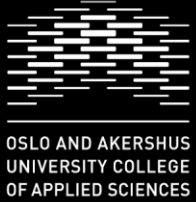


Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences
LUI/IST



Review of Save the Children Guatemala

Final Report

Axel Borchgrevink and Miriam Bolaños

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Save the Children Norway (SCN) has been cooperating with Save the Children Guatemala (SCG) since it was founded in 1983. A four year cooperation agreement for 2010-2013 included support for program areas (education, child rights governance (CRG), protection) and institutional strengthening. As this period is now coming to an end, SCN has commissioned the current review. The review has two objectives:

1. Providing evidence of overall achievements 2010-2013
2. Assessing the relevance of the SCG program priorities for a new program period

Oslo and Akershus University College (HIOA), with Axel Borchgrevink and Miriam Bolaños, were contracted to undertake the review. It was done in October-November 2013, with two weeks fieldwork in Guatemala from 28.10.13 to 08.11.13.

Findings

The main conclusions of the review are that SCG does excellent work at the local level, especially within the areas of CRG and education. The strategy of working through local institutions and building their capacities ensures that program results have a high degree of sustainability. While the organization has influenced the development of bilingual and intercultural education at the national level, there is room for further strengthening its advocacy work. SCG confronts a number of challenges in order to strengthen its organization. Overall, SCG's rights-based approach and areas of work remain highly relevant within the Guatemalan context of a weakly instituted democracy, high inequalities and large marginalized groups. In the following, these conclusions are specified in more detail.

Within the program area of *Education*, SCG has had a strong impact at school levels through the promotion of a pedagogy aimed at making students active participants and the establishment of learning resource centres (CREAs) that facilitate this. The strongest impacts are limited to around a third of the 340 schools with which SCG has worked. At a national level, SCG has had a significant influence on the development of bilingual and intercultural education.

Within *Child Rights Governance*, SCG has done an impressive work in strengthening local civil society and promoting municipal public policies for children and youth. SCG has organized around 4,500 children as promoters and communicators, who have received knowledge and awareness of child rights. For the majority of them, though, their level of activities is not very high. At the national and international level, SCG plays a crucial role for the production of the alternative report on the rights of children in Guatemala to the UN Universal Periodic Review process.

Within *Protection*, SCG does important work with children with disabilities. Given the little attention to this issue from the state, there have been strong impacts at the local level, both by ensuring that rehabilitation programs have been developed for more than 500 children, and by spreading

awareness of the issue in communities and municipalities. When it comes to work against trafficking, primary impacts have been in helping state institutions initiate efforts within the area.

SCG remains in a financial situation that is not sustainable in the longer term, being dependent on a single donor. Agreed issues related to changing bylaws and the composition of the Board were not attended to until 2013. There is still no overall communication strategy, and the organization is in need of improved strategic thinking at several levels. Few of the recommendations from the evaluation of SCG in 2008 have been concluded. Given the ongoing process of integration of the SC USA program with SCG, the organization is in a special situation. Related to this process, there is a new interim director and Board in SCG, with priorities of attending to immediate requirements of the integration. The new leadership has taken steps to address the shortcomings listed above, such as revising bylaws and Board composition requirements and developing an overall strategy.

SCG have clear weaknesses when it comes to *Planning and reporting* practices. There is a lack of consistent, strategic structuring of interventions within the program areas. Objectives, expected results, indicators and activities are not clearly separated, and reports often fail to conform to the logic of plans. It is not always clear what the numbers reproduced in reports refer to.

The fundamental problems of Guatemala remain the same: High inequality, poverty, malnutrition, ethnic exclusion, violence, weak and unresponsive state with democratic institutions that do not secure the interests of the marginalized. Therefore, the work of SCG continues to be relevant and important. In particular, it should be pointed out, that SCG's rights-based approach promotes participation and strengthens civil society engagement with local level state institutions, thereby fomenting democratic culture and practices that are necessary if Guatemala is to overcome its root problems.

SCG is among the few national organizations prioritizing children and youth from a rights-based perspective. There is still some way to go before SCG is generally known throughout the population, but it is well known and respected among the organizations and institutions working in this field.

SCG's way of working corresponds well with the SC Theory of Change. Among its strong points, through its work with communal and municipal councils, the organization does excellent work to strengthen civil society, and in the programs such as the promotion of municipal public policies and of CREAs, SCG shows systematic innovation and testing of approaches. Also if the principle of scaling up is understood to apply to work with local authorities, this is among its strengths. In addition to being relevant within the Guatemalan context and in relation to the SC Theory of Change, the SCG program corresponds well with the SCN 2014-2017 strategic priorities. In addition to the program areas mentioned above, also SCG's work on disaster risk reduction within schools fits well with SCN's priority for Test & invest: 'Disaster prevention integrated into education based on children and youth's participation.'

Main recommendations

SCG should:

- Continue program activities within the areas of Education, Child Rights Governance and Protection. The new sub-components of trafficking, violence and nutrition address urgent issues and SCG should continue to develop efforts in these areas.
- Give priority to activities aimed at ensuring long term financial sustainability, including international fundraising and cost-cutting.
- Develop a new strategic plan and strategic thinking throughout the organization. The strategy should be based on SCG's existing strengths of a rights-based approach contributing to democratization and improved education at the local level, and seek to further efforts at national level advocacy. A comprehensive communication strategy should be part of the process.
- For its program areas, SCG should clarify the time horizon and exit strategy when working at the municipal level, as well as how to ensure that impacts of the school programs extend to all schools.
- SCG should improve its systems and routines for planning, monitoring and reporting.

SCN should:

- Continue support to SCG without substantial changes. CRG, Education and support to children with disabilities should be given high priority. The recent and new components of trafficking, violence-free schools and nutrition merit support, while results should be monitored.
- Support SCG in fundraising, strategy development and in improving routines of planning, monitoring and reporting.
- Follow the implementation of a new cooperation agreement closely.
- Allow for flexibility in a new program agreement so that the organizations may to respond to changes and new needs that may develop due to the integration of the SC USA programme.

(A number of more detailed recommendations are given in section 3.3 of the main report.)

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

Save the Children Noruega (SCN) ha estado cooperando con Save the Children Guatemala (SCG) desde su fundación en 1983. El acuerdo de cooperación de cuatro años 2010-2013 incluyó apoyo a las áreas de los siguientes programas (educación, derechos de la niñez, protección) y fortalecimiento institucional. Como este período de cooperación está por terminar, SCN ha comisionado la siguiente revisión. La revisión tiene dos objetivos primordiales:

3. Proveer evidencia de los logros durante el período 2010-2013
4. Evaluar la relevancia de las prioridades de los programas de SCG para el nuevo período de cooperación

La Universidad de Oslo and Akershus (HIOA) con Axel Borchgrevink y Miriam Bolaños fueron contratados para llevar a cabo esta revisión. Se hizo a finales de octubre y noviembre, el trabajo de campo se realizó en Guatemala durante el periodo del 28 de octubre al 8 de noviembre del 2013.

Hallazgos

Las principales conclusiones de la revisión son que SCG hace un excelente trabajo a nivel local, especialmente en las áreas de CRG y educación. La estrategia de trabajar a través de las instituciones locales y apoyar la construcción conjunta de capacidades asegura que los programas tengan un alto grado de sostenibilidad. La organización también ha influenciado el desarrollo de la educación bilingüe intercultural en un marco de la multiculturalidad, existe un espacio para seguir fortaleciendo el trabajo de cabildeo frente a las instituciones gubernamentales. SCG enfrenta a varios retos en materia de fortalecer a la institución. En conjunto, programas con una perspectiva de derechos y el trabajo en este contexto sigue siendo relevante para Guatemala que sigue teniendo una democracia débil, alto grado de inequidad y muchos grupos marginalizados. En los siguientes párrafos estas conclusiones serán más específicamente descritas.

En el programa de Educación, SCG ha tenido un gran impacto a nivel escolar a través de la promoción de una pedagogía que ha logrado que los estudiantes participen activamente en los establecimientos usando otros recursos como los centros de recursos de aprendizaje conocidos como CREAs que son los que facilitan esta dinámica. Los impactos más fuertes han sido evidentes en aproximadamente un tercio de las 340 escuelas donde SCG ha trabajado. A nivel nacional, SCG ha tenido una influencia significativa en el desarrollo de la educación bilingüe intercultural.

En el área de derechos de la niñez SCG se ha hecho una labor impresionante, fortaleciendo a la sociedad civil y promoviendo las políticas públicas a nivel municipal para la niñez y la juventud. SCG ha organizado alrededor de 4,500 promotores de la niñez y comunicadores, quienes han recibido conocimiento y elevado conciencias sobre los derechos de la niñez. Sin embargo, para la mayoría de los promotores, el nivel de actividades no es muy alto. A nivel nacional e internacional, SCG juega un rol crucial en la producción del informe alternativo de los derechos de la niñez en Guatemala frente al proceso de Revisión Periódico Universal de las Naciones Unidas.

En el área de Protección, SCG hace un importante trabajo con la niñez con discapacidades. Dada la poca atención a esta población desde el Estado, ha habido grandes impactos a nivel local, tanto para asegurar la existencia de programas de rehabilitación para más de 500 niños los cuales han logrado mejorar su situación, como elevar el nivel de consciencia a las comunidades que atienden y sus municipalidades. Cuando hablamos del trabajo en contra de la "trata infantil", principalmente los impactos han sido para que las instituciones estatales ayuden a prevenir e iniciar esfuerzos en esta área.

SCG sigue siendo una institución que no tiene sostenibilidad económica en el largo plazo, siendo dependiente de un solo donante. Temas relacionados con cambiar los estatutos y la composición de los miembros de la Junta Directiva se están atendiendo hasta el 2013. La organización sigue sin tener una estrategia de comunicación completa y también necesita mejorar la capacidad de pensar estratégicamente a todos los niveles. Pocas de las recomendaciones de la evaluación realizada en el 2008 han sido concluidas. Considerando el proceso de integración de SC USA con SCG, la organización está en un momento particular. En relación con este proceso, hay un director interino y nuevos miembros en la Junta Directiva de SCG, con prioridades que atender de inmediato relacionadas con el proceso de integración. El nuevo liderazgo ha tomado los pasos necesarios para asegurar que se hagan estas revisiones de los estatutos y que se desarrolle una nueva estrategia general.

Los problemas fundamentales de Guatemala siguen siendo los mismos: Alta inequidad, pobreza, desnutrición, exclusión étnica, violencia, un estado débil que no responde con instituciones democráticas y no asegura los intereses de los marginalizados. Por lo tanto, el trabajo de SCG continua siendo relevante e importante. En particular, porque debe resaltarse el abordaje de la perspectiva de derechos que promueve la participación y fortalece a la sociedad civil para que se involucre con las autoridades a nivel local, de esa manera se fomenta la cultura democrática y estas prácticas son necesarias para que Guatemala logre superar estos problemas estructurales.

SCG está entre las pocas organizaciones que priorizan a la niñez y juventud con un abordaje de derechos. Todavía falta un camino por recorrer antes que SCG sea generalmente conocido por la población general, pero es apreciado por las organizaciones que trabajan en este campo.

La forma de trabajar de SCG corresponde también a la Teoría del Cambio que promueve Save the Children Internacional. Entre los puntos relevantes están el trabajo con las municipalidades y los consejos de desarrollo, en el cual la organización hace un excelente trabajo para fortalecer a la sociedad civil; y en los programas de promoción de políticas públicas municipales y de los CREAs, en los cuales SCG muestran innovación sistemática y pruebas sistemáticas de modelos de trabajar. También si el principio de elevar los programas a escala es entendido de comprender trabajo con autoridades locales, esto está dentro de sus fortalezas. Adicionalmente a ser relevantes en el contexto guatemalteco y en relación con la Teoría del Cambio, los programas de SCG corresponden también a las prioridades estratégicas de SCN 2014-2017. En adición a los programas mencionados anteriormente, SCG también tiene un componente para reducción de desastres en las escuelas, y en

esta área, SCG trabaja según las prioridades de SCN para ‘probar e invertir’: “Prevención de desastres integrado dentro del marco educativo basado en la participación de la niñez y adolescencia. ”

Principales Recomendaciones

Para SCG:

- Continuar con las actividades en las áreas de Educación, Gobernabilidad de los Derechos de la Niñez, y Protección. Los nuevos sub-componentes de trata infantil, violencia y nutrición se dirige a problemas urgentes, y SCG debe continuar desarrollando sus esfuerzos en estas áreas
- Dar prioridad a las actividades para asegurar su sostenibilidad económica a largo plazo, incluyendo la recaudación de fondos internacional y bajar los costos de administración.
- Desarrollar un nuevo plan estratégico y lograr que este tenga un pensamiento estratégico en toda la organización. La estrategia deberá ser basada en las actuales fortalezas de SCG: el abordaje de derechos que ha contribuido a la democratización local y la mejora de la educación en las escuelas. También deberá buscar que estos esfuerzos se eleven a cabildarse a nivel nacional. Un plan estratégico de comunicación, con abordaje en todas las áreas de trabajo, deberá ser parte de este proceso.
- Para los programas, SCG deberá clarificar el tiempo en el que trabajan a nivel municipal, también como asegurar que los impactos de los programas en las escuelas que trabajan sean extendidos a todas las escuelas.
- SCG debe mejorar los sistemas y rutinas de planeación, monitoreo y reporte a los donantes.

