these sources which account for around 90% of SC donations. Less-than-rigorous evaluations, short-termist objectives, and low benchmarks for achievement are the result of having to placate government donors who are expected to wring every possible penny of value out of budgets, and thus cannot accept or justify programmes which do not appear report stellar evaluations which can then be shown to sceptical voters.

Linking to Child Participation

The preceding narrative links to child participation, and many of the preceding analyses, for the following reasons:

First, that many of the challenges highlighted in effective M&E, target, and impact/outcome setting may be subject to a number of adverse incentives, reducing the willingness of actors to set for themselves challenging (and potentially embarrassing) targets. Similarly, there may also be a disincentive to report on challenges, or negative/non-existent results, desiring instead to frame programme outputs positively no matter the impact. This may be particularly true in cases where the targeted outcomes lay well in the future, and outside the scope of 2- or 3-year project timelines to effectively track and document.

Second, that when SCN was responsible for both collection of funds, and in-country delivery, they could exercise a greater degree of control over implementation; as such, fidelity of delivery (and direct leadership/mentorship) in child participation and other Norwegian-priority programmes was higher. This is somewhat supported by preceding analyses which highlight the distinctions between historical and new portfolio countries, and how well performance aligns with desired standards.

Interviews with stakeholders having experience leading pre-merger SCN offices internationally highlighted how much more, and more consistent, engagement they had with local stakeholders, able to provide ongoing mentorship, support, and guidance to stakeholders on the ground, promoting more effective and impactful implementation.

Taken together, the loss of specialised staff, minimisation of 'smaller' country control over SCI activities, strategies and focuses (SCN is responsible for only 4% of SCI's total funding, whereas SCUS is responsible for only 50%), and the minimised direct engagement of Norwegians and local country staff has led to a situation where fidelity and quality of child participation initiatives (a relatively unique interest of SCN among donor nations) has suffered.

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Review of pre-merger SCN country docs highlights this, with a marked (though highly qualitative) difference in the frequency and nature of reporting on child participation relative to the current framework agreement. It does appear that child participation is better understood, more in focus, and more ambitiously targeted than currently, particularly among those countries which have only recently joined the portfolio. Historical approaches to reporting and implementation, however, have much to offer future programming. Many of the recommendations will draw on these lessons.

Photo 19 – Female Students, South Sudan

LESSONS LEARNED

This section explores the lessons learned arising from the preceding analyses. These are meant to provide a broad synthesis of key takeaway points, and lessons future programming might learn from this review. They have been structured according to their relevant OECD DAC criterion, or other relevant heading.

Relevance

The relevance analyses overlap substantially with those in Effectiveness, and Impact; as such, for the sake of brevity and clarity, where overlaps exist they have been analysed in the relevant subsection. Those that are unique to Relevance have been addressed here.

Targeting of stakeholders for engagement

In some cases, detailed stakeholder (or rights holder) mapping may not be undertaken prior to programmatic design, leading to targeting of advocacy and child participation activities to those that may not be in the best position to improve the child rights situation in target countries.

For example, in South Sudan, key challenges in security and violence were highlighted as primary concerns by young people (which SCN programming did endeavour to address through its programmes); however, both parents and children indicated the police and military (such as it is) were the key individuals responsible for the promotion of security, but limited engagement has been planned or attempted in the course of relevant programmes.

Similar challenges appeared to arise in Iraq with regard to paramilitary organisations in non-camp areas. Admittedly, basic security and sanction concerns may minimise the feasibility of such approaches. Nonetheless, it did not appear a comprehensive mapping exercise was undertaken prior to implementation, with stakeholders happy to implement those approaches and contacts suggested by key international partners and little more.

Humanitarian vs Development Programming

The distinctions in need between humanitarian and development contexts are stark, and have substantial implications for the relevance of child participation initiatives. This is discussed in more detail in the 'Effectiveness' subsection in lessons learned.

Effectiveness

In the online survey, respondents were asked to highlight the factors that support or hinder effective child participation. The results of that exercise were coded, and placed in the table below.

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Table 30 - Enabling or hindering[9] factors to effective child participation (SC Country Office Online Survey)

Sufficient support and resources (human and financial) available	23
It is embedded within projects across sectors, with delivery designed to facilitate child participation	15
Appropriate understanding of and emphasis on child participation	13
Good relationships with partners, communities, CSOs, and the government	9
Effective training and capacity building resulting in right skills	9
Clear Save the Children guidance and resources, including effective M&E	5
Responsive to beneficiary needs, and local contexts, accounting for challenges (e.g. violence and abuse)	5
Cultural resistance, or openness to concepts (at all levels)	5
Appropriate participation of both children and adults	4
Effectiveness of management and leadership structures	3
Strong child-led structures	2
Effective use of social media	1
Embedded in Humanitarian Aid	1
Transparent government and policy	1

These findings overlap substantially with preceding analyses, as well as the findings of qualitative research. The following analyses incorporate both those factors highlighted by SC staff in the online survey, as well as the key themes that arose in the course of the preceding analyses.

Sufficient and appropriate training and resources

As was seen in the discussion regarding the effectiveness of capacity building, adequate and targeted resources/materials, accompanied by appropriate ongoing support, are essential to the effective implementation of child participation. Those programmes and initiatives which deliver only brief trainings, or those with insufficient support, relevance, or practicality, face frustration and potential reluctance.

Effective mainstreaming

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of ensuring truly effective mainstreaming; incorporation of child participation across all sectors, and relevant internal processes, rather

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[9] 'Hindering factors' tended to be the inverse, or simple absence of, enabling factors.

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than those prioritised by certain funding bodies. Such practice was characterised as an indicator of real buy-in, and a driver of greater effectiveness and impact across relevant programmes.

Long-term relationships, communication, and collaboration

Strong relationships with the government, partners, community organisations, and other relevant stakeholders was another important point for many, both across the survey and in qualitative discussions. Challenges can arise when SC's and children's engagements with key stakeholders and institutions is limited to narrow, project-related activities. Fostering and maintaining these connections, between and across project activities, was highlighted as a key factor in success. Without this, SC and child groups can run the risk of having only periodic and superficial engagement, and consequently impact, across a set of processes which can take many years and strong relationships to affect. A potentially 'clientelistic' relationship with these groups is another concern that can arise in the absence of sustained, frequent, and meaningful engagement.

Adapting to local attitudes and needs, gaining buy-in

Stakeholders across all instruments, and in many of the analyses in other sections of this report, highlighted challenges in gaining buy-in within contexts where stakeholders can be sceptical of child participation. The preceding point on strong relationships is important within this area, as is finding ways of working collaboratively with local stakeholders over the long term, rather than telling them the right way to act and think. Also important is finding ways to frame child participation in alignment with local sympathies; some stakeholders expressed concern over approaches which apply 'cookie-cutter' approaches and messaging, with limited effort to ensure effective targeting to local contexts.

Appropriate understanding and emphasis, managed expectations

One potential barrier to effective implementation which was frequently highlighted by international staff, as well as by consultants in the field, comprised a perceived lack of understanding of child participation and appropriate approaches to its implementation. Many stakeholders at the field level appeared to believe that child participation meant participation in activities, rather than the definition enumerated throughout this report and in SCN's guidance. As such, the degree to which programmes (and embedded child participation) can be effective may, at times, be limited. Within those countries where greater understanding was identified (e.g. Cambodia), effectiveness appeared to be greatly improved.

Rights education in many cases appeared to be incomplete; one core factor in this comprised non-engagement with the responsibilities component of the rights education and child participation framework in some countries. In discussions, rights education appeared to provide clear views on those rights enumerated within the UNCRC, but deeper exploration of how these are to be achieved (in primary research) more often resulted in children stating they should 'demand' or 'advocate for' their rights. Within challenging developing contexts, these entitlements are many years off, and simple advocacy appears to be insufficient to accelerate their achievement independent of continued dependence on international aid. A child's responsibility, as well as how such rights are to be accomplished in the long term, remained unclear for both adults and children. Such concerns were discussed within both international and country-level stakeholders, and have been highlighted as a potential driver of disaffection

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and greater propensity to support political violence in at least one portfolio country (Mercy Corps, 2016).

Primary research also highlighted the degree to which it is important that all stakeholders have realistic, and managed, expectations about what child participation will accomplish. The definition of parameters appears to overcome challenges faced in other relevant programmes, where overreach and poor role definition results in untargeted delivery and implementation, and challenges in achieving desired outcomes. Poorly managed expectations, and targeted programming, has the potential to result in frustration, disaffection, and attrition form programme activities.

Effective inclusion of children

Child participation which is meaningful, and not tokenistic, appears to drive effectiveness of implementation. Tokenism was a key concern highlighted by many stakeholders, though the degree to which this is the case appears to be uneven across (and even within) countries. Similarly, programmes which teach about child participation, but incorporate little of it, were similarly characterised as problematic.

Leadership priorities

In some cases, child participation was not characterised as a priority of SMTs or implementing staff/partners; this will necessarily have had an impact on the effectiveness of child participation, with multiple shifts in priorities, budgets, and focus leading to shortfalls in outcome achievement and effective implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation, outcome targeting

Challenges of availability of data (collection, synthesis, storage), as well as in alignment of data to outcomes instead of outputs, poses challenges to understanding whether child participation have had any real impacts, forcing the reliance on short-term anecdotal accounts (see later discussions of 'Impact'). Further to this, child participation impacts are often characterised as being long-term in nature, requiring longer term tracking and follow up. However, limited follow up (in any country) is undertaken beyond 2-3 year project timelines. When projects are renewed, those who discontinue participation rarely receive any subsequent contact. Such challenges may exacerbate issues relating to accountability and cynicism among those that might exploit M&E systems to limit accountability.

Collection of effective data and undertaking relevant follow up is further complicated by a potential lack of clarity of the intended long-term impacts of child participation. Intended outcomes are often stated as 'improved voice', or just a general increase in child participation and consultation (output- rather than outcome-focused). Other stakeholders highlight the achievement of the 9 UN principles for child participation, or achievement of the UNCRC articles, as an end in themselves, with limited assessment or understanding of why this might be important, or whether these can serve as appropriate ends on their own. However, such targets are not only difficult to measure and consistently define, but also face challenges in strong alignment with impacts. When the targets are vague and subject to a high degree of interpretation, alignment of child participation activities to strong impacts is made even more difficult.

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Iterations of programme design

As discussed in relation to 'relevance' above, the contexts in which the child participation was implemented were substantially different; the experiences and needs of children and communities in Iraq are different than those of children and communities in South Sudan or Cambodia, and the various other countries where SCN operates. However, despite these differences in context, there appears to have been limited iteration of programme (and child participation) design across targeted countries. This was highlighted throughout the previous analyses, and is evident in the degree to which limited mention of previous lessons learned, or even collection of strong evidence on effective practice, was highlighted throughout the country document analyses, and in discussions with stakeholders.

Defining mainstreaming, documenting best practice

As a concept, 'mainstreaming' appears to be well understood. However, as a practice, it still appears to be unclear (both to many stakeholders and to the consultants) how this is best achieved, and what mainstreaming approaches or practices are most effective and impactful, particularly in those sectors where child participation has not been traditionally implemented (e.g. child poverty, child health). In the course of the consultancy, it appeared that much discussion of best practice has limited basis in documented evidence, and little best practice appears to have been systematically documented and substantiated. The question was much larger than the consultants had the time of resources to establish in substantial detail.

Impact

Clean and safe environment for children to play in, congregate, and engage what is important for them

As highlighted in the above discussions, clean, safe and secure environments emerging from supported programmes were reported as fostering improved learning and child participation outcomes. Such effects are also supported by a range of secondary literature. Ensuring spaces are open to children to engage with each other independent of adults, while ensuring their safety, can also have positive impacts. The Cambodian case highlighted the usefulness of religious spaces in this regard, while others (Iraq and South Sudan) limited access and therefore opportunities for independent, child-led activity.

Community projects which regularly engage with children's opinions

Community projects which actively sought children's opinions, and incorporated them into regular operations, were viewed as having promoted positive outcomes. School improvement plans, and community clean-up and outreach initiatives comprise two examples of this.

