



Report

Review of Save the Children Norway's Education Programmes and Partnerships with National Government Institutions at Country Level

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List of Acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organization
CRG	Child Rights Governance
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CwD	Children with Disabilities
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
SC	Save the Children
SCI	Save the Children International
SCN	Save the Children Norway
ToR	Terms of Reference
QLE/QLF	Quality Learning Environment/Framework
WASH	Waters, Sanitation and Hygiene

Executive Summary

The purpose of this review to increase Save the Children Norway's (SCN) internal learning and knowledge of how to best work with government institutions in education programs. The review has mapped what has been done, what has worked and why in education programs funded by Norad. The review also presents results achieved within the government authorities, for children, and for the civil society. Data has been gathered primarily through a desk review, an electronic survey of Save the Children (SC) offices in 15 countries and from interviews with SC office staff and government officials in Mozambique, Nepal and Somalia. The review has attempted to assess if SC is achieving its partnership goals: to "be the voice", "be the innovator" and "achieve results at scale".

The mapping of government partnerships has shown that that the SC offices implement many different types of activities with governmental partners at central, province and district levels. At the central level the SC offices are often called upon to provide advice, information and tools and methodologies to address issues prioritized by the government. At the province and district level SC offices help plan and implement new projects, support the management of schools, share information and are involved in operational planning for e.g. training of teachers, joint monitoring visits and reporting on progress. The SC offices have formalized their partnerships with governmental partners through Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) and 10 of the 15 countries consulted transfer funds to the government either as budget support, for project expenses or both types of funding.

The results of the government partnerships mentioned by SC offices shows a significant improvement in both the quality of and access to education as well as an increased capacity of government to fulfill its mandate. Other important results mentioned are governments' improved technical skills, increased ability and willingness to adopt new tools/methods and take in information as well as better coordination between government and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The information collected shows that SC offices are closely involved in the educational planning processes, at central as well as at province and district level and help governments draft national educational plans, legal frameworks and educational standards. The SC offices base their own plans and programs on the national educational plans and policies and are closely aligned and relevant to the national contexts.

The data collected shows that SC is seen as an *innovator* by the government officials interviewed and there are a large number of examples of methods and tools introduced by SC into the education sectors. Taking methods *to scale* is only possible if and when government decides to adopt such a method on a broader scale, which has also happened due to SC offices' ability to become a trusted partner to the governments. SC' role as a strategic partner to the government, ability to involve government in the implementation and funding or co-funding of pilots are factors that influence the governments' willingness to adopt tools/methods on a broader scale. SC' ability to "*be the voice*" of children comes out less from the data collected although five SC offices state the government have become more

child-focused as a result of the partnership. The factors that have helped to implement SC-initiated methods at a larger scale have primarily been:

- The building of a relationships based on trust with government at different levels.
- SC' role as strategic partner – helping develop policies and plans.
- SC offices' funding and implementation of activities.
- SC' role as part of networks/coalitions of CSOs working in education.

The SC' theory of change appears to be validated. By building trust with the government, SC can introduce new and innovative methods and change government's policy. If and when the government trusts SC as a partner, its proposals, learning and evidence from testing forms the basis for decisions by the government to implement SC' initiatives at scale.

There is a worry among seven of the 15 SC offices surveyed of increasing dependence of the government on SC. There is also evidence that SC offices are implementing activities that are the responsibility of the government e.g. payment of teacher salaries, construction of schools, printing of books etc. This may be relevant activities in providing education to children, but SC should bear in mind that funding service delivery projects and budget support is not a sustainable practice and SCN needs to carefully consider such proposals from SC offices. In the cases when such funding is deemed necessary, a clear exit plan should be established and clearly communicated with the government agency. Innovations that could be scaled up by the government should be considered for funding with a plan for how to broaden the uptake.

1. Background and Description

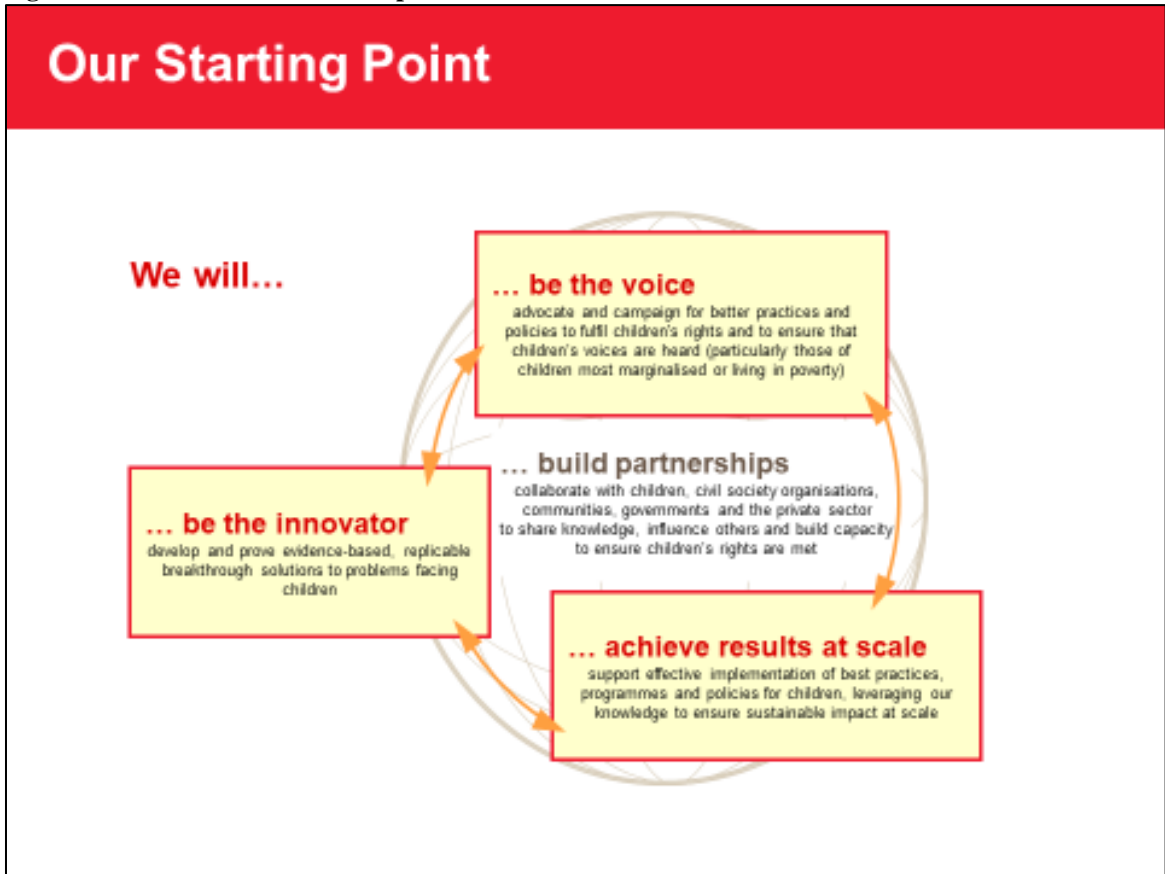
1.1 Background

Save the Children’s (SC) vision is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation. Save the Children Norway’s (SCN), part of Save the Children International (SCI), priorities are set out in the document *2014-2018 Strategy*, where its work focuses on, and is organized into, the following themes:

- Child Protection,
- Child Rights Governance (CRG),
- Education
- Health and Nutrition, and
- Humanitarian Relief.

Working in partnership is central to Save the Children's Theory of Change and its mission to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children. Save the Children's Theory of Change states that: "We build partnerships: collaborate with children, civil society organizations, communities, governments and the private sector to share knowledge, influence others and build capacity to ensure children's rights are met." SCI’s goals with its partnership work is illustrated below.

Figure 1 Goals of SCI's Partnership Framework



Source: Save the Children Partnership Working Group. *The Partnership Framework*. Jan 2016.

SC believes that governments have the overall responsibility to provide children with their right to education. The civil society, national and international organizations may support this work, but also hold the government accountable to fulfill its responsibilities. SC's approach is to work with governments and civil society. When partnering with government agencies SC cooperates with national education authorities (for the purpose of this report referred to as Ministry of Education – MoE) at central, provincial and district level, Teacher Training Schools and Inspection Authorities among other governmental agencies.

All of the SC office interviewed work with agencies and offices of the national education authority, in this report referred to as the Ministry of Education (MoE). The office of the minister and policy making departments of the MoE are referred to as the central MoE. SC office also work with provincial MoE offices (spanning a larger geographical area and often several districts) and district MoE offices. The Team has used district and local MoE offices intermittently in this report when referring to the administrative division of the MoE that is closest to the individual schools.

SCN has, with the funding from Norad, designed and supported the implementation of programs and interventions aimed at providing quality education and safe educational environments in 15 countries. SC offices in these countries have cooperated with government agencies in different programs and manners.

1.2 Rationale, Scope and Purpose of the Review

The main purpose of this review to increase SCN's internal learning and knowledge of how to best work with government institutions in education programs. Secondly, the findings will be used to develop SCN's new strategy and *Framework Application* to Norad. It is also meant to complement SCN's *Partnership Review* (May 2017) that documented the impact of SCN's work with civil society partners. The main ambition of the review is thus to map what has been done, what has worked and why, based on the results achieved;

1. in the government authorities,
2. for children, and
3. for the civil society, including SC offices in the different countries.

The main objectives of the review are to:

- Get an overview of what partnerships for the purpose of implementing education programs SCN has supported with Norad funds: Conduct a mapping of the types of partnerships SC has with governments and to what extent SC has a specific approach for its cooperation with governments.
- Find out what works and why: Assess and document results and identify good practices for what works and why, including any positive or negative unintended effects of the partnerships. Considerations of sustainability are included in the assessment.
- Look forward: Highlight lessons learned and provide recommendations on how to design government partnerships in education programs in the future.