Para SCN:

- Continuar con el apoyo a SCG sin cambios dramáticos. Gobernabilidad de los Derechos de la Niñez, Educación y apoyo a los niños y niñas discapacitadas debe ser entre las prioridades. Los nuevos componentes recientemente incorporados como trata, las escuelas libres de violencia y el programa de nutrición deben ser apoyados y los resultados monitoreados.
- Apoyo a SCG en la recaudación de fondos, desarrollo de estrategia y ayudar a mejorar rutinas de planeación, monitoreo y reportes.
- Seguimiento cercano de la implementación del nuevo acuerdo de cooperación
- Permitir flexibilidad al nuevo acuerdo de cooperación para que las organizaciones también respondan a los cambios y las nuevas necesidades que puedan surgir derivadas de la integración con el programa de SC USA.

- (Recomendaciones más detalladas se encuentran en la sección 3.3 del informe principal.)

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Save the Children Norway (SCN) has been cooperating with Save the Children Guatemala (SCG) since it was founded (under the name Alianza para el Desarrollo Juvenil Comunitario – ADEJUC) in 1983. From 2003, SCN gave support for SCG with the intention of consolidating the organization to enable it to take on the role of being *the* Save the Children Organization representing the Alliance in Guatemala.ⁱ In line with this objective, SCN closed its own country office in 2009. Some Guatemalan organizations formerly supported directly by SCN now receive funding through SCG. SCN has been the major donor for SCG throughout this period. SCN has supported SCG's programs, as well as its process of organizational strengthening.

In 2008, just before closing down its office in Guatemala, SCN commissioned an evaluation of SCG and its capacity to promote the rights of children in Guatemala. The 2008 evaluation was carried out by the same two consultants who have written the present report (Rubelci Alvarado, Program Director then and now of SCG was also part of the team at that time). The evaluation concluded that SCG's programs were strong, but that there was a need for more strategic orientation of communication activities and further organizational strengthening.

SCG developed a 2010-2013 strategy, which has served as a basis for the four-year cooperation agreement signed with SCN. The strategy included Program Areas (education, child rights governance, child rights protection) and Management/Operational Activities (fundraising, 'positioning' of SCG, administrative strengthening).ⁱⁱ As this period is now coming to an end, SCN has commissioned the current review. The purpose is to have a learning exercise, in order to orient the new cooperation agreement for the coming four-year period. The review, according to the Terms of Reference, has two objectives:

1. 'Providing evidence of overall achievements against the objectives set in the SCN – SCG cooperation agreement 2010-2013'
2. 'Assessing the relevance of the SCG program priorities in the changing Guatemalan context and suggest adjustments for a new cooperation period'

Both objectives are equally important. See Annex 1 for the complete Terms of Reference. In relation to the first question, the reviewers were also asked to assess whether the recommendations of the 2008 evaluation had been useful and the extent to which they had been carried out.

After a closed call for 'mini-tenders', the contract for the review was given to Oslo and Akershus University College (HIOA), with Axel Borchgrevink (HIOA staff) as team leader and Miriam Bolaños (independent consultant) as team member. Before the start of fieldwork, an Inception Report was written. The first version was document based, while the final and revised version also took into

account comments from SCN and SCG, as well as information from interviews at SCN carried out by the team leader.

1.2 Methodology

Fieldwork in Guatemala took place between October 27th and November 8th 2013. It consisted of interviews with SCG staff, partner organizations, civil society networks, other institutions (voluntary, multilateral and state entities) active in the field of children rights, and the Norwegian Embassy in Guatemala City. We were also able to visit youth from all the program areas taking part in a training session at an ecological resort outside Guatemala City, and to have a session with another group of youths from the capital area and from Quiche specially arranged for the purpose of the review. Furthermore, between the 3rd and 6th of November we visited Chiquimula where SCG carry out their programs in five municipalities, and we were able to visit schools, municipalities, local councils and youth activists, as well as the regional SCG staff. See Annex 2 for a list of people interviewed.

We are very grateful to SCG who have facilitated the program, arranged all the interviews, and arranged for our transport. Program Director Rubelci Alvarado deserves special mention for taking part in most of the interviews and for driving us on the Chiquimula trip (and thus being exposed to extensive and intensive questioning from team). Data collection was also aided by the fact that the evaluation team had previous knowledge of SCG and its programs.

As always, there are limitations that should be pointed out. Two weeks fieldwork is not much in any case, and we were further hampered by the fact that Friday November 1st was a public holiday, when no meetings could be arranged. Furthermore, the school holidays had already begun when we did our fieldwork, meaning that we were only able to visit schools without classes. However, a few teachers had been called to talk with us. Several meetings were cancelled or postponed, obliging us to leave from Chiquimula a half day earlier than planned in order to attend new meetings in Guatemala City. Thus, fieldwork in Chiquimula was a bit rushed, especially since we were covering activities in five municipalities. Yet given the time available we feel we were able to do a lot and collect enough information to make the conclusions of this report well-founded.

We have also had access to a broad range of written material, from the archives of SCN and of SCG. Given the relatively short time for fieldwork, this has been very useful. Yet there are inconsistencies and limitations in the available plans and reports, as discussed in Annex 3 *On the planning and reporting practices of SCG*. These limitations mean that it is difficult to quantify the achievements of SCG over the review period.

Having the SCG program director present in most interviews raises the question of how this has influenced the information we received. It may have made some people less critical when speaking to us, but we do not believe this effect has been strong. In interviews where this effect could have been particularly important – such as with the partner organizations that receive funding from SCG – he was not present.

In the Terms of Reference, it is stated that ‘a certain level of stakeholders’ participation, especially the meaningful participation of children and youth,’ is expected during fieldwork. Before fieldwork, SCN’s lead person on child and youth participation, recommended that such participation be prepared with a good lead time, so that issues could be debated within the local groups of children and youth, and they could be well prepared to act as representatives of their areas in their meetings with us. Unfortunately, due to time constraints it was not possible to make such preparations. We met with youth and children in different ways. In Chiquimula, we met with a group of young radio commentators one day and a selection of promoters the next, for fairly regular interview sessions. We were furthermore able to observe the program one afternoon of a workshop or ‘camp’ of youth from all the program areas, where participatory methods were used to stimulate reflection over the role of promoters. Finally, we had a long session with more than thirty youth and children from the SCG programs in the urban area and from Quiche. With the help of SCG facilitator Renato Chic Arriaza, the children and youth discussed and drew improvements they had experienced in their communities, and in another exercise presented objectives they had defined but not been able to realize.

Meeting with these youth and children has been important for the evaluation team, in order to get an impression of SCG’s ways of engaging with them, to understand something of the issues they see as important, and to appreciate the huge differences between the impressively reflected and eloquent promoters we met in Chiquimula and the more shy youths and children from Quiche, with less experience of working with SCG and less confident about speaking publicly in Spanish. Yet we do not feel we have succeeded in truly including them in a participatory way in the review. It is more a case of us observing and drawing our conclusions than being told by them what those conclusions should be. This is of course normal, and is also the case with much of our interaction with adult informants. However, a more truly participatory methodology requires much greater investment of time for this purpose than has been possible for us.

1.3 Save the Children Guatemala

The organization was founded in 1983. It has been part of the Save the Children Alliance since its inception, and used ‘Save the Children Guatemala’ as a secondary name on its letterhead. Since 2004, it has been calling itself only by the latter name (even if formally, it is still named ADEJUC as this is the name under which it is registered and the name that appears in its bylaws). Since 2004, the organization has also worked consistently in order to become recognized as a strong national member of the Save the Children Alliance, and *the* national member working in Guatemala. From this date the organization has also adopted an explicitly rights-based approach in its work.

Currently, SCG has a staff of 67 people, distributed between the Head Office and the Educational Centre in Guatemala City and two regional offices, in Chiquimula and Quiché. Its total budget for 2013 is close to GTQ 14 million, just over USD 1.7, of which SCN contributes 86%.

SCG’s work to promote the rights of children and youth span the following program areas: Education; Child Rights Governance; Protection; and Humanitarian (disaster response and disaster risk

reduction). During the program period, SCG has worked locally in 11 municipalities in the departments of Chiquimula Quiché, Guatemala City and Livingstone. (Work in Livingstone was phased out during the period.) In addition, with SCN as the back-donor, SCG has also been funding seven partner NGOs, through which program work is extended to eight additional municipalities. SCG has been following a principle of working in an area for five years, plus two years of phasing-out. Thereafter, activities are shifting to new areas. Thus, in the early phase of the period under review, SCG was also doing program work in Livingstone. Currently, this principle of five plus two years appears to be under revision. At the national level, SCG engages in different forms of advocacy and lobbying, related to the program areas.

The Save the Children Alliance has adopted the principle that there should only be one SC organization being operational in any one country. Most international SC members have therefore left Guatemala, handing over the role to SCG. Only the SC USA still remains. There is an ongoing process of integrating also this organization under the umbrella of SCG. It has been a long and complicated process, made difficult by different programme approaches by the two SC organizations. The SC USA focuses on food security and the direct addressing of immediate needs, through food distribution as well as support for food production, while SCG has a rights-based approach aimed at empowering people and making government institutions accountable and responding. There is also the fact that the US program is many times larger the SCG program it is supposed to be integrated into. How this integration unfolds will of course have great implications for the future strategy and development of SCG. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, this report has not sought to go into the impacts this will have.

2 FINDINGS

Our presentation of findings is divided into two main parts, addressing the two main questions of the Terms of reference: The main achievements 2010-2013, as well as the relevance of the SCG in the current context. The first part discusses achievements within the three main program areas (education; child rights programming; protection) and for the objective of ‘institutional strengthening’. One difficulty when assessing the achievements is that many of SCG’s objectives and targets are not consistently specified in their plans, and that reports often do not conform to the format of the plans. Furthermore, the reference of quantitative data is not always clearly specified. See Annex 3, which analyses these weaknesses in some detail. For this reason, it is not always easy to compare achievements to objectives, or to quantify the results of the programs. The second part of the Findings Chapter deals with relevance. Relevance is first discussed with respect to the current Guatemalan context, thereafter to the SC Theory of Change and to SCN’s strategic priorities.

2.1 Achievements 2010-2013

2.1.1 Education

At the local level, SCG’s work with schools is primarily directed at improving the quality of education, by promoting a more active and culturally appropriate form of pedagogy. The emphasis is on primary schools and to some extent pre-schools, with less attention having been given to secondary schools. Two main ways of working is through systematic training of teachers in such participatory and intercultural pedagogic methods, and by facilitating active learning through the establishment of school libraries and resource centres. The latter are called CREAs (Centros de Recursos Educativos de Aprendizaje – Learning Educational Resource Centres). SCG staff also supervise teachers and processes in the schools, promote participatory school festivals, support the formation of school governments, coordinate with authorities and parents and give different kinds of material support, including computer centres for selected secondary schools. In bilingual municipalities (currently only in Quiché) there is a specific emphasis on bilingual education. Special CREAs with emphasis on maternal *and* Spanish language training are established.

A programme for *Early Childhood Development* is also implemented at the local level, and directed towards mothers, from pregnancy until children reach the age of six. The objective is to impart knowledge aimed at giving their children optimal conditions for developing their capacities. Promoters are trained to work with groups of mothers. Furthermore, SCG has also promoted alphabetization among illiterate mothers, by organizing those who want into groups and give training in cooperation with CONALFA.

At the national level, SCG has a very good working relationship with the Directorate for Bilingual and Intercultural Education (DIGEBI), based on common objectives, and where SCG’s activities and experiences have been of use to the Directorate in different ways. SCG is also an active member of La Gran Campaña para la Educación – The Great Campaign for Education. This ‘permanent campaign’ was launched in 2000 with the objective of lobbying Congress for raising education budgets.

Results

Teacher training and establishing CREAs are successful interventions. Since there are still no available data on what this has meant for school retention and rates of students promoted to the next grade or literacy levels, we cannot really say much about the impact. But it is clear that teachers are satisfied with the training in teaching methods, which they see as directly useful in their daily work. Furthermore, the CREAs are enthusiastically endorsed by different kinds of stakeholders, and are highlighted in the Chiquimula evaluation report as a model and an intervention of great value. There appears to be interest among municipal councils to replicate the experience in more schools, and, perhaps most impressively, DIGEBI has adopted the bilingual/intercultural version as the model they want to promote in all bilingual schools. Together, the teacher training and the CREAs and libraries have undoubtedly contributed to improved quality of education in the schools with which SCG works.

The number of these schools varies somewhat in the different reports: from 337 to 388 elementary schools, and between 214 and 221 pre-schools. It should be noted, though, that these are not all the schools in the municipalities/zones that SCG cover, and that not all schools receive the same level of attention. Altogether, 116 CREAs and 75 school libraries have been established. Thus around a third of the primary schools get a CREA, around 55% get either a CREA or a school library. Schools are awarded CREAs on the basis of their willingness to improve teaching methods: The schools where teachers participate most enthusiastically in the training program are the ones that receive this benefit. In Chiquimula one of the SCG education coordinators (with responsibility for one municipality) expressed that supervising all the schools with which the program worked in his municipality (more than 40) had resulted in spreading the capacity too thinly. Currently, the attention is focused on the 14 schools with CREAs, which are the only ones still receiving supervision visits. The other schools are still included in the program, but only by their teachers continuing to be invited to training workshops. It is possible to question this prioritization, as support is concentrated to those schools that need it the least, since they are already practicing the active teaching methods and have even received the comprehensive resource centres. On the other hand it could be argued that focusing on these schools is effective since these are the ones that have shown themselves most capable of making use of the support SCG gives. But if so, it is a bit worrying that at the end of 5+2 years of working with these schools, you still get best effect of your support by focusing on the same schools. This would perhaps indicate that the schools have not advanced all that much over these years? At the very least, this narrowing of focus indicates that the impacts of the program are uneven and do not cover all the target schools equally. In some of the plan documents, it is indicated that the schools SCG work with (all of them) are expected to function as model schools, so that teachers from other schools in the area can be inspired and learn from them. We have not come across any indications that this is actually happening.