Teachers who are well trained and continuously supported through techniques

Strong teacher training, in both pedagogy as well as relevant approaches to child participation, supported by regular, systematic mentoring and monitoring, were reported as being foundations on which such positive outcomes were achieved.

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Relevant education-focused committees and CSOs allocate budgets for child-led programmes

Such efforts appeared to minimise reliance on aid to support programmes, while ensuring child participation has advocates on which it can continue to draw for other types of support and advocacy.

Short-term and one-off teacher training programmes

One-off training programmes for teachers were limited in impact, particularly those without long-term mentoring, monitoring, and follow-up mechanisms attached. Child participation incorporation in school activity and daily learning was one such area where limited, and ineffective training, is thought to have negative impacts. Such practices may have resulted in resource costs that might have been better used elsewhere.

Elite capture

The nature of many child participation initiatives can serve to attract bright and engaged pupils, where their relative talents and capacity/interest in participation can be assets in achieving success across sets of activities which are often seen as prestigious. However, there are some views that this may lead to 'elite capture' of programming, with other pupils holding otherwise valid sets of concerns, needs, and perspectives that may not be as well represented in relevant engagements.

Traditional gender roles limiting participation

While male and female inclusion in programming appeared to be broadly equal and appropriately considerate of relevant issues and approaches, there did appear to exist some barriers to participation building on traditional gender roles with regard to familial responsibilities. Common reasons for non-participation in cases of desire or interest aligned with relative expectations of boys and girls within their families: boys often had to go home and help their father support the family, while girls most often cited needing to help with domestic tasks around the house. Such barriers are often accepted by local child participation implementers with limited question or exploration of whether anything can be done to minimise such challenges.

Programme alignment to humanitarian context

Many of the components related to child consultation and engagement underpin much of what SCI does in Iraq. However, programming undertaken to achieve broader community engagement or consultation with governance structures may be outside the reach of many of those targeted due to humanitarian, security, and emergency priorities. This was reflected in many of the above analyses, where children most often emphasised acute needs and security concerns over those needs which child participation is most likely able to engage effectively. To this end, it does appear that SC in Iraq has integrated relevant participation tools and methodologies to the most pragmatic and realistically impactful ends within the challenging areas it operates, but even these positive outcomes remain limited. Within this context, there may be opportunities for rethinking of approaches to better align with the unique operating requirements and needs in emergency and transitional states.

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Staff turnover

SC Iraq, like many organisations in the region, faces ongoing challenges in staff turnover. This can often lead to a loss of institutional knowledge and learning about what has and has not worked with child participation in previous initiatives.

Challenges in effective understanding

Some staff at the field level appeared to face challenges in understanding child participation concerning what it meant, what the approaches should look like, and what philosophies and rationales underpinned delivery and design. Such misalignment of knowledge is likely to result in limited sustainability, with stakeholders implementing projects that are not well aligned with standards.

Training, monitoring, and mentoring mechanisms

Further to the above challenges, there appeared to be limited ongoing mentoring for practitioners and monitoring of ongoing delivery beyond broadly output-oriented logframe tracking. Relevant trainings appeared to be relatively short-termed in nature, and were often embedded into other trainings in the interest of achieving efficiency and minimising staff time lost. Even with partner organisations and community groups which are premier in the proposals of many organisations, trainings might at times be tokenistic, and not aligned to achieving the desired aims in capacity.

Cultural challenges

Cultural challenges may have posed obstacles to effective and impactful implementation. Challenges ranged from early marriage limiting continuity of attendance, to conservative social norms limiting the attendance of girls to mixed programmes and centres. Even those programmes that might have otherwise undertaken community-based advocacy faced barriers; these saw limited discussion of many relevant subjects which are considered taboo.

Institutional challenges

Programmes undertaking to achieve long-term institutional, governance, and policy impacts face an extraordinary set of challenges in Iraq. Corruption, nepotism, legitimacy, administrative ambiguity, and shifting borders, not to mention ongoing conflict and insecurity, raise barriers to the achievement of change to, and through, policy and governance. This was observed to be true in South Sudan as well, a fragile state, which may indicate that less developed countries face outsized challenges in this area.

Traditional attitudes toward children and their role in society

Traditional attitudes toward children's roles in society and capacity to contribute and participate effectively are barriers to broader achievements in this area. Children are often seen as too young, or that dissent and contrary opinions can be seen as disrespectful when engaging with adults. This was exemplified by the way in which many representatives of the child rights clubs engaged with staff for the first portion of most workshops: standing rigidly, in a line, repeating the written description of the purpose of the clubs, their roles within them, and what they were meant to do/achieve. Children in some cases appeared to be uncomfortable engaging with adults in a more equal exchange, and often took up to an hour of not insignificant effort to coax broader and more equal engagements.

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Cross-programme implementation, organic child participation

In Bor, positive outcomes were highlighted by many stakeholders when child participation was able to create linkages with other child-focused programmes. One key example of this comprised the creation of a debate club, which appears to have seen genuine and enthusiastic participation. SCN's child participation clubs appeared to have some overlap with the debate club, but the latter seemed to be a genuine and organic expression of child enthusiasm and interest. Many of the skills learned, and much of the confidence gained, across both clubs appears to have emerged as a result of mutual reinforcement and alignment of interests, with children gaining the skills and confidence they needed to engage with the regional government. These same children were many of the key players in several of the previously-described impacts.

Educational challenges, and engagement with abstract concepts

Poor educational quality within some target schools may have served as an impediment to broader outcomes; namely, that education regarding the UNCRC and principles of child participation may in some cases have relied on teachers in need of development with regard to pedagogical capacity. Many of these staff, who were often responsible for overseeing relevant child participation activities independent of direct SC support, may also have had limited understanding of child participation and the principles and approaches meant to underpin it. Further to challenges in educational quality, many children (from primary to secondary age) faced challenges in engaging with abstract concepts and critical thought, often preferring instead to repeat generic programme and activity descriptions when asked to probe deeper into ideas and concepts, or gravitating toward discussion of those rights, concepts, and principles that were more concrete and material in nature (e.g. access to education, health care, shoes, etc.).

Efficiency

Cost efficiency and resource restrictions

Many of the child participation initiatives, as designed, appear to be cost efficient. Integration in other programmes (e.g. education, and child protection) is a core component of this, as is use of staff working across mainstreamed child participation initiatives, and cross-sectoral work. Many initiatives (the Cambodia case is particularly instructive here) appeared to achieve even greater efficiencies through collaboration with organisations and programmes external to Save The Children, working to distribute costs and promote wider participation, thereby improving efficiency. However, the cost efficiency (or rather low resource allocations to child participation) may be limiting the potential impact and effectiveness of child participation, particularly given challenges in effective mainstreaming and implementation highlighted throughout the report.

Limited budgets will almost certainly have had an impact on the degree to which staff are willing to emphasise child participation initiatives – this appears to be the case in preceding analyses, and was highlighted in discussions with myriad stakeholders. Similarly, there are few if any staff whose primary focus at the country level comprises child participation, making availability of expertise in-country a substantial challenge.

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Internal efficiency

Internal efficiency is the relationship between the outputs and inputs of a system. A range of the factors discussed previously, primarily with regard to challenges with turnover, continuity, and unclear alignments between inputs and outputs, will necessarily have had an impact on the internal efficiency of the system. Some of the country programmes, particularly Cambodia, have stronger such relationships which may be able to inform delivery in other contexts, while others (like South Sudan) may face challenges in the alignment of inputs to outcomes and impacts.

SC oversight mechanisms

Oversight of interventions was uneven across the targeted contexts. The better infrastructure, improved stability, and longer history of delivery meant that some child participation initiatives were much better aligned to standards than the other contexts. Among those struggling to implement child participation well, there was a clear distinction between the field office and project implementers and the country office level and Oslo. In this regard, communications challenges, limited mobility between sites, relatively infrequent support and visit by experts, and challenges in securing accurate and up-to-date data on implementation were all key challenges. Field-based operations often appeared to diverge substantially from the designs of SCN and the description of more senior stakeholders. The Historical Analysis section highlights how some of these challenges may have been exacerbated in recent years by a shift in SC's international management structure, and also how things may be strengthened moving ahead.

Resource requirements highlighted by country teams

This was an area of focus integrated at SCN's request to the efficiency section: a focus on what offices indicated they needed to better implement child participation. When asked, many staff, beneficiaries, and partners requested a range of supports from vehicles, to more staff, to more money for activities. However, many of the requests had unclear rationales, as the funding requests often related to initiatives with zero marginal cost (for example, child advocacy activities in school communities where peace clubs had already been established). As a result of this, and other challenges, establishing real needs remains difficult. However, if more funds are to be allocated to child participation in the future, careful consideration should be made of what is appropriate to fund, working closely with country teams to ensure they understand what effective approaches to child participation are, and how greater resources can be used to achieve desired ends (rather than serving as an additional budget with limited targeted, planned use).

Sustainability

Working with strong existing institutions, creating long-lasting linkages

Working with strong existing institutions – both government and community-based – was key to achieving lasting outcomes. This was the case across many of the programmes studied. Building on existing structures, rather than trying to start from scratch, while also ensuring long-term, collaborative relationships were built (see relevant discussions on effectiveness) were seen to further support long-term, sustainable outcomes.

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Working with other CSOs and NGOs

Successful child participation sought to draw on the support of CSOs and other groups that are not always within the focus of child participation. Examples of projects working with local women's committees, or CSOs focusing on environmental protection, show how wider integration and participation of children can achieve sustained outcomes. Ensuring these have their capacities built effectively (through ensuring both training and long-term follow-up and mentoring) were highlighted as key means of accomplishing sustainable outcomes.

Driving an independent mind-set

Child participation initiatives endeavouring to drive independence in beneficiaries, particularly in driving non-reliance on aid and SCI provision, appeared to achieve strong impacts. This was seen by some to manifest itself in child participation initiatives by a lack of independent initiative on the part of children or trained adults due to not having funds; very often, funds were being requested for things that did not necessarily need to be paid for. Combined with the previous activities, such approaches can have strong and sustainable outcomes. Dependence on aid is necessarily an obstacle to sustainability, and minimising such challenges can be important (Moss, Gelander, & Walle, 2006).

Seeing change as long-term

M&E timelines are often focused on a very limited scope and timeframe, looking only at the finite project period. However, a focus on longer term outcomes and continued follow up and validation has the potential to promote sustainability, or at least an accurate understanding of what outcomes have in fact been sustainable.

Differences between countries, contexts of Displacement

Sustainability between countries varied, with clear relationships to presence of conflict and on-going challenges in poverty- and displacement-affected countries. In Iraq for example, emergency requirements and the challenges of displacement and population mobility make sustained outcomes from child participation a substantial challenge. In South Sudan, basic needs (education, food, etc.) often supersede considerations of child participation, with resurgent conflict consistently causing challenges to making gains in child participation. Such considerations will necessarily impact on sustainability of child participation outcomes, and will need appropriate consideration in programme design.

Uneven understanding

Within the target countries, many stakeholders did not always appear to understand the concepts and rationales underpinning child participation. This was true even with many SCI field staff who considered child participation to mean participation in activities relating to education, sport, and art, rather than the definition informing this review. Such uneven understanding will necessarily impact on the sustainability of programming past SCN's support. However, in those field locations where understanding was stronger (e.g. Cambodia) programmes were observed to have more characteristics of sustainability.

Limited follow-up, and institutional stability

Many of the legal and institutional capacity building impacts achieved across relevant initiatives are challenged by high rates of turnover and poor institutional stability. South Sudan and Iraq

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are key examples of this, with conflict, poverty, and political instability serving as barriers to sustained outcomes in the realm of governance, policy, and institutional capacity building.

Linkages between short-term and long-term activities

In some cases, it seems that activities are not clearly aligned to long-term impacts, nor are the medium-term linkages between these often well understood. They are often designed on the basis of historical delivery, or with a view to the end of the project period and little more. Such practice may serve as a barrier to achieving sustainable impacts and outcomes.