The scope of the study has included:

- Interventions implemented beginning 2015 until 2018.
- Interventions in education supported by SCN with funding from Norad in the following countries:

Figure 2 SC Offices Included in this Review

Asia	Africa	MENA region	Latin America
Cambodia Myanmar Nepal	Ethiopia Malawi Mozambique Niger Somalia South Sudan Uganda Zimbabwe	Lebanon Palestine	Guatemala Nicaragua

The consultant team carrying out this study (hereinafter referred to as the Team) included Ms. Åsa Königson (Team Leader) and Mr. Anders Pettersson (Education Consultant) of Swedish Development Advisers AB.

1.3 Methodology

The consultants' *Inception Report*¹ establishes the methodology that has been used to gather information and analyze the data. In summary, the methodology has included the following steps:

1. A desk review of documentation provided by SCN on each relevant country program funded by Norad. This resulted in initial conclusions as to type of partnerships, government partners and type of activities implemented in partnership. It was also used to draft the questions for the electronic survey.
2. Interviews with 14 SCN staff. These took place in early July and in August 2018 at SCN's offices in Oslo or over the phone/Skype.
3. An electronic survey was sent out to 15 SC offices of which all responded. In total 20 responses were received.
4. Telephone and Skype interviews with nine staff of SC country offices in Mozambique, Nepal and Somalia using a question list developed as part of the desk review (Annex to the *Inception Report*). The Team also interviewed six government staff members in the same three countries.
5. Analysis of information gathered.
6. Initial findings presentation to SCN's Education Team on August 17, 2018.
7. Submission of this draft report on August 28, 2018.

A list of persons interviewed as part of this study can be found in Appendix 1.

¹ July 12, 2018.

1.4 Limitations

The limitations to the review are:

- The ToR established that data from three in-depth country studies was to be gathered through telephone/Skype interviews with SC office and government staff. This data collection manner has, unfortunately, limited the data quality from interviews with government staff. In some cases there have been language problems; time with the government staff has been limited; and the responses from the government officials interviewed have (in some cases) appeared perfunctory (like reading from a script). Experience from the many evaluations that the Team has carried out has shown that when information is to be collected from external stakeholders without a close relationship with the organization under review (e.g. clients, suppliers, government officials, academics or media) face-to-face interviews yield higher quality information. Face-to-face interviews also allow the evaluators to validate information provided and observe the situation, program and activities. For the purpose of this review, the Team believes that visits to a selection of countries and face-to-face interviews would have yielded higher quality information about the relationship between SC and the government.

2. Findings

2.1 Mapping of Partnerships with Governments

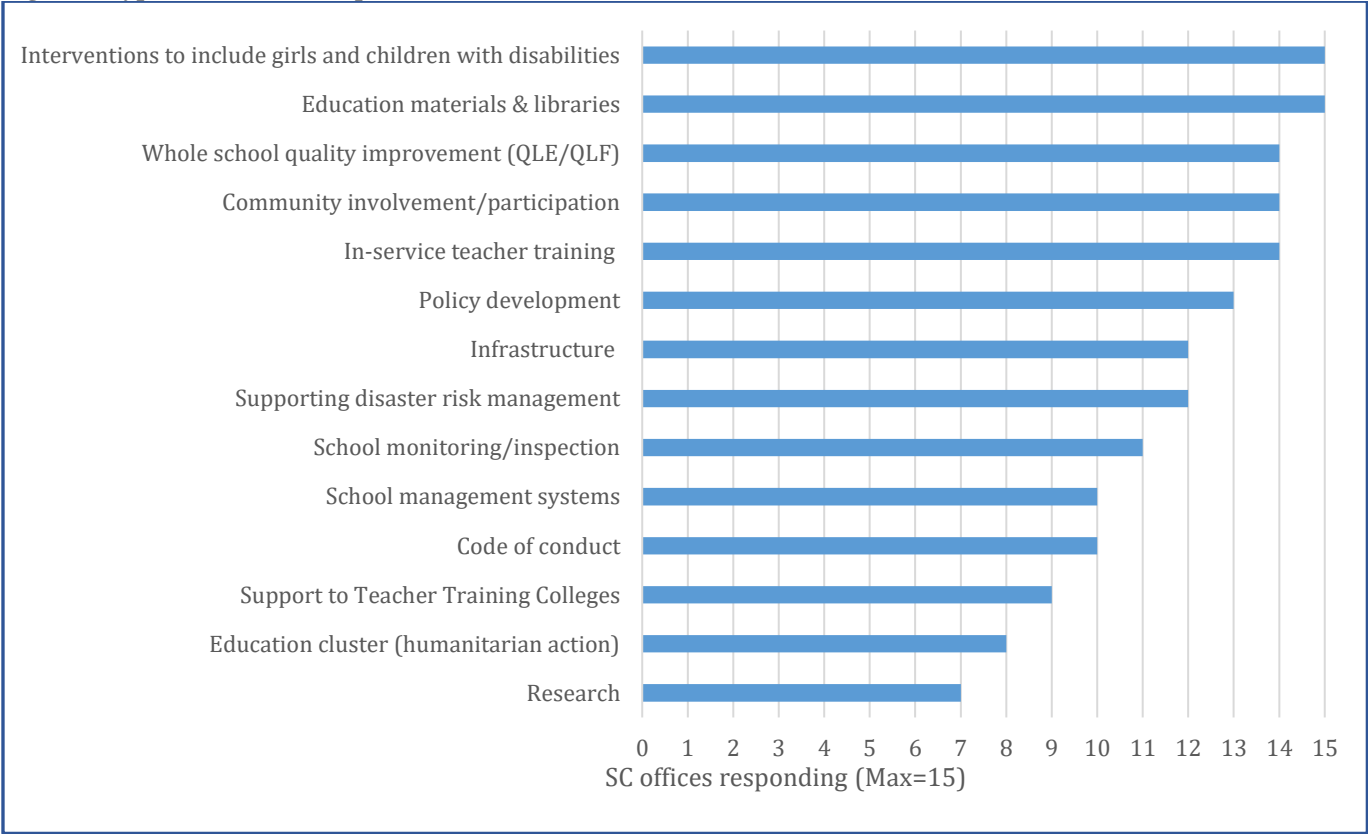
This section presents the Team’s mapping of the partnerships implemented in the 15 countries. The Team analyzed Norad proposals, *Annual Reports* and *Mid-Term Reviews*, responses to the survey questions and data gathered in telephone/Skype interviews. This chapter presents the findings regarding:

- the type of activities implemented in cooperation with government,
- with which government agency/agencies SC offices partner with,
- the type of partnerships and funding modalities that the SC offices have with government,
- indications of the results of the partnerships.

2.1.1 Activities Implemented in Cooperation with Government

The following graph illustrates the types of activities that the SC offices are implementing with government in the education sector.

Figure 3 Types of Activities Implemented with Government Partners



The SC offices implement a large number of activities with the governments in a wide range of areas in the education sector with funding from Norad. Most SC offices consulted implement at least eight of the types of activities listed above. Data collected from SC offices interviewed show that they often have different teams working with central government and the district MoE, respectively. SC offices work with the central government in the areas of

policy development e.g. to improve laws/policies/strategies and educational standards and in projects at district level to support individual schools in areas such as increasing enrollment of girls, improving Water, Sanitation and Hygiene – WASH – facilities and pre-service and in-service training for teachers.

All SC offices state that they work to address gender imbalances and the rights of Children with Disabilities (CwD). This also comes out in the documentation where a number of projects and activities have been implemented by each SC office to address either gender inequalities or access and understanding about CwD (see Chapter 2.3.5 below for more details).

As shown above, all SC offices provide educational materials. In Somalia, SC prints and distributes schools books to its target schools as the state does not provide these. In Mozambique, SC has helped furnish libraries with books. In Nepal SC has helped to develop extra teaching learning material, establish book corners in classrooms, and provide workbooks for children.

All SC offices work with in-service teacher training on various topics (as part of the Literacy Boost methodology, to address CwD and gender issues, in positive discipline etc.). The recent analysis of the I'm Learning pilot projects showed that cascading in-service teacher training has been less effective and given the substantial focus by SC office on this, it is important that SCN considers effective manners of ensuring the quality of in-service teacher training and follows-up on training to ensure that the learning is practiced.

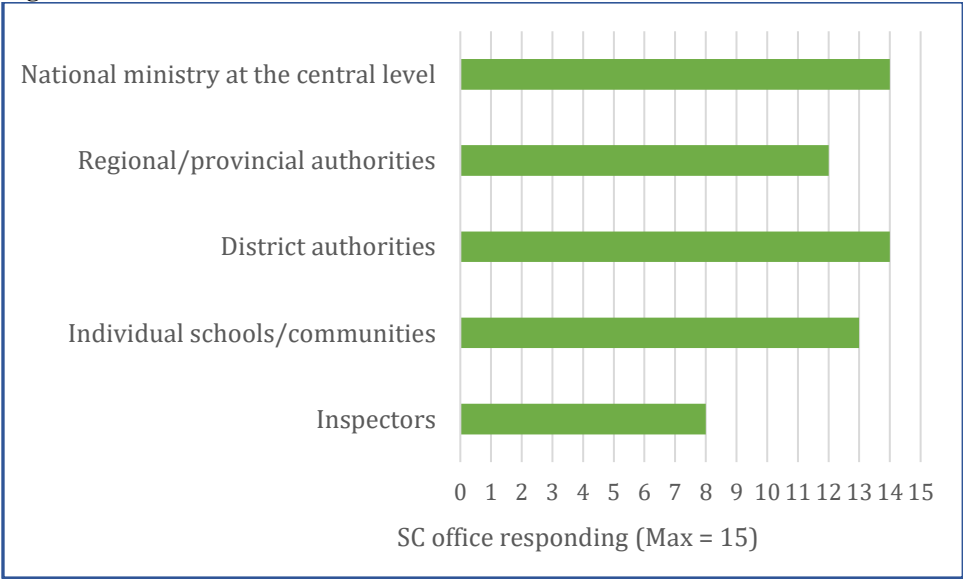
13 SC offices have worked closely with the central government to develop policy, educational standards and strategic plans. One example is SC Mozambique that has supported the central government in developing a *Gender Strategy* where parts of the QLE were incorporated. SC Mozambique is also often asked by the central MoE to comment on policy documents and has, through this work introduced gender sensitive wording in relevant policy documents. Another is the close involvement of SC Myanmar in the development of a *Kindergarten Curriculum* and subsequent roll out of this nation-wide. In Nepal, SC has been part of the development of the central government's *Education Sector Development Plan, Equity Strategy for School Education* as well as helped draft local *Education Development Plans* for newly formed local governments. This has meant the inclusion of several of SCI's methods in the *Education Development Plans*; Free and Compulsory Basic Education, QLE, Child-Centered Disaster Risk Reduction and Education Rights of Children with disability and marginalized communities. In Somalia, SC's policy work has primarily been at state and federal level; SC Somalia contracted a consultant to help draft the State government of Puntland's *Education Sector Strategic Plan*.