For the Early Childhood Development and the literacy program, it is difficult to assess the results. The SCG report as well as the Chiquimula report on the numbers of voluntary promoters recruited and trained as well as the number of mothers and children taking part in the program. Whether it has led to any changes in child raising practices is impossible to say from the available data.

In addition to the direct work done at local level, there are also important achievements in terms of scaling up. The CREA model as developed by SCG has achieved broad recognition by the municipalities, and most importantly, has been accepted by DIGEBI as a model for the national bilingual and intercultural education, to receive funding from the Ministry of Education's budget. SCG has also supported DIGEBI in various ways over the years, through developing educational materials as well as studies. The recent study by the respected research institute ICEFI, on the situation of bilingual education, was commissioned by SCG, and has had considerable impact, having for instance been presented in Congress.ⁱⁱⁱ By documenting how school desertion rates have to do with language issues, as well as the actual state of funding for the area of bilingual education and the costs and potential for expansion, the report forms a very solid and professional basis on which to carry out advocacy. While there are many factors behind the current government acceptance for bilingual and intercultural education – with budgets more than doubling – it seems probable that the report has been a contributing factor. SCG has also carried out a study of language use in communities and schools in Quiché, containing information that is useful for DIGEBI and the Ministry of Education. Less educational and didactic material has been produced in the last couple of years (maybe because the program *Rewriting the Future* ended), but the mentioned reports are recent.

It is difficult to gauge the effects of advocacy work. So also with the work of the Great Campaign, where SCG is an active member. The percentage of the budget dedicated to education has not been significantly increased over the years that the Campaign has been active. Yet it seems clear that the Campaign has been important for keeping the issue of education on the agenda, taking it up during elections and challenging politicians directly. It has also sought to shift attention to quality as well as issues of coverage.

2.1.2 Child Rights Governance (CRG)

At the local level, one main component of SCG's CRG work is recruiting, training and organizing children and youth into work as promoters, communicators and reporters. Promoters specialize in different areas: rights; health; environment; culture and sports. Communicators and reporters work with forms of social communication; some of them make radio and even TV programs. SCG also organize and train local women's groups.

Furthermore, SCG works to promote local public policies aimed at securing the rights of children and youth. This component makes use of structures and spaces created by Guatemalan legislation and decentralization process. SCG stimulates the formation of Municipal Committees for Children and Youth (CMNAs) and the elaboration and adoption of Municipal Public Policies for Children and Youth (MPP). SCG works with development councils at community, municipal and departmental levels (COCODES, COMUDES, CODEDES) to strengthen participation and anchor the work for the rights of children and youth. Participation of children is promoted in these spaces.

Through this network at local/municipal level (and through that of its partner organizations), SCG also yearly monitors the situation of the rights of children and youth. At national level, this information feeds into the network CIPRODENI, which (with SCG support) publishes yearly national

reports that ultimately feed into the UN Universal Periodic Review mechanism, as an alternative report on the situation of Child Rights in Guatemala. SCG also seeks to promote the rights of children and youth by advocacy and lobbying through other networks, including the Mesa de Municipalización (Working group for municipal processes) and the Movimiento Social (both of which also cooperate on the UPR report), other Guatemalan networks focusing on for instance street children, trafficking, and general development issues, as well as the Central American network Círculo Mesoamericano.

Results

According to SCG's figures, around 3,500 children and youth have been trained and function as promoters, while another 1,000 are communicators/reporters, covering a total of 205 communities. Thus, there is considerable scale to this participation. The gender balance is very close to 50/50. Our own fieldwork as well as other sources all show that involved children and youth have increased knowledge of rights as well as of the topics they specialize in. Some of them were extremely impressive in their knowledge, level of reflection and eloquence. They arrange festivals, sports and cultural events in order to raise awareness within their communities, but here is little available information to allow us to gauge the impacts of this promotional and communicating work. It is possible to question the intensity of this work and the depth of its impact for many of the participants, as the Chiquimula evaluation report shows that 81% of the promoters and communicators/reporters say that they only meet once a month.

Currently, organizations for youth and children are at the community level. There have been talks of establishing higher level organizations at departmental and national level, along the lines of the Norwegian organization Press. However, SCG has been reluctant to promote this, as they fear it would be a structure created by and dependent on the adults, rather than by the members themselves. Still, there is the beginning of the creation of a network between the groups of children and youth in the urban zones of Guatemala City.

SCG is also contributing to additional forms of participation at community and municipal levels. They follow-up and seek to strengthen the function of the community development councils (COCODES), they promote the organization of women in community groups, and they support the municipal development councils (COMUDES). In the COCODES and COMUDES, SCG promotes and have gotten acceptance for the inclusion of representatives of children and youth. In all the municipalities where they work, SCG has also contributed to the formation of Municipal Committees for Children and Youth (CMNAs), and Municipal Public Policies for children and youth (MPPs) have been adopted by the municipal councils. In Chiquimula, the former MPPs covered the period 2009-2013. New ones have been elaborated and adopted this year, with the active involvement of youth (according to some of the youth representatives, the work was even led by them). The new plans improve on the former in that proposals carry better and more detailed budgets for the costs of the planned items.

There are a number of impacts that can be discerned from this work. Firstly, there is increased knowledge of and acceptance of children's rights throughout the program area. This is found among the population in general – children, youth and adults – as well as within public institutions which are

assuming obligations as duty bearers in this respect. This was very evident in our interviews with different local politicians and COMUDES members from each of the four municipalities in Chiquimula, who all exhibited considerable knowledge of the SCG programs and its different components, as well as willingness to include concerns for children's rights in their work. This is also shown by the success of SCG's approach of starting to pay the salaries of new municipal staff to support these processes, and then gradually reducing the SCG payment while the municipality takes over. After five years, it is the municipality which pays the full salary. In all four municipalities these three new positions have been retained and integrated into the list of permanent staff (even though there is one or two cases where filling a position after a person has left is taking some time). This is the case even after there have been changes of mayors – when it was feared that the newly elected mayor might not feel obliged by the original agreement with SCG. Clearly, SCG has succeeded in creating widespread understanding of the importance of this work. Secondly, by promoting participation, strengthening structures for this, and demonstrating how local political processes can engender public policies that benefit the population, SCG is undoubtedly contributing to strengthening civil society, and to the deepening of democratic practices, processes and awareness at the local level.

At the national – and international – level, the work on the monitoring of the state of children's rights has a significant impact. While building on the local monitoring done in program municipalities and urban zones, it is aggregated up to the national level and has an impact here through the production of the alternative report from Guatemala presented to the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva. Formally, this is presented through the coalition of three networks (where SCG is member of all three), with CIPRODENI having the lead role. However, SCG is vital for this process, not the least through funding the secretariat and activities of CIPRODENI. It seems fair to conclude that without SCG, this civil society initiative for the UPR would not have taken place. This is undoubtedly the most important impact of SCG's work at scaling up the CRG work. It is also worth pointing out that through the networks Mesa de Municipalización and Círculo Mesoamericano, SCG's model for working with municipal public policies has been disseminated to other civil society organizations, which, it is claimed, have adopted some of these approaches.

2.1.3 Protection

SCG has been working for the establishment of integrated municipal systems for the protection of the rights of children and youth. These consist of alliances between all the entities involved with protection, creating cooperation and lines of action to promote prevention, as well as mechanisms for reporting cases of abuses against children or youth to the judicial system. SCG has also supported schools to develop protection plans.

SCG has also worked specifically to prevent the trafficking of children and youth. This has included awareness-raising among children and youth, parents, teachers and community leaders. It has also included support to the national level institutions of the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH) and the Secretariat against Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking (SVET). This work has mainly been funded by SC Spain, with support also from SCN.

SCG works for the rights of children and youth with disabilities, by identifying cases in the communities and developing rehabilitation plans in cooperation with relevant local and national institutions, including the local schools. This component has partly been funded by the German Christian Blind Mission (CBM).

SCG has also worked in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction, by supporting the establishment and consolidation of local coordination instances for disaster risk reduction (COLREDs) at communal level, as well as involving COCODES and Schools in this work. While not covered in this report, SCG has also contributed to disaster response, specializing in psycho-social attention for children.

Results

SCG has contributed to the establishment of Municipal Protection Systems in three of four municipalities in Chiquimula and in Quiché. The CMNAs are the pivotal institution, but other entities are involved, such as the Municipal Councils, the Municipal Offices for Women and the Municipal Offices for Children and Youth (where they exist), as well as coordination with the Police and with the Justices of Peace. The Chiquimula evaluation report is positive to the initiative, yet claims that the impact has been reduced due to the rotation of members within the CMNAs, as well as in some cases the change of mayor and administration after elections. SCG also reports that protection systems have been established at more than 300 schools. These involve making teachers and students aware of risks and preventive measures that can be made, as well as knowledge of procedures for reporting abuses to the police and judicial system.

SCG has promoted awareness of the problem of trafficking, and knowledge of ways of preventing and combating it among municipal leaders and staff, as well as among teachers, parents, community leaders and children. There has been a special emphasis on including children and youth in this awareness-raising work, and the theme has been dealt with by child/youth communicators and community reporters. At the national level, SCG has directly supported the Human Rights Ombudsman (PDH) and the Secretariat against Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking (SVET) to make these institutions capable of following up the Law of Violence, Exploitation and Trafficking from 2009. This has included material support for the establishment of the offices, as well as contributions to campaigns and studies mapping the problem. At the Human Rights Commissioner's office, the person responsible for the Trafficking Unit was quite explicit in stating that without the timely material support from SCG which allowed first one person to become the focal person for this area, and later the PDH to establish an office for the theme, the Unit in all probability would not exist. We were unable to have an interview with SVET. Still, it can be said SCG has had a direct impact on the ability of national institutions to address this problem.

Diagnostics of disabilities have been carried out in 7 municipalities and more than 600 children and youth with disabilities have been identified in the communities where SCG works. Plans for follow-up and community-based rehabilitation have been developed for more than 500 of them, in cooperation with local and national institutions.^{iv} In many cases this has led to children who previously remained inside their houses now having started in school. In Chiquimula we met with a group of hearing-impaired children and youth showing us the sign language on which they had been

receiving training. Some children have received medical treatment and equipment. SCG's work has led to increased awareness of the problem among municipal leaders and employees, as demonstrated in many of the interviews we had in Chiquimula. There is a tendency for the situation of disabled to be fairly invisible as many children do not go to school but remain at home. The work SCG is doing is therefore having an important impact, both in terms of directly addressing the special needs of the children and youth identified through the survey, and in terms of generating knowledge and awareness of the problem and of the rights of children with disabilities. It is probable, though, that so far this component has only been able to reach the tip of the iceberg, and that there are still a large number of children and youth who have not been identified, and who are in need of services and inclusion.

SCG has contributed to disaster preparedness in the program areas. In 168 communities in seven municipalities, vulnerability analyses have been carried out and coordinating instances (COLREDS) set up. In Chiquimula, this means that 55% of the communities with which SCG works have succeeded in establishing this system. At municipal level, five municipalities have established COMREDS. 192 schools have carried out vulnerability analyses and established School Safety Committees. 87 of these carry out prevention and preparedness actions in their schools.^v

2.1.4 Institutional strengthening

As mentioned above, the cooperation between SCN and SCG has for more than a decade been aimed at strengthening Save the Children Guatemala as *the* national SC organization in Guatemala. Eventually this objective has come to include the goal of SCG fulfilling the requirements of being a "strong member" of the SC Alliance. Institutional strengthening has therefore been a key element for the SCN support.

The 2008 evaluation referred to above focused to a large extent on SCG capacities, and sought to identify areas where there was a need for strengthening them. A number of areas were identified: Bylaws that were not in accordance with SC requirements and that in practice made the required rotation of board members impossible to comply with; challenges for achieving financial sustainability and reducing dependence on one donor; too high level of staff rotation; need to improve the system of monitoring and evaluation; need for an overall communication strategy covering the areas of image-building, advocacy, awareness-raising and fundraising. The Terms of Reference for the present review ask us to assess to what extent these recommendations were useful and have been followed up.

In the 2010-2013 Proposal, there are a number of objectives that address these areas. This includes among other issues ambitious targets for increasing fundraising and diversifying the number of national and international donors; changing bylaws and selecting board in accordance with SC best practices; image building and "positioning" of SCG; systematized and improved human resource management routines; improved systems for financial management; improved computerized monitoring and evaluation systems; etc.

It should be pointed out that SCG finds itself in a very particular situation, in part due to external factors, that have a direct bearing on these issues. To a large extent they are related to the initiated process of integration of the activities of SC USA in Guatemala, first with SCI and at a later stage to be integrated with those of SCG under a single, national SC umbrella. While this report does not deal with the complexities of that process, there are implications that must be mentioned. Firstly, the director of the last ten years (and founding member) of SCG was forced to leave the organization in early 2013 because of this integration process. The Deputy Director is currently functioning as an Interim Director. However, as she has only had a relatively short previous period in the senior leadership of the organization (the position of Deputy Director was only established in May 2012), this means an abrupt change of leadership. Also, in the wake of the deposition of the former director, seven of the eight external members of the Board of SCG withdrew from their positions. This new leadership has had to devote its attention to a number of urgent issues – partly related to the integration process, partly related to important organizational issues that had not been adequately resolved under the previous Board and Director. A lot of energy has been directed at formal institutional strengthening, such as development of manuals, guidelines, job descriptions and internal control systems (in accordance with the plan for institutional strengthening that was developed in 2012).