Reliance on aid

In some cases, respondents highlighted the need for additional funds or support; this was even in cases where low- or no-cost models of delivery (e.g. children's clubs, child-driven community advocacy) had been implemented. There were several accounts of complete discontinuation of child participation activities after donor funds went away; such accounts were not, in fact, uncommon, in spite of child participation design that was intended to be more sustainable in nature. Child participation mainstreaming in programme delivery was broadly seen to be conditional on receiving aid money.

Programming may be driving pragmatic response in some country-level stakeholders, many of whom understand the aid sector very well, and understand how to give the right answers with regard to SCN's child participation initiatives. This was exemplified by several engagements the team had both with government stakeholders and country level staff in the target locations. Eloquent, detailed descriptions of programme activities and impacts were given by many members of staff, while the activities observed did not always align completely with those descriptions. It is possible that continued implementation of programmes with limited control of, or insight into, real achievements could serve to continue driving a culture of pragmatic response (i.e. telling donors what they want to hear), and allow the continued use of funds for initiatives that may not achieve desired impacts.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been structured along the OECD DAC criteria. The relevant lessons learned to which they correspond have been enumerated within each recommendation subsection. It should be noted that many of these recommendations are relevant to multiple OECD DAC criteria; they have been placed in those DAC criteria subsections where they are most appropriate.

Relevance Recommendations

Stakeholder and partner mapping, sustained relationships

Relevant Lesson Learned - Relevance

✓   Targeting of stakeholders for engagement

The relevance of programme implementation, particularly in new countries, might benefit from effective partner or stakeholder mapping during planning and inception. Some recommendations in the recent Partnerships Report also spoke to this. In the countries visited, particularly in the new countries, it was unclear the degree to which this was systematically implemented; many key stakeholders for those issues and challenges facing children were not systematically included in relevant participation targeting. It appeared that in many cases, child participation was implemented on the basis of external frameworks or recommendations in this regard, which may have limited the positive effects of programming that engages stakeholders or partners.

Similarly, understanding that stakeholder and partner engagements implemented over the long term and on a 'horizontal' basis, rather than one where NGO staff lecture partners or demand audiences for children, can be more impactful. Helping key staff understand this, while also supporting them in the identification and cultivation of effective partners, has the potential to reap positive dividends for programming.

Humanitarian vs Development contexts

Relevant Lesson Learned - Relevance

✓   Humanitarian vs Development programming

It was clear in preceding analyses that humanitarian and emergency contexts, as well as those with particularly fragile socio-political characteristics, pose substantial challenges to effective and impactful implementation of child participation initiatives, particularly where the mainstreamed approach is the primary focus. Furthermore, there is limited evidence on what really works, beyond output data or anecdotal evidence (some of which is questionable in its reliability); this poses barriers to understanding what actually works, and how to align delivery

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with need, in these responses. Challenges were particularly apparent in the following areas: governance capacity building; policy and regulatory reform; displacement minimising long-term impacts; severe need in other areas considered by many to be more important (e.g. food security, WASH, health, etc.); particularly high staff turnover; and others discussed above.

However, there appears to be limited discussion during the planning and implementation phase on what is feasible to achieve, and what is really needed, across what timeframes in emergency or humanitarian responses. Child participation can have a range of outcomes from personal wellbeing or skill development, on to local community mechanism strengthening, on to national government strengthening. Detailed discussion, on the basis of strong evidence as discussed elsewhere in this recommendations section, endeavouring to highlight which of these outcomes and impacts are realistic within a project period, why, and how this might link to long-term outcomes, has the potential to promote improve relevance, internal efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of programming.

It may be the case, on the basis of available evidence, that contexts like Iraq may fare best by focussing on wellbeing, skill building, and parent-child relationships through child participation, bearing in mind substantial displacement and mobility challenges. Contexts like Iraq are plagued with substantial institutional instability, shifting control, and continued armed conflict, making any engagement beyond this not only challenging, but also dangerous. In the South Sudanese context, those programmes seeking to work with governmental structures may face substantial obstacles in institutional weakness and inertia, indicating community engagements may be more impactful. Development contexts like Cambodia offer more opportunities to attack the full spectrum of goals promoted by child participation initiatives. These comprise only selected (and indicative) examples from those countries visited by the consultants. Each country will likely need to have its own set of discussions of what is realistic and why. SCN may need to work to promote a culture of open discussion and debate, seeking to resolve concerns that international donors are fixated on a specific set of approaches or outcomes. Discussions of how SC and partners can implement the tenets of the Grand Bargain may also be appropriate here.

Effectiveness Recommendations

Detailed operational review of child participation guidelines, tools, and resources

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓	Sufficient and appropriate training and resources

✓	Adapting to local attitudes and needs, gaining buy-in

✓	Effective inclusion of children

✓	Leadership priorities

Save the Children has a dizzying array of guidance documents, policies, technical manuals, and similar such resources. Taken together, the (online and internal) available resources total thousands of pages, and may contradict or overlap each other to varying degrees. Many SC staff have limited time, needing to attend various trainings, seminars, and capacity building activities, while attending to their own responsibilities. Parsing this material, even for those whose passions or job descriptions focus on relevant child participation issues, can be a substantial challenge. This is even more the case for SMTs, whose time and attention are even more limited than sector specialists, but whose support has been identified as critical in the effective implementation of child participation.

As such, it may be appropriate to undertake a review of all available material with an eye to restructuring and better targeting available materials. As with any training or capacity building programme, this should begin with a discussion of required **learning outcomes** ('is it CSMART?'), with materials built around them. It is further recommended this framework (or curriculum) be broken down (or differentiated) according to **key stakeholder category or type** (e.g. children, government officials, SMTs, education specialists, MEAL officers, etc.). Initial thoughts on the structure of this curriculum, and key themes of focus can be found below – please note that these have been drawn from the consultant's reading of the evidence arising from this study, and are intended to touch off an internal discussion at SCN as to what needs to be learned, by whom, to ensure effective implementation:

- *Background Knowledge, Philosophical Underpinnings of Child Participation*
  - *UNCRC*
  - *9 UN Standards*
  - *Ethics and Protection*
  - *Child Participation Theory of Change[10]*
- *Action research Theory, and Iterative Programme Planning and Design*

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[10] *revised in keeping with subsequent recommendations*

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- *Approaches to Child Participation*
  - *Short term*
  - *Medium term*
  - *Long term*
- *Monitoring and Evaluating Child Participation[11]*

Please note that the component learning outcomes should be broken down in a high degree of detail, in keeping with best practice in curriculum design and effective instruction (Ko & Monk, 2014). The approach here should be to distil the key knowledge and skills necessary for effective implementation of child participation, promoting more effective dissemination of knowledge and standards of practice. Space for local culture, language, or other contextual requirements can be incorporated within whatever materials emerge.

Finally, any such guidance or capacity building documents should seek to replace those that have come to populate SC's resource repositories. The purpose of this exercise is to minimise the confusion highlighted by some stakeholders as to the quantity of training materials and other resources available on child participation, while also creating capacity building and training programmes which fit within available time and resources for all stakeholder categories.

Continuity and quality of stakeholder and partner engagement

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓ Long-term relationships, communication, and collaboration

✓ Adapting to local attitudes and needs, gaining buy-in

✓ Appropriate understanding and emphasis, managed expectations

Those stakeholder engagements (with partners, government officials, school stakeholders, and other key stakeholders) characterised as longer term, 'horizontal', and more 'genuine', with authentic attempts made to build sustained relationships, were often seen as being more impactful and promoting sustainability of programming. Those characterised as short-term, 'tokenistic' in nature, or not linked to genuine attempts at long term relationship building were inversely characterised as detrimental to SC's efforts in child participation. Seeking to promote quality over 'quantity' or 'frequency' of relationships may be useful in this regard; later discussions on monitoring and evaluation may be useful in establishing benchmarks or measurement mechanisms in this area.

Further to this, working closely with existing institutions and organisations, rather than seeking to create new ones, was characterised as a key factor facilitating success in partnership-oriented

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[11] *see preceding recommendations on M&E*

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interventions. As such, identifying and working with existing institutions with the interest and engagement can be key to success moving ahead.

Such entities are best leveraged where children are involved and children's issues are regularly discussed independent of NGO support. These same groups can also engage in 'child participation by proxy', raising issues and challenges with higher-level and government stakeholders in fora where children may not be present.

Strengthening M&E and the action research cycle

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓ Sufficient and appropriate training and resources

✓ Effective inclusion of children

✓ Monitoring and evaluation, outcome targeting

✓ Iterations of programme design

✓ Defining mainstreaming, documenting best practice

Much of this section on recommendations focusses on the importance of M&E, and its linkages to action research. However, substantial capacity building may be necessary at the country and field level. It may be appropriate to invest in M&E across all of SCN's targeted sectors, not just child participation, as many of the approaches and challenges identified are not specific to child participation programming. It will still be important to ensure these stakeholders get specific training on M&E for child participation, but this can be a subcomponent of a broader training package that provides the necessary ('transferrable') skills.

As was discussed in the preceding lessons learned subsection on systems, as well as the relevant section in the main body of the report, there can exist incentives within the aid sector to exaggerate certainty that programmes achieve their desired impacts. Similarly, there can be incentives to insist that there is a substantial evidence base to support such assertions. Closely related to this is a desire to be seen as decisive, and to act in response to emergent challenges: "Yes, but, good grief, should we just do nothing at all then?" (Gourevitch, 2010)

While these attitudes may be pragmatic or even noble in most cases, they can result in a reluctance to state simply 'we don't know, and we don't have enough evidence to say for certain'. This is the case in some sections of this very report: the time and resources available to the consultancy team did not provide sufficient opportunity to comprehensively document and establish firm answers to all research questions, nor find firm evidence that child participation programming contributes (or does not contribute) to all the impacts and outcomes targeted by child participation.

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What has been identified, however, are substantial challenges in ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Collected evidence and data may not be well aligned to reflective, iterative, and impact-oriented programmatic design; outputs are prioritised over outcomes/impacts, and some outcome indicators are poorly understood. This lack of data and evidence, and the uneven existence of systems for their collection, may be impeding not only the consultancy team's understanding of the impacts and outcomes in focus, but may also impede effective understanding, planning, and programmatic iteration by SCN and country teams.

Consequently, this M&E recommendation section has been discussed first. Effective response to challenges required detailed, systematic, and actionable evidence to be collected and disseminated. The consultants have endeavoured to minimise 'overstating the case' making recommendations where there exists limited evidence to support one; the attempt here is to provide recommendations on specific M&E systems and approaches to underpin future programme implementation and iteration. Where there is sufficient primary or secondary evidence to make recommendations further to M&E, these have been discussed in substantial detail in later subsections.

Furthermore, understanding of M&E within an 'action research' framework is well aligned with the broader focus, and subsequent recommendations, of this study. Data and evidence mean little if they are not used appropriately, and action research can promote strong use of evidence leading to demonstrable programmatic improvements (AR, 2017). While traditionally considered the realm of educationalists, actors (including SCI in recent years) have moved to apply the action research framework to development and aid programming incorporating more than just education programming (SCUK, 2018).
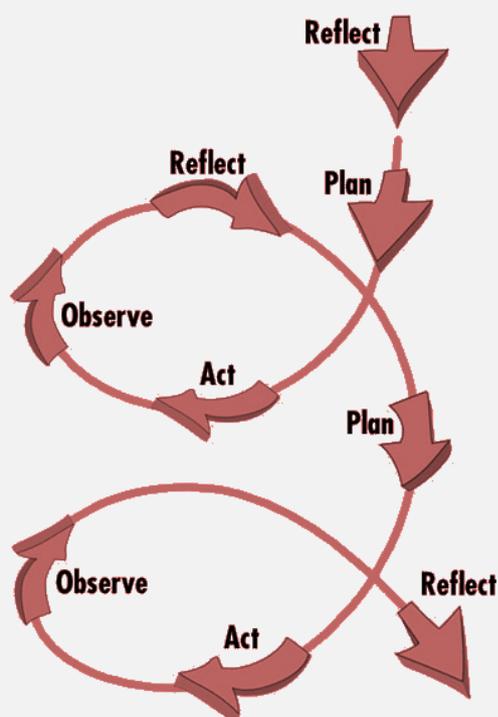
Action research is an approach which is appropriate in any context when 'specific knowledge is required for a specific problem in a specific situation, or when a new approach is to be grafted on to an existing system'. It is not a method or a technique. As in all research, the methods selected for gathering information depend on the nature of the information required. It is applied research, carried out by practitioners who have themselves identified a need for change or improvement, sometimes with support from outside the institution; other times not. The aim is 'to arrive at recommendations for good practice that will tackle a problem or enhance the performance of the organization and individuals through changes to the rules and procedures within which they operate' (Bell & Waters, 2014).