2.1.2 Government Partners

According to the survey responses, all SC offices have formalized their cooperation with the MoE through contracts and/or MoUs. Several offices mention overall agreements with the

central ministry in the documentation and then sign specific project/activity agreements with MoE at the province and district level. The overall MoUs between SC Nepal and SC Mozambique and the respective, central MoE establish overall goals and provide the SC office the legitimacy to be able to work with MoEs at provincial and district level. The MoE between SC Nepal and the Department of Education does not include any agreement on transfer of funds. According to the interviews with SC offices and government staff in Nepal and Mozambique, the overall MoUs provide legitimacy for SC to support MoE offices at district and/or provincial level (this is further analyzed in Chapter 2.3.6), which is also the case in several other countries: Cambodia, Guatemala, Uganda, Malawi and Niger.

Figure 4 Government Partners



The most intense work appears to be done at provincial and/or district level where contacts are frequent (weekly or monthly) between the SC staff and local authorities. SC Mozambique, Nepal and Somalia explain that contacts with government at these levels involve planning and supporting district officials with strategy, planning of new projects, information sharing about the situation in remote areas or about results of programs SC has implemented. There is also direct operational planning for e.g. training events, joint monitoring visits and reporting on progress.

At the national level, SC Mozambique and SC Nepal are often called upon to help the government by providing advice, experiences from abroad, data and information gathered from SC-implemented projects and proposing tools and methodologies to address issues e.g. quality of literacy education in Mozambique and Child-Centered Disaster Risk Reduction in Nepal. SC Somalia works with both the state government and the federal government to draft policies. It has also supported the restructuring of the educational ministries² with the aim of improving the governance model for the education sector.

² SC Somalia helped restructure the work of the MoE of the State of Puntland. This included providing support in areas such as decentralization, improved financial management procedures, human resource management, planning, monitoring and reporting.

In addition to the MoE, which is the primary government authority that SC offices cooperate with, SC offices also work with teacher training colleges (in some countries these are separate institutions) and other ministries such as:

- Ministries of Gender, Labor/children and Social Development regarding child protection.
- Government Public Relations Departments with development of school material and information to communities, authority staff and the public.
- Ministry of Finance is a partner as this ministry is the principal budget holder in many countries.
- Ministry of Environment is a partner to SC in Cambodia when addressing humanitarian action.

2.1.3 Types of Agreements with Government

The survey and interviews shows that all SC offices consulted all have formalized their partnerships with governmental partners. In most cases MoU or framework agreements are signed with the national education authority at the central level and then projects are agreed with provincial and/or district/local MoE agencies for specific interventions. These can be formalized with ToR or with separate MoUs between SC and the district MoE.

An analysis of the formal agreements³ show that SC offices use different formats for these, and varying degree of detail of agreement terms. None of the MoUs reviewed follow SCI's *Template MoU* or include the same amount of detail as recommended in the *Template MoU*. Some MoUs are very brief, referring instead to project documents with activities, and few include the goals or principles governing the agreement. The project MoUs (signed between SC offices and MoE at district or province level) establish funding amounts, how payments are to be made and the disbursement schedule, but little else. Some are accompanied by detailed project plans and budgets, others not. In comparison, SCI's *Template MoU* recommends that the following information is included in a MoU:

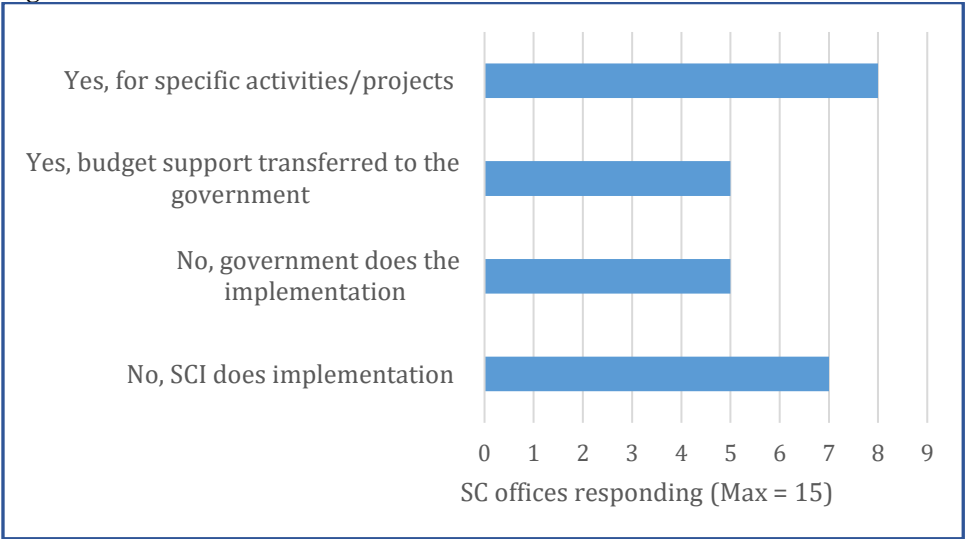
- Principles/values
- Operating principles including accountability, information sharing, participation, learning and staff competencies
- Conflict resolution
- Modification to the MoU

According to SCN, there is an initiative underway within SCI to develop a government-specific partnership policy and tools. It may not be possible to establish one template for all government partnerships (as it will depend on negotiations with each respective government) but including the information listed above and specifying the responsibilities of each party is important as is the establishing the goal of the partnerships.

³ Available only for Nicaragua, Nepal, Uganda, Ethiopia and Niger.

The responses to the electronic survey show that several SC offices transfer funds to the government in different manners.

Figure 5 Are Funds Transferred to the Government?



In 10 of the 15 countries consulted, funds are transferred to the government either as budget support or for specific project activities, or for both types of funding. SC Myanmar, SC Nepal and the SC office in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) do not transfer any funds but implement all activities themselves or with CSO partners. SC Lebanon and SC Guatemala do not transfer funds to the government but pay contractors directly. In the case of SC Somalia, the funding modalities vary; only the MoE in the State of Puntland is deemed to have adequate financial systems to manage funds and SC Somalia therefore transfers funds for teacher salaries to the MoE of Puntland. In other States and to the Federal Government, SC Somalia instead pays the teachers directly. For other types of activities, SC Somalia either pays directly to a supplier/contractor (e.g. in the case of construction of infrastructure) or directly to the government staff (e.g. per diems, transport allowances etc.). SC Mozambique has an overall agreement with the MoE at central level and then a large number of different types of contract with provincial and district MoEs to fund school material, training of teachers and parents and meetings. SC Nepal has an overall MoU in place with the Department of Education that establishes roles and responsibilities but where no funds are transferred. Projects for specific interventions are agreed at province and district level where SC and its CSO partners implement projects.

Of the 10 SC offices that transfer funds to the government, five countries provide budget support to cover salaries and office costs of the provincial or district government office.

2.1.4 Results of the Partnerships

An analysis of the results indicate that these can be grouped into the following:

1. Improved access to education – to improve enrolment and retention rates, infrastructure to allow access to CwD etc.
2. Improved quality of education (from the children’s and teachers perspective).

3. Improved capacity of the government to fulfill its mandate.
4. Policy changes advocated for by SC.

The table below shows the number of responses grouped in terms of results in access, quality, government capacity and advocacy.

Figure 6 Results of the Partnerships

Results mentioned	Mentioned by number of respondents
Results in improved access to education	
Improved access by the most vulnerable and remotely located children to educational services including CwD	6
Improved enrollment and retention rates	6
Government's increased ability to access remote areas and vulnerable groups	2
Results in improved quality of education	
Better learning performance as evidenced in literacy rates	7
Improved child participation and children's knowledge of their rights	7
Introduction of rights based educational planning	4
Introduction and implementation of child centered learning methods	4
The adoption of parts of the QLE/QLF by the government	3
Better understanding by communities about children's rights	2
Government becoming more accountable and able to work with the communities	1
Results in improved capacity of the government to fulfill its mandate	
Increased willingness of government to test and apply new methodologies/tools	7
Government agencies become more systematic in their work (e.g. establishing committees, in strategic and operational planning of the work etc.)	6
The scaling up of initiatives or programs tested by or implemented with SC	6
Improved coordination between government and CSOs and less duplication of resources as a result of joint planning	5
Improved cross-learning among CSOs through government-led forums	5
Government taking more ownership of programs, activities, training and monitoring	2
Government improved the ability to identify and analyze the needs	2
Governments increased involvement and joint implementation of activities	2
Policy changes advocated for by SC	
CSOs (and SC partners) are able to advocate directly with the government and heard and accepted by the government	9
The ability of government to prioritize children and their rights was improved	5

The table above shows a significant number of responses in terms of results improving the quality of education and the capacity of government to fulfill its mandate. More of the SC offices have mentioned results in the quality of education rather than solely improvements in access to education. This indicates a shift in focus towards quality of education (in line with developing schools working holistically towards the QLE/QLF) and away from the traditional focus on providing access to education without considering if and how children learn.