Furthermore, a key area to which the new Board has had to dedicate a lot of work is the revision of the organization's bylaws. They were not revised after the 2008 evaluation, and need to be changed to be internally consistent, to correspond to the SC Best Practices, and in order to formally change the name of the organization into Save the Children Guatemala. Among other things, the new bylaws will set new requirements for the composition of Board members and the qualifications they should possess. They therefore foresee new elections and a replacement of at least part of the Board in the first half of 2014. Thus, just like the acting director, the Board also sees itself as filling an interim function. The integration process with the SC USA, SCG seeking the status of a strong national member, and SCG's economic dependence on SCN place the Board and SCG under considerable pressure to conform to the wishes of SCI, SCN and SC USA. This pressure forced the replacement of the SCG Director, and seemingly it is these external entities that have the final say in approving new bylaws. The international insistence on bylaws for best practices of democratic governance of the organization seems to be contradicted when the crucial decisions are taken out of the Board's hands in such ways. One of the new Board members expressed that in the current situation the Board was bound to focus on the transition process, and was unable to prioritize long term strategic thinking. Yet it was also made clear that one strategic objective would be attaining economic autonomy and moving beyond 'simply being an administrator of the funding coming from other SC members'.

To sum up, while it is the case that some of the plans for institutional strengthening have not been carried out, this cannot be blamed on the present leadership of the organization, which is new, and anyway seeking to address those issues they see as most urgent. It does, however, raise some questions about the previous administration. It further means that the leadership is new and temporary, and that it has not had much time (and perhaps not the mandate) for long term strategic planning. This should be kept in mind when reading the following.

Results

As mentioned, the bylaws have not been revised in the five years since the 2008 evaluation pointed out the need for this. It is somehow surprising as the 2010-2013 Proposal specifies how the bylaws were planned to be amended^{vi}. It might be that the former Director did not see it as in his interest to do so, as the old bylaws gave him a seat on the Board (together with the SCG Program Director). With the old Board seemingly not being very actively involved, this gave the Director a very strong position for running the organization. While SCN has sought to ‘recommend and guide’, the donor has not insisted that this point of the cooperation agreement be complied with.

TABLE 1: Funding received by SCG

	2010	2011	2012	2013 ^{vii}
Total funding	GTQ 17,751’	GTQ 15,572’	GTQ 15,102’	GTQ 13,915’
USD equivalent ^{viii}	USD 2,189’	USD 1,961’	USD 1,868’	USD 1,746’
Budget from Norway	84%	83%	86%	86%
Non-Norwegian donors	4	8	11	6
National fundraising ^{ix}	GTQ 87’	GTQ 103’	GTQ 28’	
USD equivalent	USD 10.7’	USD 13.0’	USD 3.5’	

Source: Based on table supplied by SCG.

Perhaps the most crucial objective for SCG has been the issue of increased economic sustainability and reduced dependence on one donor. As Table 1 shows, there has not been much improvement in this area. Funding from SCN (including emergency funds with the Norwegian MFA as the back donor) continues to account for around 85% of the budget. Total funding received has declined about 20% over the period, while the *number* of other donors is fluctuating but higher than the first year. Results from fundraising within Guatemala fluctuate between GTQ 30,000 and 100,000 per year.

In this area, the absence of results is mainly a reflection of the challenges of fundraising. SCG has made efforts to increase fundraising, although it is difficult to assess the scope of this. The annual plans set specific targets for this area. According to the Annual Reports to SCN for 2010 and 2011, the targets were met. In 2010, 14 proposals were presented to international donors (against a target of 6); the same figures are repeated in the 2011 report. Unfortunately, the amounts reported to have been raised for these years do not match the information in the SCG accounts^x. For 2011 for instance, in the annual report for SCN is stated that USD 809,000 are collected from international donors, while the accounts show that total funds received this year from other donors than SCN were around USD 321,000.^{xi} The fact that the report to SCN refers to a multi-year grant while the accounts only show what is received the year in question probably accounts for part of the discrepancy, but it does not appear to explain all of it. Thus, it is difficult to trust the information on fundraising in these annual reports. The annual report for 2012 does not give any information on the results of fundraising.

National fundraising is also difficult to assess as figures in different reports do not match. Nevertheless, it is clear that results in this area have been even more disappointing than the

international fundraising. The number of new donors is way below the targets set in the plans. The amounts fundraised within Guatemala – as specified in the Table above – do not cover the salary of a person responsible for this area.

Like with many positions within SCG, there has been significant turnover of staff for the fundraising positions. It has proved difficult to find and keep persons with the right kind of qualifications willing to accept SCG's salary levels. This may be a partial explanation for the uneven results. The results also reflect the fact that fundraising is difficult in the current Guatemalan context.

It is important to also point out that the challenges faced by SCG for achieving financial sustainability do not limit themselves to diversifying and increasing the funding base. It is also important to look critically at the cost structure of SCG. Currently, the accounting principle places the salary costs of people working in the program area as project costs. This is a sensible way of structuring the accounts, which optimizes the possibility of project funders covering these costs that are necessary for project implementation. (Unfortunately, some donors refuse to cover such salary costs as a matter of principle, so there is no guarantee.) Still, a problem is that even when program-related salaries are placed under programs, the overall budget of SCG shows administrative costs above 15%^{xii}. Finding a new donor that will accept 15% administrative costs on top of project expenditures (which already include salary costs) is highly unlikely. Some donors may accept up to 7%, others nothing at all. This means that in order to continue operation as now, SCG is dependent on having a donor like SCN, willing to give core funding over and above project costs. So the problem of economic sustainability is not only that SCG is dependent on one single donor for most of its funding, but also that this is a donor willing to finance comparatively high administrative costs.

Another key recommendation from the 2008 evaluation was that there was a need for more coherent strategic thinking within the field of communication. The potential advantages of planning jointly the areas of image building (branding, 'positioning'), advocacy, awareness-raising and fundraising were pointed out, and the need for an over-arching strategy was emphasized. When we asked SCG about such a strategy, we were first informed that it did not exist. Later we were told that one was developed under the former person responsible for the area of communication, and we were promised a copy. It took a long time to locate the document, for us an indication that this strategy was not an important working document.^{xiii} When it was mailed to us after fieldwork, it turned out that it is not really a strategy, but rather a plan (or a strategy) for developing a communication strategy. The document carries no date.

Also within the areas related to communication, there has been considerable turnover of people. The new head of advocacy has only been working a few months, the new position as head of (international) fundraising has only been filled since April, and the communication coordinator is also recently employed. They have started developing plans and strategies: There is draft advocacy strategy (Estrategia de Incidencia 2013-2015), and in the presentations for the team we were given an overview for a marketing strategy^{xiv}. Still, these are preliminary efforts in need of systematization, concretization and prioritization in order to be able to serve as strategies for the area, and they also

appear to have been developed in isolation from each other. There is still some way to go, but it is positive that the new staff are taking up these challenges.

Thus, this is an area where the 2008 recommendation has not been carried out; there is no overall strategy. Looking at the four communication areas in turn, we may summarize the achievements over the period as follows:

1. *Image building.* It is difficult to know with any certainty, but it seems to us that among organizations and institutions working with children, education, etc., the position of SCG as a key actor in this field is strong, probably more so than five years ago.
With the general public, we really have no way of assessing knowledge or recognition of SCG. It is worrying that a prime arena of self-presentation – the SCG webpage – appears not to have been updated since 2011. While this is in part explained by change of personnel, and a new webpage should be up and running shortly (we were told it would be functioning a couple of weeks ago), it also indicates a lack of commitment to an area that is crucial for fundraising. In the meantime, SCG has been using Facebook for regular news updates. SCG has also been publishing newsletters in electronic form. On the webpage there are newsletters up to 2011. As far as we know, none were produced in 2012, while three have been produced in 2013. It is unclear how they have been distributed when the webpage has not been used.
2. *Advocacy.* This has been described under the program areas. Particularly successful efforts include achieving acceptance of the CREA model for bilingual education, using research for lobbying through the ICEFI study of financing for bilingual education, and the CIPRODENI-led monitoring of the CRC for the UPR process.
Much of SCG's advocacy work has been through networks, partly in order to have greater impact, partly as there is some protection in standing together. This means that SCG is less profiled, and there is less contribution to image building/positioning.
Our impression is that advocacy is somewhat stronger now than five years ago. It is possible to strengthen and intensify this work further.
3. *Awareness-raising.* This is mainly addressed through the program areas. There is a considerable impact in terms of raising knowledge of child rights among the direct participants of SCG programs: children, youth, teachers, parents, community leaders, municipal staff and local politicians. Through the work of the children and youth promoters and reporters/communicators, as well as through the festivals and other events that are arranged under the program, this is disseminated further within the local communities.
4. *Fundraising.* As described above the results here have not changed the financial position of SCG, which continues to be dependent on funding from SCN.

Another point, which is described in more detail in Annex 3, is that there are many weaknesses in the strategies, proposals, plans and reports of SCG. Shortcomings include weakness of overall strategic approach; lack of clarity on difference between activities, outcomes and indicators; failure to be consistent and report on progress according to indicators, baselines and last year's results. This has

effects both in terms of reduced ability to manage the program cycle, and in terms of being unable to show what the programs actually have achieved. A general comment from SCN staff who had visited Guatemala was that based on the reporting they had seen they had low expectations about the programs but were very positively surprised when they actually were able to see them for themselves. Not being able to show results is a serious weakness for an organization which has the securing of additional funding as a key challenge.

This is not a new problem; it was mentioned in the 2008 evaluation and has been a frequent topic in communications between SCG and SCN. It has often been dealt with as a problem of monitoring and evaluation, and there have been considerable efforts to develop such a system within SCG. As we see it, however, this work, as it has been oriented over the last years, does not really address the heart of the problem. In terms of M&E, SCG has put a lot of work into developing a database for information management within the organization. This is an important task in itself, even if we are uncertain if the benefits of the very comprehensive system that is being developed will outweigh the costs. One problem is that after a year and a half of having one person working full time on this (at times he has also had an assistant), the program is still not finished. Furthermore, the system has grown so comprehensive that the M&E coordinator suggests that there is a need to hire additional people at the regional offices in order to enter all the information that the system is designed to handle. The level of detail appears excessive to us, although SCG insists that is useful and necessary. As an example, it is required that for each CREA a detailed questionnaire should be filled in, including questions of whether all the pieces of the chess set, and the papers and pieces of the board game Monopoly, are intact. However, the issue of the complexity of the database is really beside the main point, which is that SCG has proven unable to develop plans with clear and consistent objectives and simple, manageable indicators that truly are able to gauge progress towards the objectives. Tinkering with a database does not address this much more fundamental problem, which cannot be resolved by a database developer, but requires a shift in the way of working of the program department.

This change involves adopting a more strategic way of planning. In this respect, it is good news that SCG has started the work of revising its 2010-2014 strategy, in order to produce a new document for the period from 2015 and beyond. This is an opportunity for promoting strategic thinking throughout the organization.

In terms of strategy, SCG has operated on a principle of working in one area for five years, then having a phase-out period of two years, before pulling out of a project area to start anew somewhere else. There are several merits to this model, as it means that work is started with a clear exit strategy integrated from the start, thereby reducing the potential for creating dependency, and it allows the benefits of having SCG programs to be better distributed. Currently, however, SCG is breaking with this model, by continuing to work in Chiquimula after the 5+2 years end with 2013. The plan is to continue for at least one or two years. The reasons given are several: These are areas subject to droughts and with high incidence of under-nutrition and therefore with special needs. Furthermore, the program so far has focused on the primary schools, while there is a need to work more with secondary schools. And for fundraising reasons, it is useful to continue working in these areas where it is recognized that needs are great. Being close to the border with Honduras, it is also an area of

great relevance for the work on trafficking. And finally, given uncertainties of future funding, it is difficult to start in new areas, not knowing whether they will be able to finance the full five years, even less seven.

The review team understands these reasons, and we are not advocating blind and absolute adherence to strict and abstract strategic principles. Yet it is important for SCG to clarify what this decision means to the strategy of working five plus two years

An issue that was discussed in the 2008 evaluation report was the high rotation of staff within SCG. Low salary levels was one proposed explanation for this state of affairs, while it was also discussed whether there were other reasons. A study of the work environment was conducted in 2009. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to locate the study, and its conclusions appeared not to be known to the current SCG staff. What is clear is that high rotation of staff remains a problem for SCG. Apart from the program director, all senior staff has been replaced within a period of little more than a year. As far as we understand, salary levels of SCG are good when compared to other Guatemalan NGOs, low in comparison with international NGOs. Since there are requirements of knowledge of English for senior staff, and the organization is part of an international alliance, it seems reasonable for Save the Children Guatemala to have a salary level in between. If the salary level is not unreasonable, one might suspect that there are also other reasons behind the high turnover. However, we cannot point to any other reasons for this state of affairs.