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This process necessitates open identification and discussion of challenges, needs, and problems (including those internal to SC), leading to reflection on available evidence (or lack thereof) to design a targeted response against which hypotheses will be tested through ongoing assessment and reflection (ideally supported by triangulated evidence collection linked closely to well understood and defined outcomes and impacts). Actions are fundamentally iterative and progressive (not repetitive), seeking to continuously achieve better alignment with what achieves the best impact with available resources.

To date, it is unclear such open and un-self-conscious discussions of challenges and failings are happening at the country level, nor is the required data on outcomes and impacts systematically collected and used effectively. Revision of approaches to child participation may consequently suffer.

'This view of learning is based on the assumption that [practitioners] learn from experience through focused reflection on the nature and meaning of [their work]... it can lead to a better understanding of one's [professional] practices and routines.' (Richards and Farrell, 2005)

While action research provides the framework in which M&E data can be applied, it remains to define those systemic characteristics that offer the most potential for future delivery:

M&E system itself subject to action research approach

The M&E system itself must be subject to continuous revision, ensuring its approaches, focuses, and components are aligned to achievement of the desired outcomes and impacts (not outputs); the action research approach should underpin this process as with implementation of programmes.

Impacts & Outcomes vs. Outputs

Stakeholders, particularly those designing and implementing M&E frameworks, systems, and plans, must understand the difference between outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Such gaps in understanding have been identified by the consultancy team in this study and myriad others. Limited understanding may underpin implementation challenges in many countries, and limit the degree to which funding bodies like SCN can be certain their programmes are achieving their desired ends.

Consistent and thorough guidance on indicator use

Further to the previous recommendation, all outcome and impact indicators must offer sufficient guidance to ensure consistent and effective calculation and measurement across all portfolio countries. Some indicators (e.g. % improvement in sense of safety and wellbeing) appear to be quantitative on the surface, but when implemented are subject to wide interpretations and varying methods of calculation (even within country offices adopting these indicators). Consequently, country offices can face challenges in understanding and implementation (frustrating key staff), and SCN and Norad may not be sure all statistics are measuring the same (or similar) things the same way.

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Understand that child participation outcomes & impacts can be difficult to define and measure

Many of the outcomes and impacts thought to emerge from child participation can be a challenge to define and measure. The specification of these should be subject to continuous revision, seeking to achieve continuous improvement and alignment with the dynamic sociocultural contexts in which SCN operates. This should, however, be undertaken to ensure a degree of comparability to previously collected data remains across all revisions (see later recommendations).

Short-, Medium-, Long-Term Outcomes aligned with revised ToC[12], track across FWAs

In keeping with later recommendations on strengthening Child Participation's Theory of Change at Save the Children, M&E should undertake to set short-, medium-, and long-term indicators which can collect data across multiple FWAs or projects, allowing for effective tracking of outcome or impact trajectories over time. Such systems do not currently exist, with most (if not all) M&E happening in relative isolation (i.e. outcome/impact performance is not compared against previous FWA M&E exercises, aside from some selected policy outcomes). Setting such indicators, and targets, to be interlinking and progressive will be important, and will likely be subject to iteration and reflective redesign on the basis of successes and failures of implementation.

Whilst ensuring wide engagement in the development process for these can be important (soliciting a wide range of views to minimise errors of omission or exclusive results), development of these indicators by committee can cause substantial challenges. It is often the case that understanding of strong M&E within organisations is uneven, and some stakeholders may forcefully advocate on behalf of a set of indicators that (while well intentioned) are not well aligned with best practice in effective measurement, and can defeat the purpose of M&E reforms.

Accounting for misaligned incentives

Ensuring M&E systems minimise reliance on 'beneficiary counts' or output-driven measures of success will be important; this can only be accomplished through close oversight and strong feedback provided to country offices. All M&E systems must ensure outputs, impacts, and outcomes are measured effectively, that discussions of challenge and failure are openly held, and that genuine reflection underpins all M&E and programmatic implementation.

Triangulation

Indicators should, as far as is possible, rely on multiple data sources and data collection tools; 'triangulation' across these different evidence types and resources will reduce the chances that self-reporting or biased sources will distort findings, and result in best practice going unnoticed, or that bad practice continue to receive funding.

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[12] Theory of Change

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Incorporates children effectively

Further to SC policy, and recommendations in the effectiveness section, incorporating child participation in M&E processes may be important for achieving SC goals. However, this participation must have clearly defined purposes and outcomes (not done for its own sake), and must minimise any opportunities for ethics or protection violations emerging from such activities.

This process will need to be internally led by SCN, with key insights arising through strong leadership and close consultation with relevant stakeholders. The systems, templates, and approaches that emerge must also receive continuous revision, ensuring effective alignment. Given that SCI's global child participation indicator has recently been abandoned, and there does not appear to be anything filling its place, this exercise may provide opportunities for SCN to lead M&E reform in the child participation space.

Defining mainstreaming, documenting best practice

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓   Effective inclusion of children

✓   Iterations of programme design

✓   Defining mainstreaming, documenting best practice

The concept of mainstreaming on its own may warrant a targeted study with limited scope, seeking to document best practice as substantiated by evidence on impact and outcomes. Best practice might also benefit from a contextualised breakdown, endeavouring to identify key best practices that interact with certain cultural components or practices. Anecdotal evidence, while useful for contextualisation, may not provide the complete picture required to guide future delivery. It may also be useful to wait on this study until later recommendations on definition of impacts, outcomes, and refinement of M&E systems have been implemented, offering a framework on which the relevant study can build.

Clear outcomes for child participation activities

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓   Appropriate understanding and emphasis, managed expectations

✓   Monitoring and evaluation, outcome targeting

✓   Iterations of programme design

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Children are more involved, and programming more impactful, where outcomes of their participation are both clearly articulated and understood by all stakeholders. Management of children's expectations in this regard is also important to minimise risk of disappointment resulting in attrition. As such, child participation as an end in itself might be avoided in future programming, with key stakeholders holding strong understanding of how to ensure outcomes are well defined, communicated, and achieved in all relevant programmes.

Iterative programme design, documentation of rationale

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓   Monitoring and evaluation, outcome targeting

✓   Iterations of programme design

✓   Defining mainstreaming, documenting best practice

Planning and programme design does appear to draw on lessons learned from previous rounds of delivery. The sections on "Effectiveness' and 'Relevance' touched on this in some detail. However, it does still appear that programme design and implementation experiences limited 'iteration', in other words building on lessons learned which are linked to impactful practice. Very often, programmes are designed because previous output indicators were achieved, with limited discussion of what has been impactful and what evidence supports ongoing implementation of a specific activity. Much evidence used in support of programme design therefore tends to comprise successful outputs in previous rounds or anecdotal evidence, or programming can be delivered in keeping with international guidance with limited reflection on what has worked in the past and why. In other cases, limited documentation of rationales can be provided at all. Taken together, it is unclear the degree to which programme design is iterative, building on lessons learned, challenges, and strong evidence arising from previous rounds of delivery.

As such, future planning may wish to build upon those recommendations below on Monitoring and Evaluation, undertaking much more explicit programmatic modification and iteration on the basis of strong M&E. Similarly, mid-programme reviews might also consider having a more iterative component, using the mid-term review as an opportunity to undertake more concerted programme modification and improvement, rather than treating the exercise as a simple reporting requirement (as it appeared to be from many mid-term reports submitted).

Such approaches may also support the adaptation of programming to local contexts and needs. It can often be a challenge to know what is, or is not, locally relevant from the outset of a new intervention or strategy. However, systematic documentation of results, impacts, challenges, and successes can provide substantial strengthening of local and contextual relevance, as well as provide an evidence base on which good practice can be promoted and disseminated in similar national contexts.

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Ensuring understanding, managing expectations

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓   Appropriate understanding and emphasis, managed expectations

This section links closely to lessons learned, and effectiveness discussions, documenting challenges in complete understanding of child participation principles and approaches. Many key implementing stakeholders at the field level appeared to lack this understanding, limiting the potential impact they can have in the targeted areas. While these stakeholders may have received training or instruction in these concepts and approaches, this training can often be very short term in nature, or even delivered by those with limited understanding themselves. There can be an assumption that because they have been trained, they must know the concepts and approaches. However, one-off delivery of training or lecturing with limited formative and ongoing assessment of learning outcomes (for adults and children), and not supported by follow-up and mentorship, appeared to be common (though not universal) means of instruction in this area. Substantial research has established that such approaches have minimal positive impact on learning and capacity outcomes (Ko & Monk, 2014) (Antoniou & Mohan, 2016). Steps can be taken to revise these approaches (see later discussions on capacity building and M&E), ensuring better alignment with international best practice, and ensuring the minimum required knowledge and skills are in place prior to programme implementation.

Within these attempts to ensure understanding, understanding of realistic outcomes and managed expectations might also be appropriate. Ensuring all participants understand what might reasonably be expected within available timeframes, trying to longer-term outcomes, might promote reduced frustration and longer-term engagement with initiatives.

Framing child participation as teaching opportunity

Relevant Lesson Learned - Effectiveness

✓   Adapting to local attitudes and needs, gaining buy-in

✓   Appropriate understanding and emphasis, managed expectations

✓   Effective inclusion of children

SC documentation, as well as discussions with key SCN stakeholders, highlighted the degree to which child participation is both an opportunity for children to influence systems and decisions affecting their lives, as well as an opportunity to teach them how to engage with governments as effective, informed citizens when they become adults. Teaching children how to communicate effectively and advocate on their own behalf can also be an important outcome of

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these engagements. The former was often well understood and emphasised within the field offices visited. However, the latter did not receive as much attention. As such, not only may some children be missing out on strong learning opportunities, but SC may also be missing out on an opportunity. Much resistance within the targeted contexts appeared to be cultural, with stakeholders being unwilling to listen to children or engage with their views with the desired degree of seriousness. However, many of these same resistant stakeholders may welcome the opportunity to instruct children in effective participation and citizenship. If well structured by SC staff and partners, this approach may better align with local sensibilities, while also acting as a 'back door' for children to provide their views to key rights bearers and then have them genuinely considered.

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Impact Recommendations

Please note that many of the recommendations in effectiveness will also have relationships with improved impact. Those recommendations with a clear, and more exclusive, impact focus have been incorporated in this section.

Cognitive maturity, abstract concepts

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓ Cultural challenges

✓ Educational challenges, and engagement with abstract concepts

As discussed in the sections on 'Effectiveness', 'Impact' and in "Lessons Learned", it appeared that cognitive maturity and capacity to engage with abstract concepts was varied across age groups, and even across countries. For example, it appeared that children of the same age in South Sudan and Iraq demonstrated substantially different capacities to engage with independent critical thought, and abstract concepts. Similarly, children of 8 and children of 14 within South Sudan were also substantially different in these capacities. Differences in natural cognitive development, education quality, and nutrition may underpin many of these distinctions (Nyaradi, Li, Hickling, Foster, & Oddy, 2013) (Hall, et al., 2009).

However, planning, targeted outcomes, and programmes did not appear to take this into account; at least not explicitly. Approaches did not appear to be scaled according to ability, with programme implementers applying single frameworks to varied abilities and needs. Within teaching practice, having 'differentiated' outcomes is standard practice (Stronge, n.d.) (Ko & Monk, 2014), and such approaches may inform effective mainstreaming of child participation, ensuring children of varied levels and cognitive abilities can substantively engage with child participation, and promote improved progress of individual outcomes.