The results listed above are not attributable solely to government partnerships but without the cooperation and approval of the government in implementing the programs the results would not have been possible.

The results that government officials identified as a consequence of cooperating with SC offices included:

- SC' implementation and financing of activities that would otherwise not have been done (training, monitoring in remote areas, infrastructure and materials).
- Adoption of new tools, methods and learning from SCI's experience in other countries.
- Receiving data and information from SC about the status of e.g. enrollment, literacy rates, female enrollment that the government otherwise does not have access to. Examples mentioned are information from pilots that SC has implemented, data on children's access to school or CwD's situation in remote areas, studies on reasons behind teenage pregnancies that the government officials found useful for their decision-making.
- Improved relationships between the government and the community.
- Better understanding by officials on how to deal with children (after having received training in e.g. positive discipline).

SCI aims to support CSOs and government to “build local capacity and structures so that children have access to public welfare⁴” and so that children's rights are safeguarded. SC' interventions therefore focus on teacher development and training, school management systems, establishing monitoring practices etc. This interaction between SC offices and government has clearly led to government agencies becoming more professional, especially at the central level. Examples include central governments' improved ability to lead strategic planning processes, lead consortiums and meetings with stakeholders, government taking ownership for implementation and governments' improved ability to coordinate CSOs. At the district level, SC offices still encounter local governments with a strong focus on infrastructure. When the SC office enters new districts in Mozambique, local governments still request new school buildings, washrooms etc. and are less interested in aspects to improve the quality of education for the children. SC Mozambique then begins building relationships and knowledge transfer to shift the focus to the quality of education.

The government officials at district level emphasize SC's role in implementing and funding activities to help the MoE fulfill its mandate. It is evident that SC offices are providing “service delivery projects” to the governments. A very clear example of this is Somalia where, SC Somalia pays teacher salaries directly from its accounts and prints and distributes school books. This may be justified in many countries, especially in conflict or post-conflict countries. SC' funding is discussed under Chapter 2.3.6 below.

⁴ Save The Children Norway. *Investing In Children - Strategy 2014–2018*

Important results mentioned by both government representatives and SC offices are the transfer of knowledge and tools and information sharing. These are vital components needed to improve children’s learning and also address shortfalls, gaps and problems.

Also mentioned by SC offices surveyed and interviewed is the improved relationship between communities and the government where SC offices have worked. Programs have included activities to involve the community and government officials in school management and thereby allowing important actors to meet and find local solutions together (e.g. in Nepal). SC Somalia has provided substantial support to Community Education Committees (CEC). These consists of parents in the community and are responsible for supporting the school in areas such as local advocacy, resource mobilization, campaigns on enrolment, assistance to teacher welfare etc. SC Guatemala has been successful in its work with the Bureau of Bilingual Intercultural Education (DIGEBI) resulting in the inclusion of representatives from different communities and language groups across the country in dialogue about bilingual education.

The most important results of the partnerships on the civil society that respondents and interviewees mentioned were:

Figure 7 Results for the Civil Society

Results for the Civil Society	Mentioned by number of respondents
CSOs (and SC partners) are able to advocate directly with the government and heard and accepted by the government	10
Improved coordination between government and CSOs and less duplication of resources as a result of joint planning	5
Improved cross-learning among CSOs through government-led forums	5
Networks and coalitions of CSOs are empowered to discuss and work with government	4

10 of the 15 SC offices interviewed or surveyed have mentioned their involvement in the government’s strategy process and/or planning processes at the central government level (see Chapter 2.3.6 below for examples identified). Several offices are also involved in such processes at federal and district level (example is SC Nepal). In many cases SC offices are part of a CSO network invited to support the government’s planning process, other times they may be one of only a few INGOs invited (e.g. Myanmar). In Mozambique and Nepal, the SC offices at times work closely with UNICEF to develop policies, sometimes invited by UNICEF to join a project, sometimes as part of common network. SC offices have endeavored to involve also partner CSOs in such processes resulting in them being heard by government and networks of national CSOs being strengthened. The coordination and cross-fertilization is another important aspect, with the aim of less duplication of efforts and more cooperation between CSOs.

Conclusion

The mapping of government partnerships has shown that that the SC offices consulted implement at least eight of the types of activities with government partners. All SC offices

work with government to address girls and CwDs' rights, provide or support government with in-service teacher training, provide education material, work towards the QLE/QLF and to improve the community's involvement in education.

SC offices cooperate with several levels of government; central, provincial and district in different capacities. At the central level the SC offices are often called upon to provide advice, information and SCI tools and methodologies to address issues prioritized by the government. At the district level SC offices help plan and implement new projects, share information and are involved in operational planning for e.g. training events, joint monitoring visits and reporting on progress.

All SC offices consulted all have formalized their partnerships with governmental partners through MoUs/contracts. SC Mozambique and Nepal have overarching MoUs with the central MoE and specific project contracts for projects with provincial and district MoE agencies. 10 of the 15 countries reviewed transfer funds to the government. The MoUs/contracts lack information/requirements that SCI's Template MoU includes and SCN should consider the content of these to ensure that the MoUs/contract include the relevant requirements.

The results mentioned by SC offices shows a significant improvement in the quality of education and the capacity of government to fulfill its mandate. More of the SC offices have mentioned aspects to improve the quality of education rather than solely access to education. Other important results from government partnerships is the improved transfer of knowledge, tools and information to government. These are vital components needed to improve children's learning, address shortfalls and gaps and to improve coordination of government and the civil society's activities.

Recommendation

- SCI should consider the content of the MoUs with government to ensure that these include operating principles, responsibilities of each party and the goals of the contract.

2.2 Relevance

The SC offices apply different methods to approach and begin working with the government as the different levels of government have separate priorities that SC offices in the countries need to relate to.

Central level government:

The interviews with SC staff and government staff in Mozambique, Nepal and Somalia suggest that partnerships between SC offices and the government are entered into based on discussions and identification of where SC can support the government (at the different government levels). SC is seen as being more proactive in the relationship, presenting evidence, information and experience from other countries or new tools/methods to the government. Providing evidence of gaps identified (e.g. enrollment), or experiences from

other countries appears to have been a successful manner of gaining government interest and approval to test new tools or implement programs, as commented on by SC office staff and government representatives interviewed.

SC Mozambique approaches the central government with, either, evidence from a program implemented in the country, a study or, with a tool or methodology that SCI has applied elsewhere. The evidence or tool is presented to the relevant national MoE representatives and discussed in order to gain acceptance/approval of the tool (e.g. Literacy Boost) or program to address the issues (e.g. program to address teenage pregnancy in schools). SC Mozambique endeavors to get hold of the government's plans, strategies and guidelines prior to presenting the tool, in order to analyze if and where an SCI tool could be of value. SC Mozambique stated that they would like to involve the government at all levels earlier on when planning interventions. However, the planning cycles of donors, SCN and other stakeholders influence the time available and do not always match the government's own planning cycles. SC Mozambique stated that there was insufficient time available to involve government earlier, which would be desirable in order to improve ownership by government and for SC to be able to explain and discuss methods, scope, and funding constraints. SCN should discuss the program planning cycle with SC offices in order to allow SC offices to more closely involve government in discussions and planning of programs prior to designing SC's program proposals.

SC Nepal is part of the government's policy and strategy development process at the central and is invited to planning processes as technical working group members. As such SC Nepal helped to ensure that Comprehensive School Safety was incorporated in the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) and to develop training packages for teachers in Disaster Risk Reduction. SC Nepal has also been actively engaged in various networks and forums led by government e.g. School as Zone of Peace, Gender Education Network, Early Childhood Development Network, School Sector Development (SSDP) Thematic Working Group, Education in Emergency Cluster.

In Somalia, the basis for the collaboration was a program description jointly developed by the government and the SC office for the Norad-funded program that started in 2015. This was based on the projects carried out by SC Somalia during the previous program period. Through the support from the SC office an *Education Sector Strategic Plan* was developed and has since been the guiding document for all initiatives supported by SC Somalia. All current projects/activities are aligned to the *Education Sector Strategic Plan*. One of the Somalian government representatives stated that there was insufficient consultation around the programs and that the government sometimes "accepted" SC' project proposal as long as these were not deemed harmful.

The survey also revealed that cooperation agreements are, in most cases, developed in dialogue with the government agencies at different levels. Most of the SC offices surveyed analyze the governments' strategic/national plans, prepare their own country strategies, and

then approach the government with proposals for where and how SC can support the government.

At provincial and district level:

In the provinces and districts where SC Mozambique has worked, the SC office used to have a better relationship with district and province MoE than the central MoE had with its departments. SC Mozambique recognized that this needed to change and therefore arranged for a MoU with the central government. This meant involving the central government in the planning and transferring knowledge from the district level. It also provided SC Mozambique with the legitimacy and approval to implement activities in the districts.

SC Nepal is part of the district and provincial government's policy and strategy development process as well. As Nepal has recently shifted to a decentralized federal structure, new responsibilities for establishing educational policies and laws have been awarded local governments, who may have limited competence to develop policies and procedures. SC Nepal has received the requests from local government to support them on development of policies and procedures. SC Nepal has therefore worked to form close relationships in order to support both federal, provincial and local level governments at the policy level.

SC Somalia supports 47 schools in Somalia in several states. These have in many cases been supported for a long time by SC and are among the neediest schools in the country. Without the SC's support some of these schools would be unlikely to even operate due to the limited resources and capacity of the government of Somalia.

Conclusion

The information collected shows that SC offices are closely involved in the educational planning processes, at central as well as at province and district level. SC offices' own country plans are prepared after an analysis of the national strategies/plans and programs proposed and discussed with the government agency at central and district levels. In addition, SC collects data that the government may not have access to, share it with the government in order to advocate for programs to address gaps and problems identified. The SC offices' own plans and programs thus appear closely aligned and relevant to the national contexts.