After SCN closed its Guatemala office, SCG has assumed the role of funder to former SCN partner organizations. In general, SCG appears to have handled this role in a manner that emphasizes equality and respect for the partner organizations. The organizations interviewed report a very supportive role played by SCG. There have been a couple of exceptions related to the management of and accounting for funds where partners have reacted against what they perceived as arrogant and inflexible attitudes from SCG, but these conflicts appear to have been overcome without any lasting damage to the relationships. One difficulty for the partners is that contracts are only for one calendar year and funding is only approved some time into the year. This, however, is due to the conditions placed on the funding from SCN, and consequently outside SCG control.

2.2 Relevance

2.2.1 Guatemalan context

Guatemala is among the 10-15 most unequal countries in the world. It is a lower middle-income country according to UN classifications, with a gross national income per capita (PPP) of close to USD 5,000.^{xv} This wealth, however, is extremely unequally distributed, as for instance shown by the recently published data on malnourishment, which shows stunting (chronic malnourishment) among 49.8% of children under five. This places Guatemala as fourth in the world on the list of countries with the highest child malnourishment rate.^{xvi} For Latin America as a whole, the corresponding figure is 14%, for Asia 35% and for Africa 40%. Mother-child mortality is among the highest in the region. While poverty rates did improve somewhat between 2005 and 2010 (although not the rate of

extreme poverty), they appear to have been increasing again over the last couple of years. Inequalities in Guatemala have deep historical roots. In the rural areas, they are intimately tied to the pattern of landholding, which is the most skewed in all of Latin America, a continent characterized by unequal land distribution.

In terms of primary school coverage, Guatemala has made significant advances since the Peace Accords were signed in 1996. Net enrolment rates are now above 95%, which is above the average both for Latin America and for low middle income countries. Primary completion rate has climbed from 39% in the early 1990s to 85% in 2010 – a steep incline even if the results are still behind the averages for the region and for the income group. School enrolment rate to secondary school has also been increasing, but at the 2010 level of 46% it remains well behind the levels of comparable countries.^{xvii} Thus, Guatemala has made considerable progress in the educational sector, especially in terms of extending access to primary school. But in terms of the quality of education there are still considerable needs.

Inequality is also closely linked to ethnicity, with poverty being much more widespread among indigenous peoples. The indigenous population in Guatemala is variously estimated to make up 40 to 60 % of the total population, and to have twice as high incidences of poverty and malnutrition than the rest of the population. Literacy levels are also highly skewed with respect to ethnicity: While 96% of urban young adults (15-24) know how to read, the corresponding ratios for rural indigenous youth and rural ingenuous female youth are 76% and 68% respectively.^{xviii} The previous UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Issues, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, described four different types of racial and ethnic discrimination: the *interpersonal discrimination*, encountered in exclusionary attitudes in face-to-face interactions with non-indigenous people; *institutional discrimination*, in the unequal share received by indigenous people in terms of state services and collective goods; *legal discrimination* in the linguistic and other barriers that limit indigenous people's access to justice; and the *structural discrimination*, where historical processes have led to the exclusion of indigenous people from economic, political and institutional resources.^{xix}

Such inequalities have persisted in Guatemala partly because the state has neither been willing nor able to address these issues systematically. The Guatemalan state can be described as weak, small, unresponsive and controlled by elite influences. It is a minimal state, functioning on the smallest tax base of all of Latin America. The weakness and limited reach of the state is apparent in a security sector unable to control violence and criminality, as well as in the situation of the large part of the population belonging to indigenous groups and living their lives under cultural, social and economic arrangements that are different from those of national society and the state. Even if a formal, electoral democratic system has been introduced, the legacy of the war in terms of a 'culture of silence' is not easily dispelled, and there has not been a real democratization that has allowed this system to make the state more responsive to popular needs and demands. While traditional elites have blocked changes challenging their economic prerogatives, there are widespread perceptions that organized crime is likewise infiltrating the state to secure the interests of this segment.^{xx}

Guatemala is also plagued by very high levels of violence. Even if around 30 years have passed since the bloodiest period of the civil war, Guatemala remains a very violent country. On average, more than 5,000 people have been killed yearly since 1996, putting Guatemala among the most violent countries in Latin America. A particularly worrying aspect of the violence is the fact that a significant number of murder victims are women, killed in ways that indicate sexualized violence. While the state is no longer the perpetrator of the violence, the fact that it is unable to control and punish those responsible, means that confidence in the state remains low. Indeed, there is a common perception that organized crime has penetrated the security apparatus of the state, and confidence in the courts and the police is close to nil. Violence is concentrated in urban areas and along borders (the SCG department of Chiquimula is included among the prevalent areas). Killings are normally linked to youth gangs and to drug smuggling. Youth and young adults are highly over-represented among victims.^{xxi}

Guatemala is also an important link in the Meso-American migration corridor, through which large numbers of Central and South American hopeful migrants seek to get to the USA, often under precarious conditions. With the tightening of Mexican border controls, many do not get across, and end up in a difficult situation within Guatemala. Human trafficking is increasingly recognized as a major problem in the country, in part related to Guatemala's position in the migratory and drug smuggling routes. Trafficking takes different forms, including sexual exploitation in the form of prostitution or otherwise, labor exploitation that sometimes involve slave-like conditions, and recruitment for organized crime. While figures are uncertain, the Human Rights Commissioner's Unit for Trafficking estimates that there are as many as 30,000 cases annually, of which 80% are children.^{xxii}

Finally, Guatemala's vulnerability to natural disasters must be pointed out. According to the World Bank, it is number five on the list of countries with the highest exposure to natural hazards^{xxiii}. This is caused by the country's geographical location – with risks of hurricanes, earthquakes and volcano eruptions, floods, landslides and droughts – as well as by its high social fragility and relative lack of resilience. Statistics covering the period 1980-2010 show an annual average of more than two natural disasters, with 135,000 people being affected yearly.^{xxiv}

2.2.2 SCG relevance within Guatemala

Overall, while there have been changes – for better as well as for worse – in Guatemala over the last five to fifteen years, the fundamental problems remain the same. Such deep-seated problems are not resolved overnight but require long processes of change. Therefore, just as SCG's areas of work and ways of addressing the issues were highly relevant five years ago, they remain so today.

Indeed, by having increased its attention to the fields of trafficking, violence and nutrition – all urgent issues, as described above – one could argue that the organization has become even more relevant within the Guatemalan context. Moreover, the issue of children and youth with disabilities is certainly not a new problem in Guatemala, but it is one which has received little attention in spite of its prevalence. Having included this area of work in its portfolio further enhances SCG's relevance.

Working directly with improving schools and teaching; developing municipal public policies for youth and children; supporting children with disabilities; addressing nutrition and violence in schools and problems of trafficking; working to reduce the risk of disasters – these are all interventions aimed at directly addressing Guatemala’s urgent problems. Yet it is also important to point out that SCG’s way of working is also aimed at doing something with underlying root causes of these problems. It was argued above that inequality in Guatemala has much to do with an unresponsive state that has little interest in addressing issues of distribution, and that the return to electoral democracy has not changed this. There are many changes needed to overcome this situation, but one of them is related to the development of a democratic culture, where people experience that they have both the right and the possibility of influencing politics and governance through exercising their citizenship rights. This is a culture that must be built from below (although to be sure, it is also necessary that national level politicians adopt this way of thinking). SCG’s work with municipalities, local civil society and municipal public policies is a very concrete and effective way of contributing to this absolutely necessary though admittedly long term task.

Along the same lines, the promotion of the participation of youth and children in diverse contexts – as promoters and reporters, within CMNAs, in classes where a new and more active pedagogy is taught, with greater cultural and linguistic pertinence – is also a contribution to creating a more empowered generation, one that may more willingly use Guatemala’s democratic structure to challenge injustices. In these ways, SCG’s approach take on a deeper relevance, as they are also aimed at changing the fundamental structures in which Guatemalan inequalities are rooted.

Conversely, the present political administration offers particular opportunities for SCG to promote its priorities in the area of education. The current Minister has a long background in the Great Campaign for Education – together with SCG – and her director of DIGEBI is capable and committed to intercultural bilingual education and has received dramatic increases in budget allocations. Thus there is a historic opportunity to advance the institutionalization of EBI. SCG is a relevant organization to contribute to this through its historic engagement and expertise in the field, as well as due to its good working relationship with the Ministry of Education.

Within Guatemala’s civil society, SCG occupies a particular position as one of the more profiled organizations working with children from a rights-based approach. Advocacy and lobbying is still mainly done through networks. CIPRODENI is probably most important from a child rights perspective, along with the Mesa de Municipalización (less active at the moment) and the Great Campaign (focusing only on education). CIPRODENI and the Mesa each contain seven to ten member organizations, with a large degree of overlap between them, and these are probably the Guatemalan organizations most similar to SCG. SCG plays a particularly central role for CIPRODENI and the UPR monitoring of child rights, both through its own participation within the network, and by having included CIPRODENI among the partners that receive funding from SCG. SCG is therefore indirectly an important voice in the public sphere. In this respect the organization is very relevant. Still, the review team believes there is a potential for SCG to play an even more active role as spokesperson for children’s rights.

2.2.3 SCG and the SC Theory of Change

One way of assessing the relevance of SCG as a partner organization of SCN is by investigating the extent to which SCG's way of working corresponds with the SC Theory of Change. In the following, SCG is assessed according to five key elements of this theory of change.

Participation of children and youth. This is a fundamental principle of SCG's way of working. The program components of promoters, reporters and communicators of course have this as a direct objective. The education program also promotes participation through an active pedagogy that breaks with former top-down and repetitive ways of teaching. SCG has also promoted youth and child participation in the CMNAs and the development of MPPs, thereby including them also in local democratic processes. This participation is important in itself, and has further important effects in changing traditional attitudes towards the rights and capabilities of children to participate.

Innovation and systematic testing and trying out of new approaches. Through systematic use and testing out by implementation in different localities SCG has contributed to the development of new models for the fields in which they work. In education, they have developed the CREA concept, as well as an intercultural and bilingual educational model and corresponding educational material. Within the area of CRG, the forming of CMNAs and developing MPPs has been developed into a specific approach that has also been extended to others. The idea of having municipalities gradually assume the costs of the *técnicos* is another new approach that was systematically tested in Chiquimula before eventually trying it out elsewhere.

Strengthening civil society. At the local level, by supporting community organizations and their participation in municipal processes, SCG is having a strong impact in terms of strengthening civil society's possibility of engaging with and influencing the institutions of the state. Supporting partner organizations such as Comunicares and CIPRODENI also strengthens the voice of civil society at the national level. Participation in networks – and supporting the network CIPRODENI – means the joining of forces of civil society organizations and a strengthening of their impact.

Scaling up and working with state institutions. The strongest work of SCG has been at the local level. Even here, however, it is possible to speak a scaling up: when an NGO works with state institutions in order to influence them and make them capable of child rights promotion. There are indications that this has been internalized within the municipal institutions to the extent that the work will continue after SCG withdraws. Furthermore, SCG models are being taken up and implemented by others: the CREA within DIGEBI's bilingual and intercultural education, the work with CMNAs and MPPs has been disseminated within the *Mesa de Municipalización* and the *Círculo Mesoamericana*. Direct support to the work of the state institutions SVET (Secretariat against Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking) and the PDH (Human Rights Commissioner) has allowed these institutions to strengthen their work against trafficking.

Advocacy. SCG is doing important advocacy work through its role for the monitoring of child rights and reporting into the UPR process. It has also been among the organizations that have promoted bilingual and intercultural education, a long process where advances are currently being seen. We see the recent work with ICEFI in producing research-based facts on bilingual education and budgetary implications as a particularly useful way of working. Most of SCG's advocacy work is through civil society networks, under the rationale that impact is greater when coordinated among many organizations.

In sum, then, the work of SCG is very much in accordance with the SC Theory of Change. In our view, among the five elements, SCG is most impressive with respect to strengthening civil society and to the systematic innovation and testing. To the extent that working with and impacting on municipal authorities is counted as scaling up, we see the results of SCG as impressive also in this respect. Among the five elements, SCG is weakest in terms of advocacy.

We are perhaps not the ones best placed to make an overall assessment of how support to SCG fits with SCN's new 2014-2017 strategy. But it is possible to point to a number of areas of correspondence:

- Geographically, the strategy focuses on supporting existing SC members into becoming strong civil society actors.
- Guatemala has been characterized as a Conflict-Affected Fragile state, which is among the priorities for SCN's work (although for Guatemala, this designation is not uncontroversial).
- There is a strategic emphasis on reaching marginalized youth, with a specific targeting of marginalization due to gender and disability. SCG focuses on children with disabilities, and has a solid gender focus. SCG further targets marginalization due to ethnic or linguistic reasons, as well as vulnerabilities because of violence and trafficking.
- SCG's work with Education, CRG and Protection continues to be in line with SCN priorities. SCG's new emphasis on nutrition would also seem to fit well within SCN priorities.
- Within the humanitarian field, SCG's work on disaster risk reduction within schools would seem to fit well with SCN's priority for Test & invest: 'Disaster prevention integrated into education based on children and youth's participation.'

3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Achievements 2010-2013

The main conclusions of the review are that SCG does excellent work at the local level, especially within the areas of CRG and education. SCG's work with CREAs and teacher training, and with strengthening development councils and promoting municipal public policies, have been particularly effective. The strategy of working through local institutions and building their capacities ensures that program results have a high degree of sustainability. The weakening of the principle of only working for five plus two years in one municipality, on the other hand, may lead to dependencies and reduce the so far high level of program sustainability. While the organization has influenced the development of bilingual and intercultural education at the national level, there is room for further strengthening its advocacy work. SCG confronts a number of challenges in order to strengthen its organization. In the following paragraphs, these conclusions are specified in more detail.