Contingency planning for systemic challenges

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓ Clean and safe environment for children to play in, congregate, and engage what is important for them

✓ Programme alignment to humanitarian context

✓ Staff turnover

✓ Training, monitoring, and mentoring mechanisms

✓ Institutional challenges

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In several analyses, international historical and systemic challenges (external to SC) were highlighted as potential barriers to programmatic quality; in some cases, they may even act as an incentive to avoid 'higher-risk' delivery that is more impactful or useful from a learning perspective (in case of failure). The key points of reference here comprise: the SCI merger; and incentive structures present within donor reporting and funding. It does seem, both in primary discussions and in the literature (Pritchett, 2002), that there is limited internal discussion within SC and in the wider development community as to what impact these may be having on delivery of programming. This may lead to potential unwillingness to have open and honest discussions about what needs to change within current planning and delivery, and why, to promote impact over conformance to (at times arbitrary) (Pritchett, 2002) reporting requirements.

Other common challenges may not receive sufficient contingency planning. Staff turnover, institutional priority shifts, local culture and resistance, institutional weakness, and other such 'systemic' or 'contextual' challenges do not often receive substantial attention in planning and design phases; they are cited as potential challenges, but little else is done beyond this. These challenges tended to be the most substantial barriers facing achievement of programme targets in reviewed programme documents, with limited substantive (documented) discussion of how these can or will be accounted for in future delivery.

Having open and honest discussions at the outset of programme design (both in SCN and at the country level) as to how these factors may be influencing the current round of programming, and how such challenges can be concretely mitigated, might be impactful. The creation of an explicit planning, or risk assessment, exercise focussed on these levels of challenge – drawing on historic lessons of what was best about previous systems – might be a positive step in this regard. Avoiding such exercises becoming tokenistic will be a substantial challenge; SCN may need to work toward the creation of appropriate approaches and strategies to address these issues across its portfolio.

Gender review

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓   Traditional gender roles limiting participation

It was clear from analyses that there remain gender distinctions in participation and engagement, but that the reasons for these remain poorly understood or that there is limited attempt to address them. Detailed discussion of what can realistically be done, and to what ends, might be appropriate for future programming. Discussions may be useful to have in the future, as there is limited evidence on what works in the targeted contexts given challenges faced in effective documentation and M&E discussed in previous sections. Addressing the data and understanding gap first, then undertaking evidence-informed action in response to challenges, has the best possible chances for success.

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Spaces for children outside SC or schools

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓ Clean and safe environment for children to play in, congregate, and engage what is important for them

In Cambodia, explicit efforts were made toward ensuring children were able to congregate, and engage in genuinely child-led programmes outside of either school facilities (which can be locked after school) or SC's facilities (which are not often child friendly spaces). This appeared to drive substantial endogenous and genuinely child-led successes in that country. However, children in other countries do not always appear to have spaces outside the school to congregate, nor do they seem to do so independent of the schools or CFSs where child participation initiatives (though SC support) are delivered. This may limit organic meetings, and extra-curricular engagement in child participation. As such, it may be useful to think carefully about how such spaces can be created or identified, and used (safely), to promote genuinely child-led initiatives independent of direct facilitation by SC or partner organisations.

Ensuring designated spaces for child participation are also clean and safe were seen to promote improved participation, and parent willingness for children to participate, in all target contexts. This can continue to guide SC implementation for greater impact.

Rights and responsibilities education

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓ Non-comprehension of all Child Participation principles

✓ Traditional attitudes toward children and their role in society

Linking to previous lessons learned on potential challenges present in education on rights and responsibilities, it may be appropriate to revisit the degree to which child participation (and child rights programmes by extension) are able to achieve the following: teaching about children's rights within the UNCRC; teaching children realistic strategies and approaches for achieving these (without over-reliance on NGOs and governments); and teaching children what their *responsibilities* are within the UNCRC framework, and how they have a responsibility to support their families, communities and governments achieve the desired end goals. Such responsibilities extend beyond advocacy and 'demanding' rights, but taking individual, achievable agency in moving themselves and their countries forward toward achievement of the UNCRC.

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Elite capture

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓ Elite capture

✓ Cultural challenges

It was unclear the degree to which 'elite capture' was indicative of programme failures, or if such outcomes are necessarily a bad thing. Some SCN and country-level stakeholders indicated that these individuals are those that will almost certainly go on to influence their communities and state, and that regardless of their background resources and relative need/vulnerability, should be engaged on this basis. It may be worthwhile for SCN and partners to undertake discussions as to the best way to leverage these 'elites' to achieve wider participation, rather than seek to penalise or exclude them. Please note that this recommendation does not seek to allow for complete elite capture; it promotes use of elites to achieve better participation and inclusion of less advantaged individuals and communities.

School curriculum crossover, teaching and child participation

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓ Teachers who are well trained and continuously supported through techniques

✓ Short-term and one-off teacher training programmes

✓ Cross-programme implementation, organic Child Participation

✓ Educational challenges, and engagement with abstract concepts

Endogenous child mobilisation was observed to arise more readily in those programmes where child participation and child rights were embedded in the broader school curriculum, and regularly addressed though ongoing instruction. Tokenistic and extracurricular programming may not have so strong an impact. It also appears that child participation initiatives were more impactful where teaching staff were also implementing 'pupil-centred' teaching methodologies; the approaches to teaching and child participation may be very well aligned in terms of their intended outcomes and behavioural changes. Future programming may learn lessons from this finding of the primary research (in Cambodia).

Mentorship, embedded expertise

Relevant Lesson Learned - Impact

✓ Teachers who are well trained and continuously supported through techniques

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✓   Short-term and one-off teacher training programmes

✓   Non-comprehension of all Child Participation principles

✓   Training, monitoring, and mentoring mechanisms

✓   Institutional challenges

✓   Cross-programme implementation, organic Child Participation

Throughout stakeholder discussions, and review of the primary and secondary evidence, one key approach to capacity building was identified as being most impactful: availability of long-term mentorship and follow-up support from genuine experts. This was one element of the historical (pre-merger) SCN system that several lamented losing, indicating that the current systems of 'advisors' and 'specialists' may provide insufficient direct engagement on ongoing personalised support to individuals who have a genuine interest in becoming excellent at their jobs (this is not to say the current advisors and specialists are not doing their jobs, but rather their time and resources are so limited that there is only so much they can do).

As such, SCN might endeavour to implement one or more of the following approaches (highlighted in discussion with key stakeholders at SCN and at the country level):

- Permanent Staff Mentorship: Choosing skilled mentors at SCN, or in other country offices, to provide distance-based support to 1-2 mentees across the portfolio.

- Roving Mentor: Hiring of a 'permanent mentor' to engage in 3-4 month rotations in 1-2 countries, supporting key country staff in the field on an ongoing basis.

- Country Mentors: This approach necessitates a stakeholder in-country with sufficient understanding and expertise in child participation to be effective in this role. Selection of an unskilled person, even with the expectation they receive a 2-3 week training session prior to becoming mentors, are unlikely to be effective *(Antoniou & Mohan, 2016)*.

Mentees in all cases should be people who will have primary responsibility for child participation programming; it may also be necessary to take steps to minimise concerns relating to staff turnover and promote commitment among selected mentees. Steps should also be taken to ensure that all capacity building (whether formal, or on-the-job) be linked to those learning outcomes and guidance notes discussed in the previous recommendation.

This approach is likely to be slower and more costly than more traditional lecture-based models. However, it is the only one likely to have the desired impact. Provision of in-person and ongoing support with those holding genuine expertise is supported by a range of evidence as the most effective means of training and capacity building (Antoniou & Mohan, 2016) (Tripney & Hombrados, 2013)**.**

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Niger Mentorship Case Study

In the course of discussions with SCN staff in Oslo, the topic of mentorship arose with several stakeholders. Several people, including the consultant, pointed to a key person, or several people, who had provided important, personal, and on-the-job guidance and support at key phases in their careers, particularly in the early days of a new role or specialism. It was broadly agreed that (in their personal experience) on-the-job learning, supported by a genuine expert, was often more effective than online sessions, capacity building lectures, or other, similar, short-term approaches to training and capacity building.

Several of these informants lamented the loss of one positive aspect of SCN direct-delivery in beneficiary countries: the historical structure offered more organic opportunities for international-local mentorships to be established, leading to the subsequent transfers of expertise and creation of long-term relationships. Whilst such outcomes still do occur, it was seen to be somewhat more challenging to establish these relationships given the short time most SCN staff have in portfolio countries, and the broad spread of responsibilities their roles require.

However, one SCN informant indicated that he so valued mentorship, and the benefits he thought it could offer new staff in portfolio countries, that he had gone out of his way to continue providing such support. The approach taken here might inform future mentorship programmes by SCN in the area of Child Participation.

This member of staff at SCN Oslo identified a new CRG-focussed member of staff in Niger who had a strong background (a qualified lawyer), and a genuine interest in the role and his new sector of focus. What began as an informal initial contact has progressed into mentorship, spanning multiple calls, comprising genuine exchanges of ideas, per week, and several in-country visits. Consequently, the Niger-based staff member gaining substantial knowledge and insight both into the inner workings of his new employer (SCI), as well as into his area of specialism (CRG). It reportedly took 3-6 months for the new member of staff to get up to speed, and to begin delivering well and independently; in the absence of such mentorship support, it is unclear members of staff would progress so quickly, nor achieve levels of competence expected by international experts.

The relationship, while not a traditional mentor-mentee relationship, made use of existing resources and internet communications to promote both strong relationships, and a rapid progression of competence in a key area of focus. In the absence of the concerted decision by the SCN stakeholder, and the provision of substantial time and guidance, it is unclear how positive the outcomes would have been.

To be sure, other stakeholders at SCN, and in the country offices, likely undertake such relationships every day; this case was simply an illustrative one. It has been highlighted here to reinforce the degree to which effective capacity building, particularly within those areas of focus that may be 'under resourced' (like child participation), is a time-consuming endeavour,

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requiring the mutual commitment of an expert and a mentee, and many months of personal and direct engagement. Such capacity development – which has been demonstrated by various studies to be among the most effective (see previous discussions) – does not lend itself well to results frameworks and traditional reporting on capacity building.

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Efficiency Recommendations

Many of the recommendations in the preceding sections will have substantial influence on efficiency of child participation initiatives. Those recommendations that relate most closely to efficiency have been covered below.

Undertake critical evaluation of resource requirements

Relevant Lesson Learned – Efficiency

✓ Cost efficiency and resource restrictions

✓ Resource requirements highlighted by country teams

It may be the case that additional resources are required to promote improved standards of child participation. However, it was clear from discussions with key stakeholders that resources requested did not always align with resources required. It may be appropriate to reconsider resource allocations to child participation, while seeking to promote resourcefulness in delivery through effective capacity building. Detailed internal discussion, potentially paired with mentorship programmes to promote improved understanding, may prove to be helpful in promoting improved use of resources, as well as impact.

Build on mentorship and capacity building initiatives to strengthen fidelity of implementation

Relevant Lesson Learned – Efficiency

✓ Internal efficiency

✓ SC oversight mechanisms

Building on mentorship and capacity building programme recommendations might be able to improve fidelity of implementation, and sustainable outcomes. These recommendations endeavour to capitalise on the best elements of historic SCN programming – sustained relationships leading to more effective implementation of SCN priorities in supported countries.