Recommendation

- SCN should consider how it can help SC offices manage the planning cycle in order to involve government agencies as early on in the planning process as possible. This would contribute to gaining governments' buy in, ownership, alignment to national plans and acceptance of SC' limitations with regard to budget, timing and capacity.

2.3 Effectiveness

The aim of SCI's partnership approach is to "be the innovator", "achieve results at scale" and "be the voice" (of the children). The fulfillment of these aims is analyzed below:

2.3.1 SC as an Innovator

Responses to the survey and interviews conducted show that SC offices are able to introduce new tools and methods, data to support the testing of new initiatives. Examples of innovations introduced mentioned in the documentation from the SC offices are:

- Cambodia: QLE used to develop 13 modules for teacher training as part of the MoE's "School Based Management Module".
- Ethiopia: Training was provided to MoE Department heads and staff members on innovative teaching methods.
- Myanmar: A Kindergarten Quality Framework, building on to the QLE framework was developed tested and rolled out.
- Nicaragua: Adaptation of the Teacher Training Module on Positive Discipline in collaboration with the MoE.
- Zimbabwe: Disciplinary Department in the MoE was resourced and capacitated to act swiftly on teachers' infringements of children's rights.
- Malawi: Inclusion of indicators from the QLE Guiding Principles checklist into the school observation/assessment tools to be used by teachers.
- Guatemala: Development and distribution to all teachers registered with the Special Education Department in MoE of a printed copy of the *Orientation Manual* to determine if a student presents disabilities.

SC offices are seen as proactive and being able to provide evidence and learning from other countries to the government representatives to support the piloting of new methods. Government officials in Mozambique and Nepal all attest to the fact that SC has brought new methods that have been implemented with good results. Government officials in Mozambique mentioned monitoring and inspection methods and the introduction of child clubs as innovative. Nepalese officials mentioned the biometric attendance system, methods to improve early childhood development as innovative.

SC' ability to be innovative was not mentioned by the government officials in Somalia. The officials instead highlighted SC' independence and ability to implement projects needed that fitted with the government's ambition of providing education to its citizens.

2.3.2 Achieving Results at Scale

There are a number of examples of methods/programs or tools piloted and/or implemented in a country that have been taken to scale by the government. SC initiatives taken to scale include:

- The Cambodian governments' swift roll-out of the schools management component of the I'm Learning pilot.
- SC Guatemala where the methodologies for addressing bilingual education were taken to scale by the government.
- The Literacy Boost initiative in Mozambique where the results of the program from Manica and Sofala provinces were rolled out to other provinces.

- Ethiopia where the government replicated the work to develop *Codes of Conduct* and introduced scholarships for girls.
- Nepal where the government adapted the work of complain response mechanism and attendance audit systems adapted by some of the local government
- Examples of the QLE/QLF (or components of) being applied at national level or by schools not supported by SC can be found in Cambodia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.
- In Somalia, the programs implemented were scaled up by the government also in remote areas. Examples included the support to development of specific regional plans on access and quality of education in areas not previously prioritized by the government. Another area is the expanded teacher training programs. However, interviews emphasize the limited financial resources available for the government as the major hinder for further upscaling.

The possible reasons for achieving results at scale are discussed below.

2.3.3 SC as the Voice of Children

This aspect of the SC offices work comes out less in the information gathered from interviews and the survey. Five SC offices state that the central government has become more child-centered as a result of working with the civil society (and SC) and there is evidence that the QLE/QLF (or components of it) have been implemented and incorporated into education standards in Cambodia, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar and Nepal. SC Nepal supported the drafting of the *Status Report of Children with Disability* to make government more responsible and accountable towards the issues of CwD.

The ability of SC to influence the government to become more child-centered depends on the context and on SC's relationship with the government. SC offices in Cambodia and Myanmar for example, tread carefully with the government, while in Nepal the relationship with government allows the SC office to provide constructive criticism. SC Mozambique has been able to ensure that the relevant government policies pertaining to education take into consideration gender issues, but there is a concern about if and how these policies are enacted in practice. The fact that SC supports governments in developing policies/standards etc. (described above in Chapter 2.1) and provides technical assistance is a pre-requisite for more child centered policies and documentation and is an important component of SC' advocacy role.

2.3.4 Unintended Results

The respondents to the survey and persons interviewed were asked to identify unintended results. The majority of those listing unintended positive effects mentioned the government taking initiatives to scale and the increased professionalization of government agencies.

Seven SC offices also listed the increased dependency of government on SC as an unintended effect of SC' support. This was also stated by government officials from the district level interviewed by the Team. SC is seen by local officials to help the local government fulfill its

mandate. There is evidence that SC has become a “service deliverer” and that by implementing activities and/or funding government’s fundamental activities this has or risks creating more dependency. There were also comments from some SC offices on the dual role of SC offices implementing interventions that are the governments’ duty while at the same time attempting to be the watchdog ensuring that the government fulfills its duties. These two roles may be difficult to combine with the risk that the watchdog role becomes less important.

2.3.5 *Leaving No-one Behind*

All the SC offices surveyed and interviewed stated that they work with:

- gender inclusion/girls education,
- rights of CwDs,
- helping vulnerable and marginalized children, and
- in some cases indigenous or children from minority groups.

There is a large number of specific results reported from the 15 SC offices with regard to access to education, provision of learning aids, building of facilities specifically aimed at helping girls and/or CwD. The examples below are those where the SC office has succeeded in influencing government policy or procedures to change/improve how girls, CwD and/or minority groups are addressed by government.

- SC Nepal contributed to the development of the *Equity Strategy for School Education* ensuring that the gender and social inclusion agenda became a priority policy. SC Nepal also collaborated with the MoE to develop a *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Manual* for teachers.
- SC Guatemala worked with the MoE’s Department for Special Education to develop an *Orientation Manual* for teachers to help them determine if a student presents disabilities. Also worked with the Bureau of Bilingual Intercultural Education resulting in improved bilingual education coverage and the inclusion of representatives from different communities and language groups across the country.
- SC Cambodia supported the MoE to develop a *Manual on Teaching Children with Intellectual Disabilities, Learning Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder*. SC Cambodia worked to disaggregate educational data to gain information about girls, boys, women and men at school, district, province and program level to incorporate into new program design with the government.
- SC Mozambique has helped the government ensure that all the key policy documents have the appropriate gender equality text, but how this is put into practice is not fully assessed.
- SC of OPT worked to introduce the concept of Inclusive Education at policy level which was endorsed by the MoE.
- Several SC offices have trained teachers to enable them to identify and support children with special learning needs (Cambodia, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nepal, Somalia and Uganda),
- SC Nicaragua has worked with gender issues especially in rural areas.

2.3.6 Factors Explaining the Results

There are a number of factors identified that may explain these results. These are:

- A. The building of a relationships of trust with government at different levels.
- B. SC' role as strategic partner – helping develop policies and plans.
- C. SC' role as part of networks/coalitions of CSOs working in education.
- D. SC offices' funding of activities.

A) Building Trust with the Government Partner

In many countries the relationships with government have been longstanding (e.g. Nepal, Guatemala) while in others (Myanmar) SC was the first International NGO (INGO) to enter into a MoU with the government only recently. In Somalia, SC staff and government officials have emphasized the good working relationship between SC and the government and how important it has been for achieving results. The SC offices interviewed stated that building trust is done by:

- being part of the solution by providing information, data, new tools/methods and actively implementing solutions,
- fostering personal relationships with government staff at different levels,
- being transparent in its communication with government, and
- being flexible in helping to adopt tools/methods/programs.

Being part of the solution: By providing data the government many not have (e.g. on enrollment of vulnerable groups or in remote areas, literacy rates etc.) and solutions in the form of tools and methods, specific projects/activities as well as funding, SC becomes part of the solution and an important partner to government.

At the national level, SC' analysis of the problem (e.g. quality of education) and tools and methods to attempt to solve it are seen as important contributions. SC is often more proactive in proposing projects to the government than vice versa, according to government representatives interviewed.

Fostering personal relationships with government: Building personal relationships with government staff is seen as important by SC offices interviewed. National staff with the appropriate background and networks facilitate contacts and are able to invite government staff to knowledge sharing events and also to be allowed into government planning sessions.

The point of entry to build trust and relationships, as explained by SC staff interviewed, can be investing in an evaluation, study or data collection of an issue important to the MoE (e.g. low enrollment in remote areas of Nepal, drop outs due to child marriage in Malawi or low literacy rates in Mozambique). Several SC offices surveyed and interviewed shared such information with government as a first step to address the issue at hand and develop a programs/tools/methods.

An additional successful manner of building relationships tried by SC offices has been to invite government representatives to learn about SCI initiatives/methods/results tested in other countries in order to present an alternative or proposed solution to an issue.

SC offices have, over time developed relationships with government at different levels. Most appear to anchor any relationships at province or district level with a framework MoU or cooperation agreement at the central level to gain legitimacy to work at province or district level.

Transparency: The SC staff interviewed all state that transparency is important when dealing with government. SC staff share project proposals, budgets, SCI tools and regulations in order to be transparent about how SC can contribute. SC staff also commented that district government where SC has not worked in the past, often request infrastructure projects at first (i.e. building of classrooms) but with a transparent dialogue about SC' budget, mandate (as established in the MoU with the central government) and proposal to solve the issue the process of planning and implementation runs more smoothly.

Flexibility: SC shares its tools and methods, but is flexible in how these are used. Other CSOs may approach the governments with programs with an established methodology that is perceived as too rigid. SC has worked by helping governments adopt SCI tools to the local policies, priorities and strategies. In Mozambique the SC offices have helped the government to roll out a Literacy Boost Initiative and helped the MoE with the design of a *Gender Strategy* where parts of the QLE were incorporated. In one district in Nepal, SC Nepal has incorporated QLE in the *District Education Plans*.