Within the program area of *Education*, SCG has had a strong impact at school levels through the promotion of an active pedagogy and the establishment of learning resource centres (CREAs). While SCG has been working with around 340 primary schools, the strongest impacts are limited to around a third of them (the ones that have received CREAs). At a national level, SCG has had a significant influence on the development of bilingual and intercultural education. It is less clear what the effects have been of the Early Child Development program or the advocacy through The Great Campaign.

Within *Child Rights Governance*, SCG has done an impressive work in strengthening local civil society, promoting municipal public policies for children and youth in all the eight municipalities where they work, and spreading awareness and understanding for child rights within municipal councils and administrations. Impacts in this area are unquestionable. SCG has likewise recruited, trained and organized around 4,500 children from 205 communities as promoters and communicators. While the knowledge and awareness these children have received are unquestionable, the level of activities does not seem very high for the majority. At the national and international level, SCG is playing a crucial role in ensuring that an alternative report on the rights of children in Guatemala, based on detailed reporting from all over the country, is developed annually, and presented at the UPR in Geneva every four years.

Under the heading of *Protection*, SCG has opened an important area of work with children with disabilities. Given the little attention to this issue in the rural areas where SCG works, there have been strong impacts at the local level, both by ensuring that more than 500 children have initiated rehabilitation and/or inclusion programs, and by spreading awareness of the issue in communities and municipalities. When it comes to trafficking, primary impacts have been in helping state institutions initiate efforts within the area. So far, results at local level are less significant. Municipal systems for protection have been established in six of eight municipalities, and also more than 300 schools have established such systems. There is little information on how these systems function and the effects they have.

The recommendations from the 2008 report largely focused on *Institutional strengthening*. They are largely unknown within SCG today^{xxv}, and many have not been implemented. It seems fair to say that these recommendations have not proved very useful^{xxvi}. SCG remains in a financial situation that is not sustainable in the longer term, being dependent on a single donor and with administrative costs too large for its program portfolio. Issues related to bylaws and the composition of the Board have not been attended to. There is still no overall communication strategy, and the organization is in need of improved strategic thinking at several levels. The organization is currently in a special situation, with director and most of the Board having been recently replaced. The new leadership is focusing on the most urgent of the strategic challenges, including the coming integration of the SC USA program, as well as on the issues mentioned above related to bylaws, Board and strategy.

SCG have clear weaknesses when it comes to *Planning and reporting* practices. There is a lack of consistent, strategic structuring of interventions within the program areas. Objectives, expected results, indicators and activities are not clearly separated, and reports often fail to conform to the logic of plans. It is not always clear what the numbers reproduced in reports refer to. Due to these weaknesses, it is difficult to report on achievements in relation to specific objectives. Likewise, it is often impossible to quantify achievements.

3.2 Relevance of SCG

Overall, SCG's rights-based approach and areas of work remain highly relevant within the Guatemalan context of a weakly instituted democracy, high inequalities and large marginalized groups. The fundamental problems of Guatemala continue to be the same: High inequality, poverty, malnutrition, ethnic exclusion, violence, weak and unresponsive state with democratic institutions that do not secure the interests of the marginalized. Thus, the work of SCG continues to be of importance. In particular, it should be pointed out, that SCG's rights-based approach promotes participation and strengthens civil society engagement with local level state institutions, thereby fomenting democratic culture and practices that are absolutely necessary if Guatemala is to overcome its root problems.

SCG is among the few national organizations prioritizing children and youth from a rights-based perspective. While there is still some way to go before SCG is generally known throughout the population, it is well known and respected among the organizations and institutions working in this field.

SCG's way of working corresponds well with the SC Theory of Change. Among its strong points, through its work with communal and municipal councils, the organization does excellent work to strengthen local civil society, and in the programs such as the promotion of municipal public policies and of CREAs, SCG shows systematic innovation and testing of approaches. Also if the principle of scaling up is understood to apply to work with local authorities, this is among its strengths. While SCG have some successful experiences, we believe it could do even more in advocacy.

In addition to being relevant within the Guatemalan context and in relation to the SC Theory of Change, the SCG program appears to correspond well with the SCN 2014-2017 strategic priorities.

3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.3.1 For SCG

- I. **The relevance** of SCG's activities continues to be high, as they are directed at Guatemala's continuing fundamental problems related to inequality and marginalization, and as components addressed at emerging problems such as violence and trafficking are added to the portfolio.
 - a. SCG should continue to work in the existing program areas.
 - b. SCG should seek to strengthen its advocacy activities, through campaigning in alliance with other civil society organizations as well as by partnering with state institutions.

- II. **Economic sustainability** remains a fundamental challenge for SCG, and must be pursued with high priority. This includes both expanding and diversifying the funding base, and working to reduce the ratio of administrative costs to total turnover.
 - a. SCG should give priority to international fundraising for its income-generation. Intensified proposal-writing and contact with potential donors are important, but also other issues mentioned below (functioning webpage, improved planning documents) are crucial for succeeding in this field.
 - b. National fundraising has so far been a disappointment. While we believe there is a greater potential than has been realized, we concur with SCG that it makes sense to give priority to the international field in the near future. Should SCG suddenly experience positive media exposure of a new level, it may be worthwhile to also make some fundraising efforts in the national context. SCG should strive for such exposure.
 - c. Reducing the percentage of total costs that covers administration can be achieved either by cost-cutting or by expanding total budgets. Until the latter is achieved, SCG must look closely at ways of reducing administrative costs. New mechanisms for controlling costs have recently been introduced within SCG. This is good. However, too bureaucratic routines may increase administrative costs further. This should be assessed after the mechanisms have been in place for some time.

- III. **Strategic planning.** While there have been weaknesses in this area, SCG is working on updating its current strategic plan which ends in 2014. It is positive that this work has started early, and it will give the organization the possibility of creating a more coherent overarching framework and better structured program areas.
 - a. In setting priorities, SCG should start from what are their own strengths. In our view, this includes the clear rights-based approach; the local level strengthening of civil society and municipal structures to promote children's rights and democratization; and the contribution to raising the quality of education through the development of models

based on an active pedagogy and directed at the bilingual and intercultural context of Guatemalan schools.

- b. SCG should match its strong local level activities with increased efforts at scaling up. We believe SCG's work of advocacy and seeking to influence the work of state institutions can be intensified. Advocacy is more effective when built on documented thorough knowledge of the facts. We therefore recommend further cooperation with research institutions such as ICEFI. Perhaps SCG could even work together with ICEFI and UNICEF around promoting the findings of their recent joint report?
- c. SCG should maintain its clear profiling of the rights-based approach and its advantages. This is important in order not to be swamped in the upcoming process of integration with a larger SC USA program oriented towards food security rather than rights. Documenting results of the rights-based approach will also be important for the integration process.
- d. The strategy should also address what are the urgent needs in the Guatemalan context. Building democratic accountability and participation is crucial in the context of stark inequality of Guatemala. The new areas SCG are planning to give priority to in the coming year – violence and (mal-)nutrition – are both highly relevant in the national context.
- e. The strategy process should serve to improve program cycle management (see below) by setting an overall framework. By developing the new strategy in a participatory manner with all staff, in a process facilitated by a good external expert in participatory strategic planning, this may also serve as a valuable way of disseminating this way of thinking throughout the organization.
- f. The strategy should specify the time frame for working in specific communities or municipalities. The SCG principle of working five plus two years has been a strength, and the organization ought not to discard having an exit strategy established from start-up in an area. Given the decision to continue in Chiquimula there is a need for a reformulation of the principle. We recommend to continue with the 5+2 principle in normal circumstances.
- g. In light of the Chiquimula decision to prioritize schools with CREAs – apparently those with the least need for support – SCG should reconsider how to maximize their impact on educational quality in the municipalities where they work. A good way to start would be through an impact study of SCG's work with schools, taking care to distinguish between those schools that receive CREAs, those that receive school libraries and those that only receive teacher training.
- h. A coherent communication strategy – including and integrating image building, advocacy, awareness-raising and fundraising – should also be developed as part of this overall strategic process.

IV. Various recommendations.

- a. SCG must have a web page that is updated regularly.
- b. SCG must improve its systems and routines for planning and reporting, to overcome the difficulties documented at various places in this report. Most importantly, there must be a systematic and consistent use of linked objectives, indicators and activities. If possible,

the number of indicators should be reduced – but consistently reported on. SCN’s three indicators for education^{xxvii} could, if used systematically within the schools with which SCG work, be a way of gauging to what extent the quality of education is improving, and would be a tool for SCG in order to adjust the approach in municipalities/communities that lag behind.

- c. SCG should carefully consider its database development. The database being established within SCG at the moment seems to the consultants to be too complex and costly to manage if only meant to serve the M&E needs of SCG. However, it is a system with wonderful potential, and – because of the comprehensive nature of the data (not being limited only to SCG’s geographical areas) – might be of use to other institutions working for instance within the field of education. However, to develop the system into an open database like this would be a project in itself, requiring specific funding – perhaps from an organization like UNICEF? Or perhaps it would be a project for which SCG and ICEFI together might find a donor? On the other hand, if the system is to remain solely for the benefit of information management within SCG, it needs to be reduced in scope and complexity.
- d. For the work with children and youth with disabilities, SCG should establish further contacts and cooperation with different national level organizations that specialize on different types of disabilities.
- e. In relation to the partner organizations, SCG must strive to maintain a relationship on an equal footing (which has been the dominant mode up to now). Requirements for proper handling of and accounting for funds must be presented in a respectful manner.
- f. SCG should consult with SCN over ways to establish multi-year contracts with the partner organizations, or other ways of minimalizing the problems of late approval of budgets and release of funds.

3.3.2 For SCN

- V. SCN should continue its support to SCG for a new contract period without any dramatic changes, as SCG is doing important work in the Guatemalan context that corresponds to SCN’s priority areas and preferred approaches, and since this work is dependent on continued SCN funding in the short to medium term.
 - a. In terms of program areas and components, the CRG and much of the Education work have had significant impacts and should be given high priority.
 - b. The work with children and youth with disabilities is likewise important and corresponds well with SCN’s prioritization of marginalized children and youth, and should therefore be continued.
 - c. Trafficking is also in line with SCN priorities and is an urgent issue in Guatemala, but here the impact of SCG’s work is perhaps less obvious. We recommend continuation but not any great expansion of this component for the moment.
 - d. Among SCG’s new priorities of violence-free schools and nutrition, SCN is already supporting the first one, while the second may also be relevant for SCN. We recommend

supporting these components, while monitoring results and adjusting level of support to the results achieved.

- VI.** SCN should support SCG in complying with the recommendations given in section 3.3.1.
 - a. SCN should support SCG in its fundraising activities.
 - b. SCN should be a dialogue partner in SCG's strategy process. While strategic decisions should be taken by SCG themselves, SCN should play a constructive role as a challenging discussion partner.
 - c. SCN should support SCG in improving its planning and reporting documents.
- VII.** Again, while SCN should not impose decisions on SCG, it should monitor closely the implementation of the strategy and the new cooperation agreement throughout the strategy/cooperation period, including the achievements in terms of fundraising and financial sustainability. Where the strategy is not followed or activities agreed upon are not implemented, SCN should raise the issues with SCG.
- VIII.** SCN must follow closely the integration process of the SC USA program with SCG. SCN will go from being the by far largest donor to becoming a small minority donor. This process also implies challenges for maintaining the rights-based approach of SCG. We cannot give very specific recommendations to SCN about how to handle this, as so much is unclear about the outcomes of the process.
 - a. What seems evident is that SCN must focus perhaps even more strongly on rights-based issues, as these may not be supported by the new main donors.
 - b. Furthermore, it seems wise to adopt a strategy of flexibility, being able to respond to new needs that may arise in the course of the integration process. The new cooperation agreement ought to allow for such flexibility.
- IX.** SCN should seek ways of allowing for multi-year contracts and reducing the problems of late approval of budgets and release of funds.

Endnotes

ⁱ At the time, the Alliance in Guatemala was represented by SCG and the country offices of Save the Children Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the USA. In addition, Save the Children UK was also working in Guatemala from its Honduras office.

ⁱⁱ Also included in the agreement was SCG work on Disaster Risk Reduction, and support to other civil society partner organizations (including former SCN partners). In accordance with the emphasis in the Terms of Reference and the discussions held with SCN, less emphasis is given to these areas in the present report.

ⁱⁱⁱ It was presented and discussed in the Comisión de la Niñez, Congreso de la República de Guatemala.

^{iv} These figures are from the presentation to the review team by SCG's protection coordinator. The annual reports give lower figures. The difference may be due to the coordinator reporting cumulative figures while the annual reports only deal with that year.

^v Figures are from the 2012 Annual report – thus current figures may be higher.

^{vi} Save the Children Guatemala: '2010-2013 Proposal: Save the Children Guatemala', p 5.

^{vii} Projected figures.

^{viii} Calculated from the amount of Guatemalan Quetzales on the basis of average exchange rate for the calendar year.

^{ix} These figures are from the SCG annual reports for the organization, not the reports to SCN. In the latter there are only figures reported for 2010 and 2011, which do not match the ones reported here. Annual Report for 2009 gives the figure of 104'.

^x Here we refer to the table called 'Fondos recibidos por donantes, por el período de 2010 a 2014', prepared for the review team by SCG.

^{xi} It is possible that the discrepancy arises because SCG in this context reports multi-year funding: For instance a pledge of USD 250,000 annually for three years could be counted as USD 750,000. From the information we have had at our disposal, it is difficult to assess whether this is the explanation. In any case, this way of reporting would easily result in the same amounts being reported more than once.