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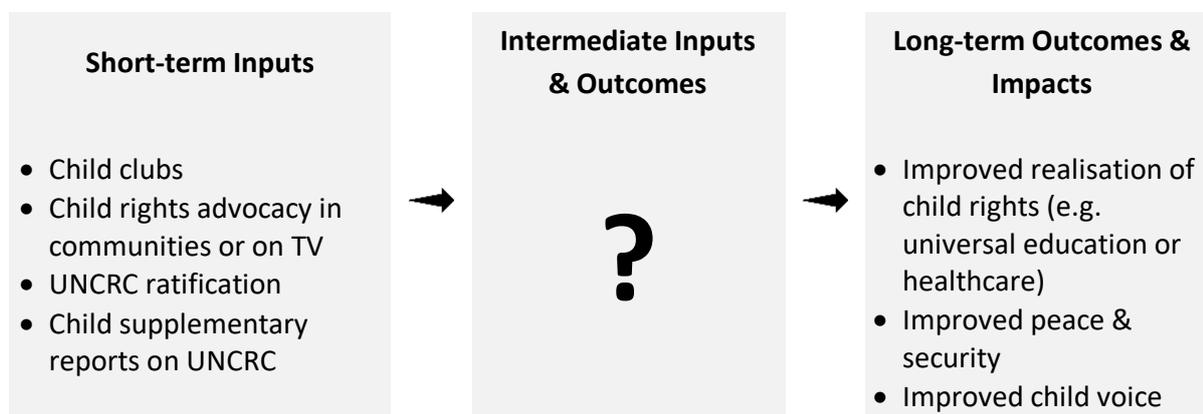
Sustainability Recommendations

Many of the recommendations in the preceding sections will have substantial influence on sustainability of outcome for child participation. Those recommendations that relate most closely to sustainability have been covered below.

Strengthen the Child Participation Theory of Change (ToC)

Relevant Lesson Learned - Relevance

✓ Seeing change as long-term

✓ Limited follow-up, and institutional stability

✓ Linkages between short-term and long-term activities

SC's Theory of Change with regard to Child Participation is minimal, and does not appear to strongly link short-term inputs to the long-term outcomes – it is assumed that inputs like child clubs, awareness raising, and the other inputs described in the Effectiveness section will result in improved rights for children, as enumerated within the UNCRC. The table below provides and illustrative (though not comprehensive) example of this gap:

Short-term Inputs	Intermediate Inputs & Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes & Impacts
- Child clubs - Child rights advocacy in communities or on TV - UNCRC ratification - Child supplementary reports on UNCRC	**?**	- Improved realisation of child rights (e.g. universal education or healthcare) - Improved peace & security - Improved child voice

Some stakeholders highlighted the degree to which this can pose challenges in understanding what happens to young people after they leave. This challenge means that much programme design focusses only on that first stage, not thinking through critical intermediate steps or support that are required to achieve the long-term outcomes.

As such, SCN may wish to create a more detailed theory of change, building on and supporting the development of the M&E systems described above, laying out, in detail, the progression by which the end goals will be achieved, what actions must be taken when, and what evidence will be used to substantiate assessments of progress and attainment. Further discussion of key stakeholder groups, their role in this TOC, and specific country requirements may also be useful discussions to have.

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As with all recommendations, this one also should seek to implement the action research framework, ensuring its structure and contents remain iterative, building on lessons learned in both success and failure.

Working with and building on existing institutions

Relevant Lesson Learned - Relevance

✓ Working with strong existing institutions, creating long-lasting linkages

✓ Working with other CSOs and NGOs

✓ Driving an independent mind-set

✓ Limited follow-up, and institutional stability

✓ Reliance on aid

As discussed in the section on effectiveness, building on those institutions that existed prior to interventions – and largely independently of aid support – has the potential to promote substantial sustainability of outcome. Such approaches minimise wasted effort and resources involved in starting from scratch, while promoting the strengthening of those institutions with the best chance for success.

Aid dependency and independent mindsets

Relevant Lesson Learned - Relevance

✓ Driving an independent mind-set

✓ Reliance on aid

Further to the challenges discussed in the 'Lessons Learned' section, dealing with issues of aid dependency and cynicism can be challenging. These were issues cited by SCN and other international stakeholders as concerning. However, there are as yet limited proven means of dealing with such challenges. SCN may wish to undertake additional discussions in this area, building on improved M&E systems, or even future research, to better design programmes to minimise such challenges.

Some lessons from the Cambodian context – where child participation has become embedded in government school improvement – may be instructive for SC. However, such achievements appeared to be dependent on effective understanding and long-term capacity building (see previous recommendations on 'Effectiveness' and 'Impact') will underpin any gains in the area of sustainability.

ANNEXES

Image Rights

Cover Photo by Edmund Blake, Carfax Projects

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Methods Overview

Objectives

This review explores how SCN's focus on child participation is implemented in country programmes, whether child participation initiatives meet international standards, whether participation leads to enhanced quality of programming, and to what extent the collaboration of SCN with children and youth contributes to their development and role in civil society. The following were the main objectives of the study:

1. *To assess the implementation of SCNs work on child participation in terms of quality against the UN 9 requirements of child participation*
2. *To assess impact by identifying how SCN´s collaboration with children and youth contributes to their development and role in civil society, including potential shortcomings*
3. *To assess the impact of children and youth´s participation on the quality of programs implemented by SCN in development as well as in humanitarian contexts*
4. *To assess the strengths, potential shortcomings and areas for improvement, and provide recommendations on how to improve future work*

Key Research Questions

Although not formally an evaluation, the team used the OECD/DAC criteria to structure the review:

Relevance

5. *What are stakeholder views (at all levels) with regards to child participation and its relevance?*
6. *Are the interventions relevant to the priorities of the target groups (children and youth) and to the priorities and policies of the countries in question?*
7. *Are the activities and outputs of the interventions consistent with the projects' goals and intended outcomes?*

Effectiveness

8. *Which approaches to Child/Youth Participation are most effective?*
9. *What are the strengths, weaknesses, and consequences of child participation in SC's programmes? Consider efficiency, impact, and validity/legitimacy?*
10. *How is child participation work anchored in PDQ-teams, OPS-teams and MEAL teams in the field offices and how is it anchored in the country office SMTs?*
11. *To what extent are interventions addressing gender inequality?*
12. *Do interventions target the most vulnerable and deprived children (e.g. children with disability)?*

Efficiency

13. *To what extent are interventions cost-efficient?*
14. *Are the interventions implemented in the most efficient way, and can the research team identify more efficient alternatives?*
15. *To what extent is Save the Children in control of the implementation of projects, and what external factors influence the efficiency of projects?*
16. *To what extent do resource factors (cost, time, skills and HR) determine the choice of participation methods?*

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17. *What kind of support does the CO get? What technical resources are made available? Do they get enough support on this issue?*

Impact

18. *What are the impacts on children and young people of the varied approaches to child/youth participation at the government, civil society, community, school, household, and individual level?*
19. *Identify unintended positive or negative effects of the work, such as issues related to Do No Harm and Child Safeguarding?*

Sustainability

20. *To what extent are the benefits of the interventions likely to continue after donor funding ceases?*
21. *To what degree is child participation included in budgets; reporting templates, log frames, and strategic approaches? Identify potential systemic issues inhibiting this.*
22. *To what extent does child participation contribute to sustainability?*
23. *What were the major factors, which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the interventions?*

Methodological Strategy

The developed research questions require the synthesis of a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sources; such requirements are ideally suited to a mixed methodological approach (Denscombe, 2010) (Hart & et.al, 2007), drawing heavily on the range of data already held by SCN as well as data collected through primary research. Such methodologies have been found by a range of research to be particularly effective within fragile and complex contexts (Barakat, Chard, Jacoby, & Lume, 2002).

Multiple instruments and approaches collected data against individual research questions, engaging in a process of 'triangulation' of findings – a technique that facilitates the validation of data through cross-verification of two or more sources – ensuring stronger findings from data collection and analysis (Denscombe, 2010) (Hart & et.al, 2007).

Selected Instruments and Tools, Summary of Stakeholder Selection Approach

The selected instruments were designed to collect stakeholder-specific data, while allowing for comparability of collected data across the various instruments and stakeholder groups (Bell, 2010, pp. 140-141) (Denscombe, 2010, pp. 155-156).

(▶) **Document and Data Review**

The team undertook extensive review of existing data and documents from across SCN's current portfolio (comprising fifteen countries). This was with the intent of relying on the extensive project documentation already collected, expanding the depth of findings. A list of SCN-submitted M&E and reporting documents reviewed in this research have been included in the appendices; other documents have been cited in-text as appropriate and listed in the bibliography.

Documents covered included all available monitoring and reporting documents across SCN's current portfolio; the team has also included relevant research, advocacy, and

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guidance materials submitted by the SCN team. Additional documents and data sources were incorporated as appropriate, with most of these sourced from databases held by the consultants, or those available in relevant online archives.

Implementing Partner KII

These stakeholders required their own instruments, as they had extensive insights into programmatic, planning, and operational questions.

The team undertook to speak with those staff specifically tasked with oversight of SCN's portfolio, both in the field, as well as at the central country office level. Other stakeholders with insight into relevant child participation initiatives and child rights governance programmes were contacted. At the international level, SCN recommended additional stakeholders for contact. Given the challenges that tend to emerge implementing in-country research, and busy schedules of many stakeholders, selection and contact were subject to a degree of availability.

Duty Bearer FGD

Civil society groups, community leaders, and parents had a joint FGD, as they were both parents and members of the relevant civil society organisation. The insights gathered from these stakeholders overlap substantially.

Those CSOs and community members with relevant insights into programme activities were contacted for FGDs. The researchers undertook to speak with as many of them as possible, and relied heavily on recommendations of country teams.

Government Official KII

Government officials had particular insights into issues of governance and leadership in the space of child rights governance.

Those government officials with relevant insights and key roles in programme activities were contacted for FGDs. The researchers undertook to speak with as many of these as possible, and relied heavily on recommendations of country teams.

Secondary Duty Bearer (Parent) Survey

Parents of child stakeholders and participants were interviewed in survey format, particularly when they had children that are too young to participate in research with understanding. Parents' views on child rights were also solicited, seeking to understand programme relationships with attitudes toward child rights and child participation. Parents in the community, and parents of children younger than seven, were the core focus of this survey.

The team extended invitations for surveys to all parents at visited schools and CFSs supported in SCN's portfolio and visited in the course of the review. Several parents were selected from among survey participants, usually those offering key or novel insights in the course of the surveys.

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▶ Rights Holder (Child) Survey

The most important group of all to speak with were the children. Their views on programming, and its potential effects, was central to analyses. Children between the ages of 8-17 were covered by this survey.

The consultants undertook to speak with as many children as possible at visited CFSs and schools supported by SCN. Sites were selected in consultation with country teams, seeking to balance ease of access with novelty of insights. While the team endeavoured to achieve a degree of 'randomness' in selection, specific respondents were chosen from school and CFS populations on the basis of who was available on that day; children were pointed out of groups to participate, endeavouring to strike a balance between boys and girls of 11+.

▶ Child Participatory Approach – Peer-to-Peer Data Collection and Observational Activity, Integrated Data Validation[13]

The review team selected a cross section of child/youth participants to conduct peer-to-peer data collection and fact-finding activity. The tools and discussions built heavily on the data collected in the course of the surveys, KIIs, and FGDs. The data collected in these was synthesised and instructed the specific activities and discussions to be undertaken during this phase of activity. Through this approach, the team aimed to deliver a consolidated child data validation exercise, as well as collect new data.

The objective of this activity was to understand the needs of the child/youth participants and reveal insights to the needs and gaps in child rights and participation of the case country's implemented activity. It also served as a 'Validation 'Workshop' with child participants, allowing the team to explore, validate, and deepen insights emerging from the data in a child-participatory manner. This participatory approach sought to understand the gaps in services while carefully observing children's perception and attitude through observations (e.g. what questions child/youth participants tells SC about their own programming efforts).

Given the complexity and challenges in implementing these tools effectively, the sessions were lead largely by the consultancy team, through interpreters and facilitators as appropriate, ensuring the quality of data collected, and the quality of child participation was maintained without.

Children were chosen for participation in these instruments in two ways: selections of child group or club members were asked to attend workshops, or children showing particular engagement and energy during survey discussions.

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[13] Detailed protocols included in the annexes.

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(▶) **Online Follow-Up Survey**

Building on the results of initial consultations with country teams and SCN and/or partner organisation international staff, the team developed an online survey – comprising only 5-10 minutes of questions – soliciting key insights from a variety of informed stakeholders; the team undertook to target stakeholders from fifteen countries as far as is possible. This research sought to substantiate some of the key lessons learned from earlier research, working across a wider country base than previous rounds of primary examination.