B) Helping Government Develop Policies and Plans

Being part of strategic planning or policy processes at national as well as district and provincial level is also a method used by 10 of the SC offices to both plan their own activities, discuss with government how SC can contribute, create a relationship with government where SC (and other NGOs) and government jointly work towards the government's goals and to influence government to become more rights based, child-centered and innovative. Being part of this process is a privilege that SC offices have achieved either as a result of long standing relationships (e.g. SC Nepal), from having worked in the country at local level (e.g. SC Cambodia), and as the leaders of CSO coalitions (e.g. SC Mozambique).

This also allows SC direct contact with decision makers. One example of this is SC Mozambique where the Minister of Education supported the roll out of the Literacy Boost Initiative after a pilot, or in the case of Cambodia where the Minister, after a visit to a school in the I'm Learning pilot, decided to roll out a component of the pilot nation-wide.

The results of the Quality Education Program, piloted by SC Mozambique was presented to the MoE, donors, NGOs and other stakeholders. The aspects of the QEP that especially attracted the attention of the MoE were the active participation of stakeholders in the process of teaching; teachers, students, parents, guardians and other agents. The Literacy Boost tool was to be introduced in the curricula for schools, because it accommodates the community component and approaches teacher training at the grassroots level.

C) SC as Part of CSO Networks

Many of the SC offices responding have indicated that they are part of CSO networks and they work with CSO partners when implementing Norad-funded programs. In some cases (Nepal, Mozambique) they coordinate CSO education networks working with government in strategic planning processes. SC Nepal was also the co-coordinator of the Education Cluster in the humanitarian response after the earthquake and helped the government introduce child-centered disaster risk reduction. In Somalia, SC is an active member at coordination groups for CSOs on state and federal level.

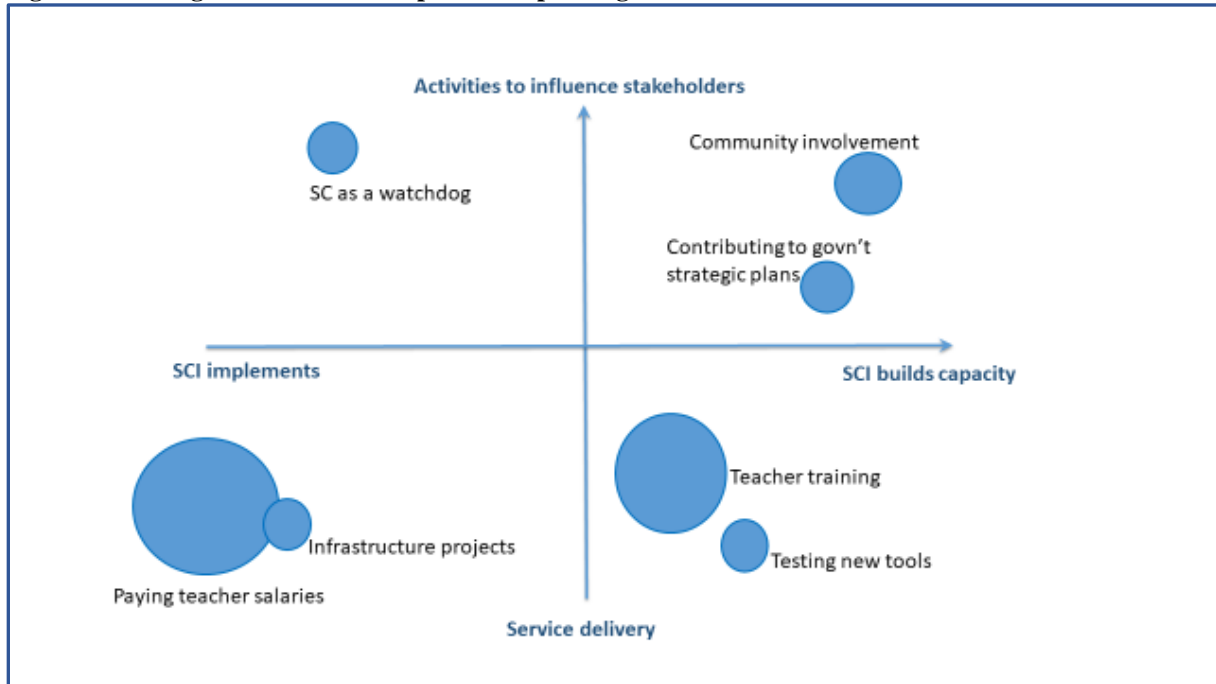
Being part of such networks has meant a stronger ability to influence government, the need for government to become more systematic in establishing committees, in planning and in coordination of programs to avoid duplication of work.

The effect on the civil society has been to promote SC' partners and other CSOs in their dialogue with government, improving relationships with specific interest groups (e.g. promoting education in native languages by including CBOs and other communities to engage with the MoE – example of Guatemala), and improved cross-learning between CSOs.

D) Funding of Activities

SC is an important partner to government agencies in all 15 countries; as a source of new ideas and competence; but also as a service deliverer and source of finance. The documentation, interviews and survey show that SC offices' funding is used in various manners. In 10 of the 15 countries surveyed SC offices transfer funds to the government either as budget support or to finance specific activity costs (transport, per diem during training, school materials etc.) or in some cases both funding modalities are used with different MoE agencies. Each SC office seems to have its own setup and funding modalities; there does not appear to be a specific policy, guideline or instruction on how the SC offices should work when providing funding to the governments. This provides flexibility for the respective SC office but also creates a situation where there may be inconsistency in how SC operates between countries with similar challenges. The Team has grouped the types of funding into the following types in order to help SCN and SC offices consider the sustainability of the funding:

Figure 8 Funding of SC activities in partnership with government



The model attempts to help SCN when considering activities to fund and their sustainability. The x-axis measures the degree to which SC actively implements activities i.e. pay teacher salaries and build classrooms on the one extreme and support government by providing advice, new learning and methods, on the other. The y-axis attempts to measure the type of the activity implemented and to what extent it represents an activity that is a core function of the government (as a duty bearer) or if it is an activity aiming at changing/influencing the government in providing rights to children. As an example, when SC constructs school buildings, SC is, in essence taking over the responsibility of the government. When SC is acting as a watchdog, it is attempting to influence government policy.

The size of the circles is an attempt to measure the relative size of the funding, larger circles representing larger amounts.

When analyzing its activities and projects, the SC offices and SCN can use this model to plot its activities and projects in the respective country. By doing so it can analyze aspects such as the sustainability of the activity, the need for exit strategy or a scale up strategy, and to what extent the SC office works with the aspects of “be the voice”, “be the innovator” and “achieve results at scale”. In order to be a trusted partner to the government activities in all four areas of the model may be needed.

SC offices fund different types of activities, and in many cases activities that may fall into several or all of the categories above. Being a service deliverer may be necessary especially in lower income countries and/or in conflict and post-conflict regions but, if that is the case, SC should consider developing an exit plan for how and when that type of support can be phased out as it is not sustainable in the long run. The program proposals to Norad (for the period 2015-2018) include a general discussion about sustainability strategies but may need to be

more explicit for each activity that falls into the “service delivery” category. The idea that initiatives be implemented during a certain period and then taken over by government is good, but appears to not have been realized in several countries, as dependency on SC has increased and initiatives have been discontinued when the government was to take over.

SC is also an innovator, funding pilot activities, testing methodologies in order to see if these can be taken to scale. An example of that mentioned by SC Nepal is when SC Nepal together with partner organizations identified good practices in education programs and shared these with a newly a formed district government. This resulted in some of the good practices being incorporated into the district government's plan and budget. SC should, when testing new tools, consider the “scale up” strategy i.e. is it possible to expand this method/tool geographically and will the government be willing to fund the scale up?

Conclusion

The data collected shows that SCI is seen as an innovator by the government officials interviewed and there are a large number of examples of methods and tools introduced by SC into the education sector. Taking methods to scale is only possible if and when government decides to adopt such a method on a broader scale, which has also happened, in a number of cases. SC’ role as a strategic partner to the government, ability to involve government in implementation and funding or co-funding of pilots and testing of tools are factors that influence the governments’ adoption of tools/methods on a broader scale. SC’ ability to “be the voice” of children comes out less from the data collected although five SC offices state the government have become more child-focused as a result of the partnership.

There is a worry among seven of the 15 SC offices surveyed of increasing dependence by the government on SC. There is also evidence that SC offices are providing service delivery i.e. implementing activities that are the responsibility of the duty bearer, with limited exit strategies. This is a precarious situation and may also affect the SC offices’ ability to hold government to account.

Recommendations

- SC offices need to consider the types of activities it will fund in order to establish clear phase out strategies for service delivery and budget support projects and scale-up strategies for pilot projects.

2.4 Efficient Government Partnerships

The data collected for this review has not allowed for a detailed analysis of the most effective activities implemented by SC offices but instead an analysis of the characteristics of effective government partnerships. The results mentioned by the SC offices surveyed cannot be attributed only to government partnerships but there are indications that the relationships have resulted in government taking SC interventions or methods to scale.

In all in-depth countries (Mozambique, Nepal and Somalia) where SC' initiatives, piloted methods and/or programs have been scaled up upon a decision by the government, the relationship between SC office staff and the central government has been valued by both parties. The SC offices were described as trusted partners supporting the government in strategic planning processes, in activities at district levels, by providing data and innovative methods. By presenting methods and, in the case of Mozambique, evidence of the effect of the Literacy Boost initiative, the government decided to implement these at scale. Also in six other SC offices where government decided to roll out SC-introduced initiatives, the survey shows that these SC offices work at all levels of government, also at national level.