^{xii} We have not seen the total accounts for SCG except in the annual reports where they appear in a form that does not facilitate this calculation. The 15% estimate is based on the following logic: According to the 2013 SCG budget presented to SCN, non-thematic items (finance and administration, human resources and fundraising) make up 19.2 % of the total budget. For 2013, SCN support accounts for 86% of SCG donations. Assuming there are no administrative costs covered by other donors, the percentage of administrative costs of the total will be 16.5%. If other donors also provide administrative support, the figure will be higher. The whole calculation is complicated somewhat by the fact that SCG also has its own income, which in 2011 amounted to 11.5% of the total income. However, if this amount is to be taken into account, so must the costs accrued to gain this income, such as the operating costs of the educational centre. All in all, we believe that 15% is a conservative estimate.

^{xiii} It appears that many key documents are only archived by the person responsible, and not in the central archive. When there had been changes of staff, it was sometimes difficult to locate documents requested by the review team, despite the best efforts of SCG to find the things we asked for.

^{xiv} 'Lineamientos de Comunicación 2014' in the powerpoint presentation 'Presentación de resultados de comunicación 2010-2013'.

^{xv} <http://data.worldbank.org/country/guatemala>

^{xvi} <http://www.wfp.org/countries/guatemala/overview>

^{xvii} <http://data.worldbank.org/country/guatemala>

^{xviii} Minority Rights Group International, *State of the World's Minorities and Indigenous Peoples 2009 - Guatemala*, 16 July 2009, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4a66d9b550.html> [accessed 25 January 2014]

^{xix} UN Economic and Social Council, 2003, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, Rodolfo Stavenhagen submitted in accordance with Commission resolution 2001/57. <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G03/111/33/PDF/G0311133.pdf?OpenElement>

^{xx} Ivan Briscoe and Martín Rodríguez Pellecer, 2010. 'A state under siege: elites, criminal networks and institutional reform in Guatemala'. Clingendael Institute.

http://www.clingendael.info/publications/2010/20100913_cru_publication_ibriscoe.pdf

^{xxi} Annie Bird: 'Drugs and Business: Central America Faces Another Round of Violence'. NACLA Report on the Americas Spring 2012.

^{xxii} Interview, Sandra Gularte, Procuraduría de Derechos Humanos, Unidad de trata de personas, 30.10.2013.

^{xxiii} In terms of economic vulnerability.

^{xxiv} PreventionWeb: Guatemala Disaster Statistics.

<http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/statistics/?cid=70>

^{xxv} Perhaps because of staff rotation.

^{xxvi} SCN disagrees with this way of putting it, and points out that most of the recommendations of the 2008 evaluation report were included in the 2010-2013 plan. There were many attempts to implement them, according to SCN. The fact that they have not been successful does not mean the recommendations were not useful, and when nobody knows about the recommendations, this has to do with lack of institutional memory within the organization and staff rotation, SCN maintains.

^{xxvii} Net enrolment rate, School retention rate and Literacy.

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Country Strategic Review

cooperation between SC Guatemala and SC Norway

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND

Alianza para el Desarrollo Juvenil Comunitario (ADEJUC) started as an international Save the Children (SC) program after the earthquake in 1976, obtained its legal status as a national organization in 1983, and has been a member of the International Save the Children Alliance (ISCA) since then. By an amendment of 27-12-2004 the statutes being constituted as a civil society organization with the business name of *Alianza para el Desarrollo Juvenil Comunitario*, ADEJUC, and also known as Save the Children Guatemala (SCG).

SCG's vision is a Guatemala and a world in which all children and adolescents have the right to survival, to a decent life, protection, development and participation.

The mission is to “inspire and promote significant changes in the way that Guatemala and the world values and acts on behalf of children and adolescents, to achieve immediate and lasting improvements in their lives, strengthening the capacities of communities and local institutions and national guaranteeing the fulfillment of the rights of children and adolescents.”

Save the Children Guatemala is located in Guatemala City and has two regional offices in the departments of Chiquimula and Quiché. SCG cooperates with and currently provides programmatic and financial support to six national partners that are responsible for the promotion and implementation of projects in areas related to quality education, child participation and communication.¹

Table 1: Annual support (NOK) from SCN to Guatemala for years 2006 – 2013

2013*	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
9 000 000	8 818 797	9 505 961	11 118 776	13 636 311	14 290 452	15 827 944	19 138 637

Norway's annual support to SCG has in the period of cooperation ranged from 11 million NOK in 2010 to nine million budgeted for 2013. In the years 2006-2013 the total amount channeled to Guatemala including SCG was 99 million NOK. Most of the funding has gone to education (38 MNOK), Child Rights Governance (32,8 MNOK), Disaster Risk Reduction/emergencies (11 MNOK) and Child Protection (10 MNOK). The funds have come from Norad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and private SCN collected funds.

The cooperation between SCG and SC Norway has gone through different phases since 1983. Below are some key dates from the last 13 years:

¹ The five partners are: IDEI in the department of Quetzaltenango; AJKEMAB in the department of El Quiché; EDECRI in the department of Alta Verapaz; CIPRODENI, PENNAT and COMUNICARES in Guatemala City.

- 2000²: A meeting between SC members with presence in Guatemala (Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, from its office in Honduras, and USA) was held in March 2000. Program Directors from the corresponding head offices and the Program Coordinator of the Secretariat of the SC Alliance attended this meeting, with the objective to consider the future of the cooperation in Guatemala. They agreed on the importance of promoting SC Guatemala's leadership as the national SC member in the country.
- 2003: SC Guatemala and the other SC members in Guatemala (Denmark, Norway, Sweden and USA) signed an agreement to support SC Guatemala's organizational strengthening for the 2003-2005 period.
- 2004: SCN decided to close its office in Guatemala during the 2006-2009 strategy period and give re-channel the support through SCG instead.
- 2006-2010: SC's 2006 – 2010 campaign Rewrite the Future was launched in 2006 in several countries affected by armed conflicts or in post-conflict contexts. In Guatemala this campaign was coordinated by SC Guatemala, with the participation of SCN and SC USA.
- 2007: An agreement with the Ministry of Education, through the Vice-ministry of Intercultural Bilingual Education, was signed within the framework of the Rewrite the Future campaign in Guatemala.
- 2008: External evaluation of Save the Children Guatemala.
- 2009: Decision made at the SC Members Meeting in 2009 to create One SC.³
Closing down of SCN country office and integration into SCG.
- 2010-13: Current SCN and SCG cooperation agreement.⁴
- 2013: Country Strategic Review.

The agreement between SCN and SCG is built upon SCG's strategic plan 2010-2014 which has three overall objectives⁵:

- Promotion and enforcement of the rights of children and adolescents.
- Strengthening Citizen Participation and Local Power.
- Strengthening and Institutional Development.

As the current cooperation agreement is coming to an end in 2013, both parties have agreed to undertake a review that will assist in creating the basis for a new agreement.

2. PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

The main purpose of the Country Strategic Review is to document results, inform and provide directions to the next SCN/SCG cooperation agreement.

² From [DOCS-#159932-Report from 32 years in Guatemala 1976-2008 SCN - English version](#) / [DOCS-#159931-Report from 32 years in Guatemala 1976-2008 SCN - Spanish version](#)

³ Discussions started in 2011 on how to prepare for an integration of the SCUS supported program into SCG. Even though that process may have had an impact on the work the last couple of years, those processes are outside the scope of this review.

⁴ [DOCS-#158002-Agreement 2010-2013 first year SCN-SCG](#) / [DOCS-#183572-Signed Agreement SCN - SCG 2010 - 2013 Three last year](#)

⁵ [DOCS-#139116-cp strategy 2010-2014 GTM - original](#) / [DOCS-#141050-cp strategy 2010-2014 GTM - comments from Oslo](#)

The review should also assess to which extent the recommendations from the external evaluation in 2008⁶ have been useful and followed up.

The review should primarily be seen as a learning exercise for SCN and SCG. The findings and recommendations will be used by SCG and SCN in preparing the next cooperation agreement. Secondary use will be considered, if appropriate, in attracting future supporters, partners and donors to the SCG program; informing SCN strategic decision-making, reporting to and dialogue with back donors (especially Norad) and potential future donors.

1. OBJECTIVES AND KEY REVIEW QUESTIONS

Objective 1:

Provide evidence of overall achievements against the objectives set in SCN- SCG cooperation agreement 2010-2013.

Review questions will be developed jointly by the external team, SCG staff in the country and SCN.

Key issues to be addressed (not exhaustive list):

- Achievements of overall objectives in the current country strategy plan - outcomes and if possible impact, intended as well as unintended, positive and negative.
- SCG's overall added value in Guatemala in contributing to positive change for children.
- Specific projects and/or programs standing out as particularly successful and adding value in the Guatemala context?
- Efficiency: to which extent has results for children been delivered in a timely and cost-efficient manner.
- Sustainability: to which extent are the results for children likely to be sustained after funding has ended?
- Scalability: to which extent are program models ready to be scaled up for larger impact for children?
- Cross-sector synergies between the different program elements.
- Examples of good practices/lessons learnt that could be incorporated into the next strategy.

Objective 2:

Assess the relevance of the current SCG program priorities in light of a changing context in Guatemala and suggest change/adjustments preparing for a new cooperation agreement SCN-SCG.

Preliminary review questions that need to be further elaborated in a participatory process around::

- Relevance: Are priorities identified in the current SCG strategy still the *right* ones (i.e. the most pressing in lights of SCG's dual mandate⁷, capacity, children's situation and the general development in society)? What are the emerging issues concerning children in Guatemala which SCG should address?
- Extent of implementation of SC's Theory of Change and its relevance for programming.
- SCG's role as a child rights defender in Guatemalan civil society, including the role of the child rights communicators.

⁶ Evaluation Report, Save the Children Guatemala, Axel Borchgrevink with Miriam Bolaños and Rubelci Alvarado Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI), October, 2008 [DOCS-#117648-Evaluation SCG 2008 final report pdf](#)

⁷ Dual mandate: To attend both long term programs and respond to emergencies

- Strengths and limitations in SCG’ delivery mechanisms for long-term development and emergency response.

4. METHODOLOGY

The review team is expected to propose an appropriate methodology for addressing the key questions mentioned above. The review will consist of three main phases:

- a. Desk study of key achievements and results as documented in SCN/SCG evaluation & monitoring data.⁸
 - Deliverable: inception report to be approved before fieldwork.
- b. Field work in Guatemala including close consultation and cooperation with the SCG senior management team and field directors. A certain level of stakeholders’ participation, especially the meaningful participation of children and youth⁹ is also expected. The researchers should feel free to propose methods.
 - Deliverable: Debrief and presentation of preliminary findings for SMT and key stakeholders in Guatemala (and in Oslo upon the return of the fieldwork).
- c. Reporting and feedback.
 - Deliverables: draft report and final report in English (and a Summary in Spanish language).

5. ORGANISATION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Country Strategic Review will be led by a team of external consultant(s)/researcher(s). The team will be responsible for developing the research methodology, planning and conducting participatory processes and managing data collection, as well as writing up the reports and presenting the findings and recommendations. The external consultant(s)/researcher(s) are ultimately responsible for the conclusions and recommendations and the quality of the evaluation reports.

In SCN the Area director will be managing the review process backstopped by the Section for Strategic Analysis. Within SCG, the SMT will appoint a focal point for managing the review with support from program staff (hereafter termed SCG “evaluation manager”).

A Reference Group will be established to input to the review of reports. The team can also establish an advisory group involving children and youth, representatives from child and youth clubs.

SCG staff will support the evaluation team as appropriate, i.e. in facilitating the involvement of partners, children and government in the evaluation process, both in the design phase and in the feedback of findings and recommendations.

⁸ SCN/SCG developed a baseline in 2010 for key result areas (education, child rights governance and protection) (#168712), and data has been collected for 2011 and 2012.

⁹ The participation of children and youth is crucial to any SC evaluation process. Evaluation activities as well as any involvement of children and youth must comply with SC Practice Standards for Child Participation (<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/practice-standards-children%E2%80%99s-participation>), as well as SC’s Child Safeguarding framework and Ethical Standards for M&E.

SCN/SCG will make archives with related documents available for the evaluation team, and SCN/SCG staff will be available for interviews.

6. DELIVERABLES

- Startup workshop in Guatemala, sharing and specifying the ToR, refining and agreeing research questions and draft review design. Make the necessary preparations to include children/youth
- Inception report (max 15 pages) with detailed methodology and work plan for the review to be approved by SCN/SCG before starting data collection
- Feedback to involved children and stakeholders, giving opportunity to validate findings
- Draft and final strategic review report in English, of maximum 30 pages, including executive summary. The content of the report will be discussed and agreed in due time before producing the report. Final report should include a translation of Summary into Spanish language.
- Presentation at a workshop in Guatemala.

7. DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The researcher(s) are expected to fill the following requirements:

- Extensive evaluation experience and good knowledge of the Child Rights Convention.
- Documented experience in undertaking similar reviews.
- Advantage with knowledge of Save the Children's work.
- Ability to communicate in Spanish and produce a well-written and analytical report in English (with Spanish Summary).

8. TIME AND BUDGET

The study is calculated to take in total 35 working days, including the participation of both international and national researchers/consultants.

Save the Children Norway will fund the review by covering consultancy fees, local and international travel costs, accommodation and daily subsistence during field visits for the evaluation team. The researchers are asked to submit a proposed budget.

SCN and SCG will assist in data collection and participation of children and other stakeholders.