SCN provided a list of individuals across each supported country office, as well as at the international level, with key insights into the review questions. At the country level, efforts were made to include PDQs and CRG advisors, though others considered to have relevant insights were also included.

Note on Sample Approach

The team employed a purposive and cluster-focused sample approach for primary research, with the team undertaking to target key stakeholders with insights into the key research questions. Clusters comprised key communities where SCN programming has been delivered; locations were selected to provide insight into strong or challenged programmes with regard to child participation. Identification and selection of target areas was undertaken in consultation with key SCN and SCI-country stakeholders. A degree of availability underpinned selection given the challenges in accomplishing truly random samples in the target contexts and with available child stakeholder information. Within each cluster, the team endeavoured to accomplish a 95% confidence interval, and a 5% confidence level sample for child participants.

Primary Data Collection: Targeted Stakeholders

The targeted stakeholders have been placed in their relevant categories below. The categorisation has informed the development of tools and instruments.

(▶) **Donors and Implementing Partners**
- SCN Staff
- SCI Country Leadership
- Other Participating SCI Staff
- International SC Staff
- Partner Organisation Staff
- Donor Representatives

(▶) **Rights Holders**
- Child Stakeholders

(▶) **Duty-Bearers**
- Government Representatives
- Community Leaders
- Parents

(▶) **Civil Society**
- Child Protection Committees
- PTAs
- Other Relevant Civil Society Groups

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Sample Summary[14]

	Qty. Interactions	Female Participants	Male Participants	Total Participants
Donors and Implementing Partners (KII-FGDs)	37	22	15	37
CSO Representatives (FGD)	18	6	12	18
Parents (FGDs)	10	32	45	80
Government Rep. (KII-FGD)	11	15	22	40
Teachers (FGDs)	9	20	17	37
Child Participation and Validation Workshops	17	105	91	196
Child Survey	-	297	253	550
Parent Survey	-	209	101	310
Online Survey	-	18	28	46
Total Sample:				**1,314**

Data Analysis Approach

Given the relatively small size of the individual data sets and the open question format used for some of the instruments, all quantitative results were processed through Excel pivot tables. Moreover, and also because of the open question format specified, it was necessary to subject survey responses to coding, enabling the quantitative analyses of all responses (Saldana, 2012, pp. 1-4) (Denscombe, 2010, pp. 240, 284-286).

Photo 20 – Children inside Bahkara refugee camp

The data, once appropriately coded, organised, and validated, was then analysed using a range of statistical (descriptive) and non-statistical methods, with the intent of beginning to resolve the key review questions (Tashakkori & Teddli, 2010, pp. 614-616) (Denscombe, 2010, pp. 235-237). Where a relationship was unclear or determined to require deeper analyses, further study of qualitative data relating to that relationship was undertaken (Denscombe, 2010, p. 239). All qualitative data collected not only functioned in a typical descriptive role, but also – through data coding – bolstered the collected quantitative data, facilitating data triangulation and therefore stronger, richer research.

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[14] A full sample breakdown can be found in the appendices.

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The reporting and M&E documents submitted by SCN were subject to their own coding exercise, with documents reviewed against a pre-set list of criteria; these broadly undertook to establish the degree to which child participation has been mainstreamed throughout the portfolio's operations, as well as the depth to which such mainstreaming has been undertaken. These quantitative results have been explored throughout the relevant sections below, as well as the remaining document as appropriate; where additional discussion or insight was required, deeper analysis of individual documents, or supporting findings from the qualitative data, were used in support of analyses.

Limitations and Challenges

▶ **Time of Year**

The in-country research fell within a busy time of year for SC country offices; multiple assessments, evaluations, and strategic activities all competed for time of country teams, requiring careful scheduling and limiting the support country teams could offer.

▶ **Access to Remote and Conflict Affected Areas**

Within South Sudan and Iraq, conflict and displacement limit access to many areas of the country. This posed challenges to securing long-term follow-up subjects, as well as general logistics and sample obstacles in the course of data collection. In Cambodia, many supported schools were in very remote, mountainous areas; the time for travel limited the degree of access the team had to some of these schools.

▶ **Communications and Operational Support In-country**

Linking to the first challenge, general communication and logistics issues arose while in country. Contacting relevant stakeholders, and following up on commitments for support all faced challenges and limited the scope and speed of data collection.

▶ **Duration and Depth of Research**

As with any such research exercise, the amount of time available to explore these challenging, nuanced, and complex themes was very limited; the degree to which such limited exercises can achieve complete understanding of any topic is justifiably questionable, and when compounded by the preceding issues in access and communications, becomes even more challenging.

▶ **Challenging Subject of Study**

The topics in focus of this study are difficult to measure, document, and describe; this was a particular challenge in the review of reports and M&E documents emerging from SCN's activities. They are challenging concepts to communicate across language barriers, and can at times be subject to different interpretations and different focuses. The team faced these challenges throughout the research.

▶ **Cultural Differences**

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Particularly in the case of Cambodia, cultural differences may have posed challenges to the accuracy of findings; several stakeholders highlighted a culture of reluctance toward open criticism, which may have impacted on the results of some data collection exercises. In other locations, culture challenges or unfamiliarity with child participation concepts led to challenges in engaging children and other stakeholders, with some reluctant to speak openly and equally with researchers.

Availability of Stakeholders

Given the challenges that tend to emerge implementing in-country research, and busy schedules of many stakeholders, selection and contact were subject to a degree of availability across all instruments.

Response Rate of Online Survey

An additional key point to highlight comprises the return rate for the online survey – only c. half of portfolio countries participated in the online survey, and those individuals that responded tend to be more invested in child participation and securing more resources for it. There were few responses from SMTs. Consequently, any insights emerging from the online survey must be approached with this in mind.

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Achieved Sample Breakdown

Stakeholder Category & Instrument	Location	Qty. Interactions	Female Participants	Male Participants	Total Participants
Donors and Implementing Partners (KII-FGDs)	International	16	10	6	16
Donors and Implementing Partners (KII-FGDs)	Cambodia	16	8	4	12
Donors and Implementing Partners (KII-FGDs)	Iraq	5	3	2	5
Donors and Implementing Partners (KII-FGDs)	South Sudan	2	1	3	4
CSO Representatives (FGD)	Cambodia	12	4	8	12
CSO Representatives (FGD)	Iraq	2	2	0	2
CSO Representatives (FGD)	South Sudan	4	0	4	4
Parents (FGDs)	Cambodia	5	29	29	58
Parents (FGDs)	Iraq	3	3	11	17
Parents (FGDs)	South Sudan	2	0	5	5
Government Rep. (KII-FGD)	Cambodia	6	12	6	18
Government Rep. (KII-FGD)	Iraq	3	3	11	17
Government Rep. (KII-FGD)	South Sudan	2	0	5	5
Teachers (FGDs)	Cambodia	5	18	15	33
Teachers (FGDs)	Iraq	1	0	1	1
Teachers (FGDs)	South Sudan	3	2	1	3
Child Participation and Validation Workshops	Cambodia	5	17	22	39
Child Participation and Validation Workshops	Iraq	7	29	29	58
Child Participation and Validation Workshops	South Sudan	5	59	40	99
Child Survey	Cambodia	-	66	69	135
Child Survey	Iraq	-	120	133	253
Child Survey	South Sudan	-	111	51	162
Parent Survey	Cambodia	-	33	10	43
Parent Survey	Iraq	-	169	79	248
Parent Survey	South Sudan	-	7	12	19

Online Survey respondents, disaggregated by country

Country	Respondents
Ethiopia	3

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Guatemala	8
Lebanon	1
Malawi	5
Mozambique	8
Nepal	2
Nicaragua	3
Niger	4
Somalia/Somaliland	1
Uganda	4
Zimbabwe	7
Grand Total	**46**

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List of SC Internal Documents Reviewed for this Research

Submitted documents

Save the Children Background Documents:

- Global Partnership; Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding; Partnership (NEPAL, EASTERN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO + COLOMBIA); 2015

- SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES RESULTS REPORT 2010-2013

- SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES FINAL REPORT 2010-2014

- Save the Children Norway; Investing in Children, Strategic Plan 2014-2018

- Save the Children; Theory of Change, Strategy 2010-2015

- Save the Children; Ambition for Children 2030; Save the Children 3-year strategic plan

- (2016-2018)

- Save the Children; Global Strategy Update 2016 – 2018

- Review of Save the Children Norway's Support to programmes for child protection system strengthening; 2014

- Save the Children Norway; Creating Change in Children's Lives; An Evaluation of Save the Children's Child Rights Governance Programme Synthesis Report; 2014

- Save the Children International; REVIEW OF THE PROJECT ENTITLED "ACCESS TO PROTECTION, EDUCATION AND HEALTH FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHER VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN NORTH GONDAR ZONE, AMHARA REGIONAL STATE"; 2017

- Save the Children Norway; Rights of children with disabilities: Current practice, future direction; A Mapping and Analysis of Save the Children's work to promote the rights of children with disabilities; 2015

- Save the Children Norway; Investing in Children; 4 Years Application to NORAD 2015-18

- Save the Children Norway; Evaluation of Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change Adaption Programmes and Advocacy 2010-2015

- Save the Children; GENDER REVIEW OF SAVE THE CHILDREN PROGRAMMES WITHIN CHILD RIGHTS GOVERNANCE, CHILD PROTECTION AND HEALTH AND NUTRITION; 2018

- SCN (Osman); Gender Analysis of Save the Children Norway's Education Programme; 2016

- Redd Barna; Evaluation of Save the Children Norway's Continued Protective Emergency Education for Children (CPEEC) & School as Zones of Peace (SZOP) Programs in North East Syria; 2018

- Country Report – Guatemala

- Country report- Malawi

- Country Report – Uganda

- SCN; Review of Save the Children Norway's support to prevent and respond to violence in and around schools; 2018

- Child Rights Governance Qualitative Results Reporting guidelines; 2016

- Child Rights Governance (CRG) Qualitative Results Reporting template; 2016

- Save the Children Norway; EDUCATING GIRLS – REDUCING TEENAGE PREGNANCY IN MALAWI; Project evaluation 2014-2015

- Save the Children; SPEL tool

- Save the Children Norway; Annual progress report 2016; 2017

- Save the children; EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS AS ZONES OF PEACE; 2017

- Save the Children Norway (IOD PARC); Save the Children Norway Partnership Review Final Report; 2017

- Save the Children Norway (IOD PARC); Save the Children Partnership Review - Mozambique Case Study; 2017

- Save the Children Norway (IOD PARC); Save the Children Partnership Review Draft Nicaragua Case Study; 2017

- Save the Children; Integrating Child Protection and Child Rights Governance in Education Programmes: A Strategic Review; 2017

QLE:

- Consolidated Result Framework 2015-2018; Save the Children Norway; 2017

- Midterm Values Literacy QLE per country xlsx; 2017

- QLE average scores sub-standard per country - Norad 2015-2018 xlsx; 2018

- 2013 QUALITY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT MONITORING FORM FOR BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS; Save the Children; 2013

- Kindergarten Quality Framework Myanmar doc

- QLE average scoressub-standard per country - Norad 2015-2018; 2017

Annual Reports:

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Country Nepal; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and Norad Save the Children: Cambodia; 2013

- Save the Children in Lao PDR Annual Report 2013; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Honduras; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Nicaragua; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Zimbabwe; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Uganda; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Mozambique; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: South Sudan; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Guatemala; 2013

- 2013 Annual Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad Save the Children: Ethiopia; 2013

- 2013 Reporting Template Grant Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad

Consolidated Reports:

- Save the Children Norway International Programmes; Annual Progress Report; 2012

- SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES FINAL REPORT 2010-2014

- SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES RESULTS REPORT 2010-2013

Final Reports:

- 2014 Proposal from Grant Funding from Save the Children Norway (SCN) and/or Norad SCI in Uganda

- Final Report; Grant Funding from Save the Children Norway (SCN) and/or Norad SCI in Uganda; 2014

- NORAD Regular and SCN Committed And 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Nepal; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Nicaragua; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Zimbabwe; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Honduras; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Dominican Republic; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Myanmar; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Mozambique; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Cambodia; Annual Report; 2014