The fact that SC offices finances the piloting and testing of new models is, in some cases, a pre-requisite for the "go ahead" by government. The government officials interviewed stated that they have broad and increasing duties and not sufficient resources to fulfill all duties. SC' ability to fund the introduction of new methods is key to implementing/testing them and eventually, in rolling these out in the country. The data gathered and experience from other educational programs shows that a good relationship between the organization introducing new models/methods and top management at the MoE, is a pre-requisite for the adoption by the government of a new model with national wide implementation. It is therefore important that the SC offices continue to foster a good relationship with the government and does not introduce new models/methods without the consent of the government.

As discussed above, there is a worry that government offices are becoming dependent on SC to deliver on their duties and that SC is providing service delivery. In the upcoming proposal to Norad, SCN may need to carefully consider what activities are proposed by SC offices to be used for "budget support", which fall into the "service delivery" category (i.e. helping government offices fulfill their duties) and which funds would be used to introduce relevant new tools, methods and programs. The latter would be initiatives SCN should consider funding (if relevant to the context), while SCN may need to carefully consider the two former types of support in order to not create a dependency.

Conclusion

The factors that have helped to implement SC-initiated methods at a larger scale have primarily been the SC offices' frequent and trusted relationships with central government and SC' ability to fund initiatives, pilots and programs. The funding of new initiatives is important and SCN should continue to fund these.

Recommendations

- SCN should consider analyzing the SC offices' proposals to assess which initiatives fall into "budget support", "funding of service delivery" and "funding of new methods/programs/pilots where there is a potential to take these to scale". The latter type would be important to fund, while the former need more careful consideration.

2.5 Sustainability

The different types of sustainability analyzed are:

- Institutional sustainability: the governments improved and sustained ability to fulfil its duties
- Sustainability for the target group: the sustained improvement in learning environment for children and teachers.
- Financial sustainability: the ability of government to fund and implement its duties.

2.5.1 Institutional Sustainability

Institutional sustainability can be analyzed from two aspects:

- Sustained improvements in the national policy/legal/strategy frameworks governing education.
- Sustained improvement in the capacity of government to fulfill its duties.

The results mentioned by the SC offices surveyed show that 10 SC offices support either central and/or district government agencies in establishing policies/strategies that are more inclusive and more child centered. Supporting governments in establishing such policies is highly sustainable, if properly implemented by the government and relevant stakeholders, as these are to govern the education sector (and potentially other ministries' actions) for the foreseeable future. The results mentioned regarding establishing policies include:

- Mozambique's MoE including indicators for the QLE as part of the MoE's quality assurance processes and supporting MoE with the design of its *Gender Strategy*.
- Cambodia: "National Guidelines on Teaching Sequences for Khmer Study from Grade One to Three" were endorsed by the MoE.
- Ethiopia: SC Ethiopia's advocacy work at national level influenced the *National Plan of Action for Children (NPA: 2016-2020)* to include and clearly indicate CwDs' issues.
- In 2017 SC Malawi advocated against corporal punishment resulting in the MoE directing all Education Divisions in Malawi to ensure that children are protected from gender based violence and corporal punishment in all schools.
- Guatemala: support to the Vice Minister of Intercultural and Bilingual Education improved bilingual education coverage in terms of the inclusion of representatives from different communities and language groups across the country
- SC Palestine worked with the MoE resulting in the strategy on Inclusive Education being endorsed by the MoE
- Somalia: The establishment of the *Education Sector Strategic Plan* to govern the implementation and reformation of the educational sector.

The ability of government to fulfil its duties is conditioned on capacity (i.e. resources) and competence (knowledge, expertise and systems) to do so. SC offices have worked to build competence within national and local government offices. This has resulted in the governments' improved ability to plan at strategic and operational level, work in

committees/coalitions, coordinate their work and that of CSOs, identify and analyze needs and test new methods. In many countries the educational governance and the organization of the MoE is required, for instance through de-centralization and an improved organization. SC have assisted in these processes, for instance SC Somalia has supported the restructuring of the HR and Finance departments of the MoE.

Although government staff may move around often (a problem encountered by several SC offices) establishing systems for operational planning and coordination are sustainable and help government staff new to the MoE agency to more quickly become effective. Although not a specific goal of SCI (capacity building of government) this is an important and sustainable result that is important to consider and plan for.

2.5.2 Sustainability for the Individual Schools

Key components for achieving sustainability for the individual schools are

- strong school leadership and management,
- high quality teachers and
- the involvement of the community in creating a culture of ensuring that children are allowed to go to school, feel safe and thus able to learn in the school.

These components are encompassed in the QLE/QLF. And three SC offices surveyed have stated that the QLE/QLF, or components thereof, have been adopted by the government.

In terms of strong school leadership and management, 10 of the 15 surveyed SC offices state that they work to support school management systems which includes support to Headmasters/Principals in the day-to-day management as well as implementing child-centered policies at school level and management of teachers. Examples of results reported are support to administrative systems (attendance, enrolment, results monitoring etc.) and pedagogical leadership. In the interviews and the reports, results and activities targeting school management are not as frequent as those directly targeting the teachers (in-service teacher training, support to teacher training colleges). A positive result was reported by government officials in Mozambique where SC Mozambique helped identify the problems experienced by Headmasters and prepared tailored training to Headmasters. It was also interesting for government officials to notice that in schools where Headmasters were trained and were often present in the school, literacy rates improved.

14 of the 15 SC offices have worked on improving the quality of teaching (competence of teachers) in the schools through in-service teacher training and the examples of results achieved at school/teacher level include better pedagogical methods, understanding and use of the positive discipline methodology, inclusion of CwD, improved voice/influence of the children in the teaching etc. All of these have a direct impact on the children. However, improved quality of the individual teachers does not per se bring sustainability to the schools. Teachers are often re-posted or leave which has negative impact on the school and on children. Experience show that in order to achieve sustainable change at larger scale in

teaching methods at schools, it is important that capacity is built at school level and not only with the individual teacher that has participated in a training. A key factor is therefore reducing teacher turnover in schools. No initiatives have been reported on how the SC offices work with influencing and assisting the government to reduce teacher turnover despite being identified as a critical factors for achieving results. SC should therefore consider not only focusing on training of individual teachers, but to address issues causing high teacher turnover in the schools.

In many countries, the involvement of the communities is a key factor for achieving a good and sustainable educational environment in which generations of children go to school and receive high quality education. Examples of community involvement include:

- Informing parents of the rights and importance of children to attend school, particularly for girls.
- Providing support to (posted) teachers' welfare in the community by providing accommodation, social life and support. In many communities the community funds part or the full cost of teachers' salaries. This reduce staff turnover and increases the output from the teachers.
- Mobilizing the community to care for the school environment for instance through construction and maintenance of school buildings, school gardens, safe spaces for children, access to water, school feeding etc..

The role of the community varies from country to country. For instance in countries like Nepal, Somalia and Malawi, the community plays a crucial role in ensuring that all children go to school. The community also has a large responsibility in supporting the school and its teachers. In other countries, the issue of enrolment may not be a problem and the MoE may have more resources available to support and maintain schools and teachers. Thus, it is important that SC offices analyze the specific roles of the community in the respective village/district/country in order to establish a strategy for how it can support community structures.

Although the specific activities to involve the community in their children's education does not come out as strong in the survey, the success stories (from seven SC offices) mentioned included:

- Improved collaboration between government and the communities (Nicaragua, Mozambique and Nepal)
- Government getting involved in mobilizing the local communities (Ethiopia)
- Raising awareness of children's rights, gender issues, and early marriages with the local communities which contribute to increased enrollment (Cambodia and Somalia).
- SC Somalia's work with the Community Education Committees to train them, help them develop *School Development Plans* and provision of resources for the implementation.

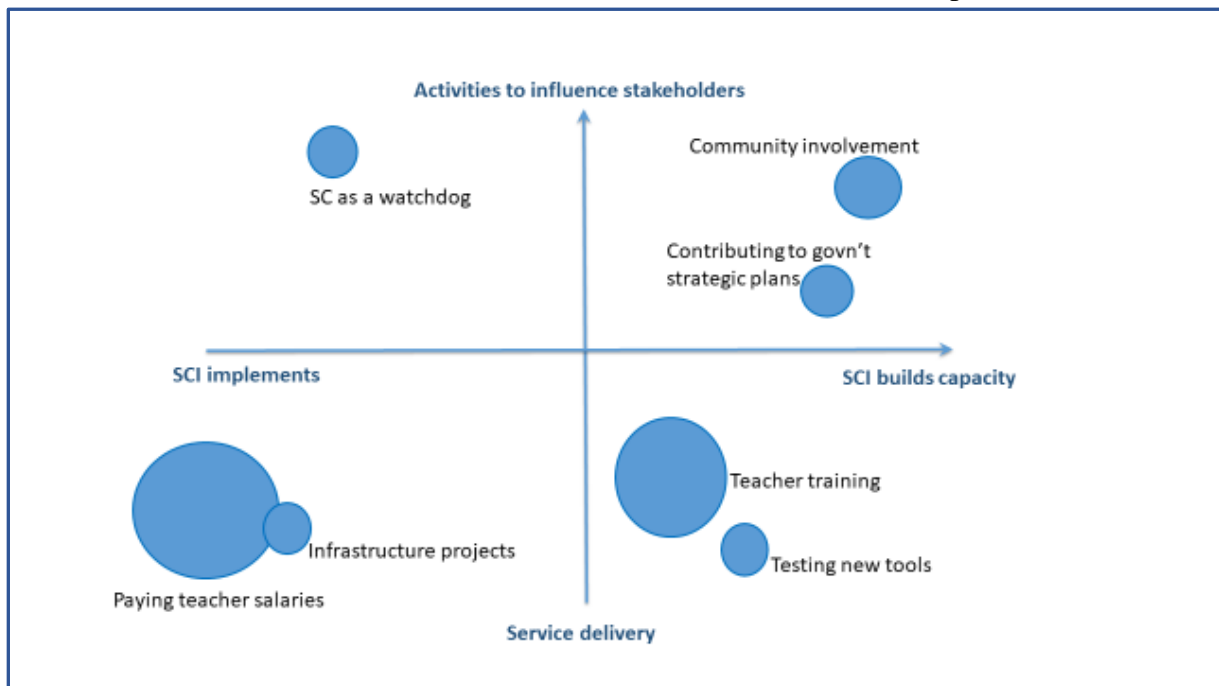
- SC Nepal's work the School Management Committee to develop the School Improvement Plan in more participatory way. In many program schools, the teachers and SMC have been using QLE as planning and monitoring tool.