The team of researcher(s) are requested to provide a budget for the estimated costs of the study. A detailed timeline for deliverables will be developed together with the team, but ideally SCN would like to have a draft report available before by 15th December 2013.

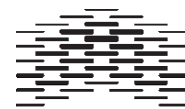
8. CONTRACTS AND PAYMENTS

Save the Children Norway will sign a consultancy contract with one company/person.

50% of the fees will be paid upon submitting the first deliverable and the remaining amount upon the submission of the final report.

Annex 2: List of interviews

Oslo		
04.09.13	Save the Children Norway	Nora Ingdal Kari Thomassen Bjørn Richard Monsen
21.10.13	Save the Children Norway	Nora Ingdal
	Save the Children Norway	Ann Margaret Stewart Pedersen
	Save the Children Norway	Brynjar Nilsen
	Save the Children Norway	Hanne Lotte Moen Helene Andersson Novela
	Save the Children Norway	Annette Gjertsen
	Save the Children Norway	Bjørn Richard Monsen
	Save the Children Norway	Liv Heidi Pedersen
Guatemala City		
28.10.13	Save the Children Guatemala	Rubelci Alvarado Alejandra Flores Ivonne Araújo Ana Beatriz Medina
	Save the Children Guatemala	Rubelci Alvarado Roberto Cabrera Gloria Sanitoriales Roberto Silvestre Jennifer Smith
		Visit to three-day meeting/camp of promoters from different areas
29.10.13	Royal Norwegian Embassy	Jan Gerhard Lassen
	Save the Children Guatemala	Maria Toledo Diani Cabrera Juan Carlos Villatoro
30.10.13	Procuraduría de Derechos Humanos Unidad de trata de personas	Sandra Gularte
	Organización Internacional de Trabajo (ILO)	Karina Javier Martínez
	La Gran Campaña para la Educación	Mirna de González Samuel Fadul Laura Valdez Ana Silvia Escobar
	DIGEBI	Oscar Saquil Bol
31.10.13	Red Humanitaria	Inés Camas
	Save the Children USA	Carlos Cárdenas Mauro Tartaglia
	Pennat Comunicares	Lenina Garcia Oneida Rodas
	Save the Children Guatemala	Cándida Rabanales
	Board, Save the Children Guatemala	Eduardo Arenas Mario Mendigal



		Ingrid Pacheco Nancy Salva Mirna de Gonzales Cándida Rabanales Rubelci Alvarado
Chiquimula		
04.11.13	Primary school, Olopa	School director and two teachers SCG municipal education coordinator
	Olopa	Five Radio communicartors (youth/children) One coordinator
	Olopa	Members of CMNA (4, including 2 youth representatives), Municipal Council (2), municipal staff (4)
	Primary school, Los Encuentros	Director
	San Juan de la Hermita	Mayor, members of Municipal council (6), Municipal staff (6)
05.11.13	Camotán	Promoters (11), group of hearing- impaired children, municipal staff (3)
	Camotán	Members of municipal council (3)
	Jocotán	Municipal staff and members of Municipal Council
	SCG Regional Office	Staff members (11)
Guatemala City		
06.11.13	Mesa de Municipalización	Lucas Ventana
	Save the Children Guatemala	Ivonne Araújo
	Save the Children Guatemala	Fernando Leche
07.11.13	SCG Educational Centre	Promoters (35+-) from Quiché and Guatemala City
	CIPRODENI	Carolina Castro
	ICEFI	Jonathan Menkos
08.11.13	Save the Children Guatemala	Candida Rabanales Rubelci Alvarado Gloria Sanitoriales Alejandra Flores Jennifer Smith Ivonne Araújo Roberto Cabrera

Annex 3: On the planning and reporting practices of SCG

In the Terms of Reference, we are asked to provide evidence of overall achievements against the objectives set in the SCN – SCG cooperation agreement 2010 – 2013. This is less straightforward than it sounds.

Firstly, it is not obvious what the objectives and targets were. In the agreement between SCN and SCG, there is reference to the ‘documents provided by SCG related to the period 2010-2013’, as well as to the document ‘DOCS-#139116-cp strategy 2010-2014 GTM – original’. A document with an almost identical reference (‘DOCS-#139116-v1-cp strategy 2010-2014 GTM – original’) was supplied by SCN. When opened, the document is entitled ‘2010-2013 Proposal: Save the Children Guatemala’ and contains what seems to be more of a funding proposal to SCN than a strategy document (and also covers a shorter period than what the reference says). In the final meeting with SCG, after the fieldwork, we were informed about another document: *SCG’s 2010-2014 strategy*. When we received this document from SCG, its file name was ‘Plan Estratégico 2010-2014 revisado 2013 (3).doc’. This document is a strategy document and covers the period of the original reference. Yet from its title it appears to have been revised in 2013, without any information given on what the changes have been. It is also in Spanish, so probably not the one referred to in the cooperation agreement. Still, it is not completely clear which document should regulate the SCN – SCG cooperation. This is relevant since the two documents specify targets differently. For instance, the *2010-2013 Proposal* states that ‘By 2013, 800 schools in 16 municipalities apply quality education methodological processes, with the direct participation of 2,400 teachers and 72,000 students’, while the *2010-2014 Strategy* has a lower target for one year later: 600 schools (although in 19 municipalities), 1,800 teachers and 58,000 students by 2014. The logic of the proposals seems to imply that these schools are all primary schools, although this is not clear. In the 2013 plan it is difficult to read the number of schools expected to be covered (340?), while the 2012 plan has the target of 200 pre-school education centres and 450 elementary education centres. The reduced numbers at later stages is probably due to the fact that the program in Livingston and Izabal has phased out, but this is impossible to confirm from the texts. There are also many targets (termed indicators) in the *2010-2014 Strategy* that are not included in the *2010-2013 Proposal*.

Furthermore, the cooperation agreement refers to the document with SCN’s comments on SCG’s strategy. This document is a long list of comments, criticisms and recommendations for changes to the strategy, in particular the way that expected results are formulated and to the baseline data provided. As the agreement indicates that these comments and recommendations are also part of the basis for the agreement, the status of the objectives and targets as stated in the proposal becomes more unclear.

The objectives, targets and ways of structuring the programs change over time. In the plan and report for 2012, the logframe is completely changed. The new set-up – with clearly linked Objectives,

(expected) Results and Indicators – appears to be an advance in terms of giving a more systematic way of monitoring advances. However, the fact that objectives and targets are changed makes a systematic assessment of achievements with respect to original plans difficult.

Reports do not consistently refer to the expected results of the plans. Often there is a tendency to report on activities rather than results/outcomes. For instance, in the 2010 report on the educational area, for primary schools, many of the expected results from the 2010 annual plan are not reported upon. This includes the goal of having figures for net rate of schooling for each community available, as well as having an increase of 3% in the net enrolment rate and 2% in access to school for out-of-school children. Expected results of promotion to higher grades are likewise not reported on. The target of having 475 schools promote intercultural issues is subtly reformulated to the activity that interculturalism *has been promoted* (in 388 schools and 219 pre-schools). Thus, what was originally stated as an expected outcome is transformed into an easier-to-achieve activity.

In general, many of the items reported are activities or outputs. Where they are in the form of outcomes, they are sometimes reported in vague and impressionistic terms that do not inspire confidence in them having been systematically monitored; i.e.: ‘The relation between mothers and children has improved and strengthened; emotional links are stronger and reading skills have improved...’ or ‘Secondary school teachers apply active learning methodologies with their students’ (Annual report 2011). While the 2012 and 2013 plans are better structured in terms of linked objectives, results and indicators, it remains a problem that most indicators refer to activities or outputs, and few of them can be said to represent outcomes. There is no baseline data, and results are not formulated in ways that focus on overarching outcomes; i.e.: ‘Result 1.1: 4,366 children 0-6 years old, ..., build their capacities, skills and abilities and are better prepared, after having practiced with dialogues, reading stories, rhymes, listening to music, making rhythms with objects, solving puzzles, counting, making figures with Legos, differentiating sizes, drawing, coloring, cutting, listening to animal sounds, running, jumping, playing soccer, working in groups and playing with hula hoops.’ (Annual Report 2012) The indicator score ‘Children read an average of up to 125 books per year’ (Annual report 2012 Indicator 2.1.3) sounds good but the operative words here must be *up to*, not *average*. There is not always consistency within the same annual report. In the 2012 report, in the logframe, under indicator 1.1.4 it is stated ‘260 mothers ... learn to read and write through processes coordinated with CONALFA’, whereas in the annexed report on the Maternal Literacy Project with CONALFA, the achievement is presented as ‘Mothers already identify phonological sounds of letters and can write their names’. Sometimes the result as stated in the Plan is repeated with little modification or specification in the Report. For instance in the 2012 Plan, ‘Result 2.2 Constitutional duty bearers include actions to promote the access and quality of education in their plans and budgets’ becomes ‘Result 1.2.2 Constitutional duty bearers (Ministry of Education and 8 municipal governments) include actions to improve the quality of education in their plans and budgets’ in the 2012 Report. As long as we learn nothing of what these actions actually were – they are not specified elsewhere in the report – the specification of the Ministry and the municipalities does not give us any information on what the achievements have been.

Among the annual reports accessed for this review (2010-2012), only in the last one have SCG reported on the SCN educational impact indicators of net enrolment rate and school retention rate (for three of the municipalities) and literacy pass rate (for 495 girls and boys from marginal urban areas) been calculated /areas where SCG work. As this appears to be the first time it is done, the results are not compared to any baseline figures. They are reported on separately, not integrated into the logframe.

The different ways that programs are structured in different presentations also makes a systematic assessment difficult. For instance, in the area of Child Rights Governance of the 2010-2013 Plan, expected results are stated as so many youth and children community organizations, so many promoters and communicators, so many Municipal Committees for children and youth, so many Municipal Public Policies for youth and children, and so many Departmental Committees – that is, all objectives at local level dealing with promoters and with municipal policies and committees. This is echoed in the plans/reports for 2010/2011, where CRG is subdivided under three main headings: Children and Youth Organizations, Children and Youth Promoters and Municipal Policies. In the 2012 plan, a completely new area is introduced: Child Rights Monitoring (and diffusion of findings), while the areas of organization and promoters are merged into one. In the presentation we were given at the first meeting for the review, work under CRG were presented by the SCG program director under the following five headings: Child Rights Monitoring; Strengthening Civil Society Capacity; Improving legislation for children and youth; Public policies for children and youth; and “The window of 1000 days” (a campaign on nutrition for young children). Thus two new areas are added. The presentation from the CRG coordinator, however, was restricted to two main areas: *Promotorías* (which include advocacy by the promoters) and Public Policies.

Similarly, in the 2010-2013 Plan, Education is subdivided into Primary Education, Pre-school and Secondary Education, as well as Systematization and validation of experiences. In the presentation we were given by the Program Director, there are four categories: Early Childhood Development (community education for improved treatment of 0-6 year children); Pre-school, primary, secondary and diversified; Violence-free schools; and Alphabetization. In this way of presenting the program, the three first categories of the original presentation are merged; the fourth one is not there anymore; while three new categories are introduced. The Coordinator of the Education program had a slightly different way of grouping the activities into four categories: Pre-school and primary education; CREAS (school library and activity centers); Bilingual and intercultural education; and Early Childhood Development.

It is not surprising that broad thematic programs with many activities at different levels can be subdivided according to different logics, each of which may have its particular advantage. To some extent there has also been a broadening of the area of work which is behind the inclusion of new components. Thus, the new category of Violence-free Schools actually refers to a new program (to be started with Norwegian funding next year). Similarly, in the area of Protection, the original activities have been expanded since the 2010-2013 plan was made by the inclusion of activities addressing the problem area of Violence, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking. However, this can only account for a minority of the differences in the ways that programs are presented. And this inconstancy in

presenting the program is not unproblematic. On the one hand, it makes our task more difficult, both for finding relevant items in SCG's reporting, and for knowing how best to present the programmatic areas and our findings in this report. More worryingly, it may also indicate a lack of systematic-ness and strategic orientation to the programs. This is an issue that is further addressed in the section on Institutional Strengthening.

It is worth pointing out that there is a tendency for the activities at municipal and local level to be presented with a higher degree of consistency than advocacy activities at national level – which tend to become fairly invisible in plans and reports. It is easy to read this as an indication of where SCG's strength lies, and to some extent it is true that this lies in its local programs. Yet it is also the case that SCG has achieved important impacts at national level, for instance in acceptance for its models for intercultural and bilingual education. These achievements tend to be under-communicated in the reports, just as the lobbying and advocacy work is given little emphasis in the plans.

One conclusion from this rather laborious review of plans and reports is that comparing achievements to objectives is complicated. There are several reasons for this: It is not completely clear what the objectives were at the outset; ways of specifying objectives and the objectives themselves have changed over the program period; too many objectives are formulated as activities or outputs, especially in the reporting; and the objectives do not consistently include all areas of intervention, with advocacy and lobbying at national level sometimes not being included. For these reasons, the following presentation focuses on those achievements the review team sees as the most important, with less reference to how objectives are specified in different documents.

A second implication is that it is difficult to *quantify* the achievements of SCG's educational program. In the following, some quantification of results is given, based on combining information from the Annual Reports, the Evaluation Report of the SCG activities in Chiquimula (for which fieldwork was carried out between December 2012 and February 2013) and the powerpoint presentations of achievements made by SCG staff to the review team. More qualitative assessments draw on our own fieldwork as well the evaluation report mentioned above.