- 2010-2014 Final Report for Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad; Ethiopia; Annual Report; 2014

- Report on Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad 2014 Annual report & 2010-2014 Final report

- Reporting Template - Grant Funding from Save the Children Norway and/or Norad 2014 Annual report 2010-2014 Final report; 2015

Iraq

Background:

- Humanitarian Response Plan for Iraq; 2017

- 2016 Humanitarian response plan; 2015

- INSO Iraq, Salah al-Din Governate profile February; 2017

- Responding to Mosul Crisis; an overview; 2017

Country specific strategic documents:

- Iraq Country Office; 2016-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN; 2017

- Save the Children Iraq; Iraq 2018 strategy; 2017

Technical proposals:

- eSINGLE FORM FOR HUMANITARIAN AID ACTIONS 2015/00670/FR/01/01; Building Resilience for IDP Children in Iraq through Education; 2016

- eSINGLE FORM FOR HUMANITARIAN AID ACTIONS [113118]/RQ/01/01; Providing quality integrated education and child protection services to conflict - affected children and their families in Salah al Din

- Integrated Protection, Education and WASH Assistance to Vulnerable Children and their Families Affected by the IDP Crisis in Iraq Intermediate Report; 2017

- UNESCO OFFICE FOR IRAQ; Access to inclusive quality primary and secondary education for IDPs and Refugees in crisis-affected areas in Iraq; 2017

- MFA annual Interim report; 2016 (program: Tikrit)

- Final report for Grants from the Norweigan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA); 2015

- UNICEF; Programme progress / Final report – to be completed by CSO as part of reporting with FACE; 2016

- UNICEF Program document; Provision of Education in Emergencies to vulnerable, conflict-affected internally displaced persons (IDPs) Children in Qayarrah camps, Ninewa Governate; 2017

- SCN MFA 2nd Disbursement report; QZA, 16/0219 Addendum no. 15: Improving access to quality, safe, and inclusive education and child protection services for conflict affected children in Iraq

- Save the Children annual report_v1_311217-FINAL.DOCX; 2017

- Save the Children BPRM Iraq - Revised Technical Narrative; Strengthening protective environments for displaced children, families and communities through increased access to quality education and child protection service; 2017

- SCN_IRQ_Tikrit_NMFA_Final_Report; 2016

- Integrated Protection, Education and WASH Assistance to Vulnerable Children and their Families Affected by the IDP Crisis in Iraq; 2015

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- eSINGLE FORM FOR HUMANITARIAN AID ACTIONS; 2017/00684/RQ/01/02; Providing integrated education and protection assistance to conflict affected children and their families in Iraq

Assessments and Evaluations:

- Needs Assessment Report; IDENTIFYING THE NEEDS IN DOHUK, KIRKUK AND SALAH AL DIN GOVERNORATES; 2016

- Annex 2; Summary of Save the Children Needs Assessment Findings; 2016

- Save the Children; Multi Sector Needs Assessment Salah al-Din; SC 2018

- Save the Children; ASER Education Assessment SC 2017

- Save the Children; FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON RETURNS SALAH AL DIN GOVERNORATE, IRAQ; 2018;

- Evaluation of Child-friendly spaces; An inter-agency series of impact evaluations in humanitarian emergencies; World Vision International; 2015

- Save the Children; The Unbearable Reality; The impact of war and displacement on children's mental health in Iraq; 2017

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- Final EVALUATION REPORT FOR EDUCATION, CHILD PROTECTION AND WASH SECTORS; Building Resilience for IDP and host community Children in Iraq through Education; 2017

- Education_Ninewa_exit_strategy; 2017

- Save the Children; ECHO Evaluation; Education, Child Protection and WASH (WATER, SANITATION, HYGEINE) Survey Report; 2017

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- UNICEF bulletin story; SC Norway and UNICEF work with IDPs; 2016

Cambodia

Country specific Strategic Documents:

- Save the Children; 2016-2018 Strategic Plan; 2017

- CNCC; NATIONAL PLAN FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT (NPCD) 2014 –2018; 2014

- KHM NORAD Proposal RF Results Framework Outcome for I'm Learning Pilot Countries xlsx; 2014

- KHM Norad proposal second Draft Result framework xlsx; 2014

- Country Proposal for Save the Children Norway Norad Framework; 2018

- KHM Budget Template Norad 2015 – 2018 xlsx; 2014

- KHM Annex 5 Updated Norad 2015 - 2018 Results Framework; 2016

- Norad Programme Mid-term Review Report; Save the Children; 2017

- Norad Annual Report; 2016

- Norad Results Report 2015-2017

MEAL Documents:

- Save the Children; Assessment Tool for Global Indicator on Child Participation (CHP); 2017

- Save the Children; Child participation guide for collecting data from child participation (in Khmer); 2016

- Save the Children; Global Indicator_Child Participation_Indicator Field Guidance; 2016

- KHM_CRG_MTR_CASE_STUDY; PROMOTING CHILD PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL DECISION MAKING FOR GREATER LOCAL GOVERNANCE FOR CHILDREN RIGHTS; 2018

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Quality Benchmarks:

- Save the Children; Quality Benchmark General Form; 2018

- Save the Children; QB discussion presentation - July 2017 - SC Cambodia PDQ.pptx

Program Standards and Instruments:

- Action Plan_SPEL_2015_CRG Program.xlsx; Child Rights Governance Program

- Save the Children MEAL plan; Incoorporated with the SPEL approach; 2015

- SPEL Strategic Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Guide (SPEL); For Childs Rights Governance Programmes; 2015

- Save the Children; Child Centre Social Accountability (CCSA)- PPPT.pptx

- Save the Children; GOOD PRACTICES: PROMOTING ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE; 2016

- Save the Children; I'M LEARNING CONTEXTUALIZATION REPORT; 2017

- Save the Children; I'M LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE; 2017

Assessments and Evaluations:

- Save the Children; 2010 -2013 PERIODIC RESULTS REPORT FOR SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY; Cambodia; 2014

MISC:

- Cambodia Children Report in 2010 by CCYMCR

- Report about IiC CRG program, Cambodia September 2017

- Save the Children; Case Study template PDF

- Child-frienly-version-of-GC-No-19-final-Eng.pdf

- Children forum with policy makers; CHILDREN'S CONCERNS HEARD AND ACCEPTED FOR CONSIDERATION; 2014

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- Case Study report on Children and Youth advocate for better investment in children in Preak Khsay kor and Neak Loeung commune in Peam Ro district of Prey Veng Province; 2016

- CRG Case Study Reporting - feedback and evaluation tool

- Final Trip Report for visit to Cambodia 8 - 12 June 2016

- KHM_NORAD_Case_Story_Reaksa_CRG with SCN; Child Empowerment; Accessing Children's issues through Participation; 2016

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- Save the Children Cambodia; Consultations on Children's Situation FACILITATORS GUIDE; 2012

- Child Rights Situation Analysis Field Research Plan; 2014

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- MoSVY; Monitoring and Evaluation Guideline; For Management and Governance of OVC; 2012

- Kingdom of Cambodia, National Religion King; Policy on Alternative Care for Children; 2016

South Sudan

- Jonglei State Children and Civil Society Organisations Petition on Budget Allocation and Spending on Children Benefiting Programmes; 2017

- Jonglei State Legislative Assembly (letter); 2017

- Speech Delivered in Jonglei State Conference held in Jonglei Legislative Assembly about Issues Affecting the Children on 7th July 2017

- Case Study Success Story; Save the Children; 2017

- Jonglei State Legislative Assembly (letter of appreciation); 2017

- SSD NORAD Detailed Result Framework xlsx; 2018

- Norad Results Report 2015-2017 Report; 2018

- 2016 Norad Annual Report Template

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Full Text of Relevant UNCRC Articles

Article 12   **Respect for the views of the child**

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Article 13   **Freedom of expression**

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
   a)   For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
   b)   For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

Article 14   **Freedom of thought, conscience and religion**

States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 15   **Freedom of association**

States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 17   **Access to information; mass media**

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall

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ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

To this end, States Parties shall:
   a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;
   b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;
   c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;
   d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;
   e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

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Detailed Child Participatory Workshop Protocols

Selection of Participants, Invitation to Participate	Carfax Responsibility	SCI Responsibility
Throughout the week, participants will be selected and invited to discussions using two methods. The first group of child participants will comprise children already participating in CFS activities. Throughout the two weeks consultants are in country, SCI staff will be responsible for communicating schedules for these activities to parents, as well as actively securing consent for children's participation in the activities. The consultants have also embedded an invitation mechanism in the surveys, seeking to invite sufficient children and parents within specified age brackets to the activities. Schedules will be pre-coded in the instruments, allowing enumerators to invite children and their families to the participation and data collection workshops during the survey process.	Design of survey invitation prompts; Training and supervision enumerators to implement invitations correctly and training; undergo risk assessment per SC Form	Ensuring CFS participants and parents are properly notified and invited to activities. Securing initial consent for children to participate, and identify locations
Initial Processing of Data, Collation of Discussion/Validation Themes	**Carfax Responsibility**	**SCI Responsibility**
Between the first and second weeks of data collection, once substantial survey, KII, and FGD data have been collected; the team will undertake a preliminary data analysis. This analysis will extract key themes and initial findings for discussion and use in the later child participatory data-collection activities to involve child stakeholders. The team will endeavour to generate at least fifteen themes and findings per country; each country will likely generate unique insights for discussion given the widely varying context.	Data analysis, and creation of themes and questions and guidance for discussion by children	Ensuring all is ready for child participation workshops in the coming week.
Workshops and Child Participatory Collection Stage 1 - Murals	**Carfax Responsibility**	**SCI Responsibility**
All workshops with children will be broken into two phases, each comprising 60 to 90 minutes depending on availability and the children's attention spans. The first of these stages will be a creative activity, where consultants will have pre-prepared a space for child stakeholders to create a mural on a wall in the CFS. The consultants will ask the children to collaboratively create a piece of art, which speaks to one of the themes identified during the preliminary data analysis. The finally selected themes will depend heavily on the outcome of the analysis, but at this stage it is anticipated that some of the thematic questions might include 'Can you create a piece of art which shows me the most significant change in your life since you participated in XYZ Save the Children programme?'	Preparing materials; Guiding activities; Maintaining attention and discipline; Photograph and document results and outputs; and Coordinating SCI staff.	Distribution and collection of consent forms; Supporting with maintaining order and attention; Interpretation and translation; and Facilitation of workshop with Carfax.

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or another area which will provide the children space to creatively express answers to the key research questions of this assignment. The results of these activities will be photographed and documented by video as possible.

Workshops and Child Participatory Collection Stage 2 – Red Light, Green Light, Peer-to-Peer Data Collection	**Carfax Responsibility**	**SCI Responsibility**
The next stage of the workshops will involve peer-to-peer data collection, employing the red light green light methodology described in the document 'me_toolkit_booklet.pdf' submitted with this document. The questions will be asked by children themselves, with guidance to focus on the activities undertaken by SCI being studied in this research. If a child struggles to think of their own question, they will be given one the pre-selected questions (building on the previous interim data analyses) which they will pull from a hat. The consultants will not only record the red-yellow-green responses, but also take notes on the direction, tone, and contents of subsequent discussions among the children. This approach is anticipated to give the consultants a chance to inform, validate, and deepen findings resulting from earlier stages of data collection, while promoting voice, agency, and accountability for children.	Preparing materials; Guiding activities; Maintaining attention and discipline; Photograph and document results and outputs; Taking notes, and guiding discussions; and Coordinating SCI staff.	Distribution and collection of consent forms; Supporting with maintaining order and attention; Interpretation and translation; and Facilitation of workshop with Carfax.
Debrief of Child Stakeholders	**Carfax Responsibility**	**SCI Responsibility**
At the end of the workshops, the team will undertake to hold a debrief with all children, explaining the purpose of the exercise, what their information and art will be used for, and also to see if children have any final thoughts or learning they want to share with the team.	Leading debrief; Answering questions; and Taking notes.	Supporting with maintaining order and attention; Interpretation and translation; and Facilitation of workshop with Carfax.

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