Recommendation:

- SC should consider addressing issues causing high teacher turnover in the schools as experience has shown that this is a success factor to achieve sustainable change in teaching methods.
- SC offices should analyze the specific roles of the community in the respective village/district/country in order to establish a strategy for how it can support community structures.

2.5.3 Financial Sustainability

As discussed above, many SC offices surveyed provide different types of support to governments. In order to increase the financial sustainability of its interventions SC offices and SCN are recommended to consider the model described above in Chapter 2.3.6 D).



It may be possible to chart each proposed activity into the model by asking the following questions:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Is the activity scalable? | If NO, then it may be a service delivery project and an exit strategy should be developed?
If YES, then a strategy for how to scale up the activity should be developed. |
| 2. Is the proposed initiative new/innovative/never tested before in this country? | If YES, then a strategy for how to scale up the activity should be developed.
If NO, then it SC should consider if it is necessary and/or a service delivery project. |

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3. Does this initiative help SC “be the voice” of children? | If NO, then SC should consider if it is possible to develop the initiative into an “influencing” initiative (up along the y-axis in the model above). |
| 4. Does the initiative build capacity of the government to fulfill its duties? | If YES, consider if there either needs to be an exit plan or a scale up plan.
If NO, consider if it is a service delivery project and the need for an exit strategy |

Conclusion

It is important to bear in mind that funding service delivery and budget support is not a sustainable practice and SCN needs to carefully consider such proposals from SC offices. In the cases when such funding is deemed necessary, a clear phase out plan for such support should be established and clearly communicated with the government agency. Innovations that could be scaled up by the government should be considered for funding with a plan for how to broaden the uptake.

Recommendations

- SC offices and SCN should consider the proposed initiatives in terms of scalability, innovativeness. In the cases when an initiative is not scalable, it may not be sustainable and a clear phase out plan for such support should be established and clearly communicated with the government agency. If the initiative is innovative and a potential for taking it to scale exists, a plan for the latter should be developed.

3. Conclusions

The mapping of government partnerships has shown that the SC offices consulted implement many different types of activities with government partners at central, province and district levels. All SC offices work with government to address girls and CwDs' rights, provide or support government with in-service teacher training, provide education material, work towards the QLE/QLF and to improve the community's involvement in education.

SC offices cooperate with several levels of government; central, provincial and district in different capacities. At the central level the SC offices are often called upon to provide advice, information and SCI tools and methodologies to address issues prioritized by the government. At the district level SC offices help plan and implement projects, with school management, to share information and are involved in operational planning for e.g. training events, joint monitoring visits and reporting on progress.

All SC offices consulted all have formalized their partnerships with governmental partners through MoUs and or contracts. In many cases there is a MoU signed with the central MoE to provide legitimacy and approval to work in the province and districts. At the district level contracts with specific ToRs or project plans establishing funding, activities and disbursement plans exists. 10 of the 15 countries reviewed transfer funds to the government.

The results mentioned by SC offices shows a significant improvement in the quality of education and the capacity of government to fulfill its mandate. More of the SC offices have mentioned aspects to improve the quality of education rather than solely access to education. Other important results from government partnerships are improved technical skills, capacity development of the MoEs, tools and information with government and among CSOs. These are vital components needed to improve children's learning, address shortfalls and gaps and to improve coordination of government and the civil society's activities.

The information collected shows that SC offices are closely involved in the educational planning processes, at central as well as at province and district level. SC offices' own country plans are prepared after an analysis of the national strategies/plans and programs proposed and discussed with the government agency at central and district levels. In addition, SC collects data that the government may not have access to, share it with the government in order to advocate for programs to address gaps and problems identified. The SC offices' own plans and programs thus appear closely aligned and relevant to the national contexts.

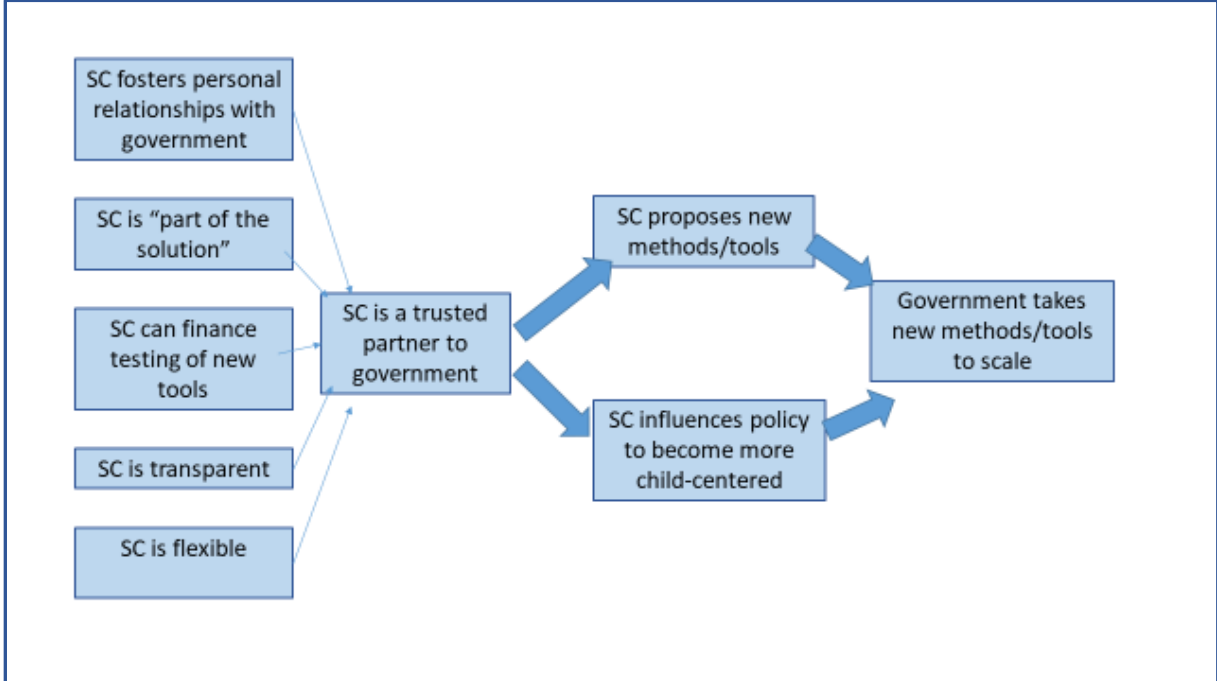
The data collected shows that SC is seen as an *innovator* by the government officials interviewed and there are a large number of examples of methods and tools introduced by SC into the education sector. Taking methods *to scale* is only possible if and when government decides to adopt such a method on a broader scale, which has also happened due to SC offices' ability to be a trusted partner to governments. SC' role as a strategic partner to the government, ability to involve government in implementation and funding or co-funding of piloting and testing of tools are factors that influence the governments adoption of

tools/methods on a broader scale. SC' ability to "be the voice" of children comes out less from the data collected although five SC offices state the government have become more child-focused as a result of the partnership. The factors that have helped to implement SC-initiated methods at a larger scale have primarily been:

- The building of a relationships of trust with government at different levels.
- SC' role as strategic partner – helping develop policies and plans.
- SC offices' funding of activities.
- SC' role as part of networks/coalitions of CSOs working in education.

The SC' theory of change appears to be validated. By building trust with the government helps SC go introduce new and innovative methods, to change government's policy and thereby implement SC' initiatives at scale. The figure below illustrated the casual links.

Figure 9 Validating SC' Theory of Change



There is a worry among seven of the 15 SC offices surveyed of increasing dependence of the government on SC. There is also evidence that SC offices are providing service delivery i.e. implementing and funding activities that are the responsibility of the government. This may be a relevant activity, but SC should bear in mind that funding service delivery and budget support is not a sustainable practice and SCN needs to carefully consider such proposals from SC offices. In the cases when such funding is deemed necessary, a clear phase out plan for such support should be established and clearly communicated with the government agency. Innovations that could be scaled up by the government should be considered for funding with a plan for how to broaden the uptake.

4. Recommendations

The recommendations made by the Team are summarized below:

- SCI should consider the content of the MoUs with government to ensure that these include operating principles, responsibilities of each party and the goals of the contract.
- SCN should consider how it can help SC offices manage the planning cycle in order to involve government agencies as early on in the planning process as possible. This would contribute to gaining governments' buy in, ownership, alignment to national plans and acceptance of SC' limitations to budget, timing, capacity etc..
- SC offices need to consider the types of activities it will fund in order to establish clear phase out strategies for service delivery and budget support projects and scale-up strategies for pilot projects.
- SCN should consider analyzing the SC offices' proposals to assess which initiatives fall into "budget support", "funding of service delivery" and "funding of new methods/programs/pilots where there is a potential to take these to scale". The latter type would be important to fund, while the former need more careful consideration.
- SC should consider addressing issues causing high teacher turnover in the schools as experience has shown that this is a success factor to achieve sustainable change in teaching methods.
- SC offices should analyze the specific roles of the community in the respective village/district/country in order to establish a strategy for how it can support community structures.
- SC offices and SCN should consider the proposed initiatives in terms of scalability, innovativeness. In the cases when an initiative is not scalable, it may not be sustainable and a clear phase out plan for such support should be established and clearly communicated with the government agency. If the initiative is innovative and a potential for taking it to scale exists, a plan for the latter should be developed.