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REVIEW OF SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY'S GENDER WORK – “LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND”

12 NORAD FUNDED COUNTRIES

REPORT

20 FEBRUARY 2023

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Report

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Stephen Van Houten

Canada, February 2023.

ACRONYMS

ASRHR	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CO	Country Office
CP	Child Protection
CRG	Child Rights Governance
CWD	Children with Disabilities
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAM	Gender with Age Marker
GAP	Gender and Power analysis
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GEM	Gender Equality Marker
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
HRB	Human Rights-based
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex +
LOE	Level of Effort
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OOS	Out of School
SC	Save the Children
SCI	Save the Children International
SCN	Save the Children Norway
SCS	Save the Children Sweden
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity/Expression and Sex Characteristics
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WGQ	Washington Group Questions
WOLREC	Women's Legal Resources Centre

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

Programme Overview. Save the Children Norway's (SCN) Norad-funded programme "Leaving No Child Behind" (2019-2023) Framework Agreement aims to secure children's right to education and protection, focusing on gender equality and inclusion. The Norad programme is implemented in 12 countries: Colombia, Guatemala, Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda. The programme has also been implemented in four countries where Norad support has been phased out during the agreement period, including Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe. SCN has set out to mainstream gender equality throughout all interventions and implement gender transformative programmes in five countries. These targeted programmes focus on reducing teenage pregnancies and child marriages in Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, and Uganda. The programme proposal prioritises gender equality and the inclusion of children with disabilities (CWD), given SCN's commitment to reaching the most deprived and marginalised children.

Review Background. This review is timely for two key reasons. First, SCN has not undertaken a gender review of its international portfolio since 2016 and 2017/2018. Second, the Norad programme is approaching the end of its cycle and a new proposal will soon be developed, hence assessing results, progress, challenges, and lessons learned is essential.

Review Purpose. The specific purpose of the review is to (1) provide information on how the COs in the Norad agreement are progressing with gender equality within and beyond the Norad Framework Agreement, and (2) identify needs and ways to strengthen gender equality programming in the COs. The review aims to enhance internal learning to strengthen the integration of gender equality into SCN's programming, including targeted and mainstreaming efforts. The review process itself was also designed to generate reflection, learning, and new ideas among relevant staff in SCN and COs.

Audience. The primary audience for this review is SCN. The review report will be used by SCN and COs to extract learnings and recommendations to build on for designing a high-quality gender-responsive proposal for the new Norad agreement. Moreover, the review will likely be of interest to SCI, notably the Gender Equality Technical Working Group and other SC members and COs. Documentation of SCN's gender equality work may also interest Norad. Finally, the review aims to provide a sound basis for further technical discussions with Norad and other Norwegian NGOs.

Methods. Mixed methods were used in the data collection and analysis. These methods were participatory, inclusive, and target group sensitive. These methods ensured that the findings have been derived from the collective contribution of a wide range of individuals, and that data are triangulated and validated. Primarily, these methods included a desk study, scoring with the Gender Equality Marker (GEM), key informant interviews (KIIs), and focus group discussions (FGDs). Following the ToR, the data was collected in two phases. In Phase 1 (Objective 1), the review team conducted a desk review and then scored all 12 countries with the GEM tool. In Phase 2 (Objective 2), the review team conducted online KIIs and FGDs with stakeholders to assess how the various COs are currently working on gender issues and to identify existing gender capacities within COs, along with outstanding gaps and needs.

Data Summary. A team of five international consultants collected the review data between November 2022 and January 2023. There were 65 responses comprised of 20 responses from SCN, SCI, Save the Children Sweden, and Norad, and 45 responses from the COs. Of the 65 responses, 43 (66%) were from female stakeholders and 22 (34%) were from male stakeholders.

Report Outline. This report is comprised of an Introduction, Approach and Methodology, Findings, and Conclusions, including Recommendations. The findings are divided into the two review phases (GEM Assessment and CO and SCN Assessment). The report also includes One-Page Summaries for all twelve countries (Annex 1).

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In recent years, SCN and the COs implementing the Norad Framework Agreement 2019-2023 have made impressive strides toward the integration of gender equality considerations into programming. Country offices have made substantial headway in designing programmes that strive to be at least gender sensitive and gender transformative. In this review, SCN stakeholders, alongside many CO staff, spoke clearly and passionately about this work and the need to continue building and strengthening these efforts moving into the next Norad Framework Agreement. SCN has made notable efforts to build its own capacity in gender, equality, and inclusion, and its learning culture was also apparent throughout the review, underpinning conversations, and dialogue during the process. This work has been bolstered by the gender-related commitments and strategic directions of SCI across the movement.

The focus on gender, equality, and inclusion in the Norad Framework remains highly relevant and necessary, particularly in a global context deeply impacted by the effects of COVID-19, economic upheaval and inflation, food insecurity, climate change adaptation, armed conflict, resistance and pushback on women and girl's rights from well-funded conservative political and religious groups (e.g., women and girls rights in Afghanistan and Iran, and the USA's abortion rights), and other challenges. The long-term nature of SCN's collaboration with Norad and the COs implementing the Framework Agreement provides a welcomed opportunity to identify gender challenges and build and share gender capacity over time.

However, many challenges remain. The review found that the GEM tool is useful for some COs in the planning and design of gender sensitive or transformative programmes, while other COs tend to view the tool as a "box-ticking" exercise, with little perceived value in their own context. By all accounts, the collection of sex disaggregated data has steadily improved at the CO level, although there remain varied levels of capacity regarding how to interpret and use that data for programme adaptations. Staff within COs are working within vastly different contexts, with a continued need for context-specific responses and interventions. There are also different levels of capacity within different COs, in terms of gender experience and expertise. The need for sufficient, consistent, and dedicated gender capacity within COs was a strong theme in the review, and CO staff identified a wide range of gender-related themes and issues they would like to learn more about. The review also identified examples of how children have been participating in the different country level programmes, and how issues of gender (intentionally or not) are often raised or included in these activities. Programme responses to LGBTQI+ and SOGIE rights vary across the COs. This review emphasized the importance of continuing to support some COs to strengthen their existing responses and gently support the other countries that are considering such responses or where no such responses exist.

As SCN and the COs wrap up this Framework Agreement and turn their thoughts towards the planning and design of the next phase, there is much progress to be celebrated. Across all three programme areas of Education, Child Protection and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and Child Rights Governance, there is emerging evidence that gender considerations are being integrated into programming, especially in the five targeted countries, which highlights the importance of targeting specific gender issues in each country. Exciting and important opportunities exist for SCN and the COs to strengthen and expand this targeted gender programming. Moving forward, it is important to consider (1) strengthening and expanding targeted gender programming, (2) establishing and supporting Gender Focal Point positions in all COs with an LOE of at least 30-50%, (3) ensuring that all COs conduct a gender analysis across all phases of the programme cycle, that is, the strategic planning, proposal design, implementation, M&E, and accountability and learning phases, (4) monitoring and sharing the adaptations and challenges related to sex disaggregation, and (5) strengthening CO partnerships with relevant national organisations.

Phase 1: GEM tool

All 12 countries were scored on the GEM tool with an average score of **4.33** (out of 5) [range: 3-5], which falls into the **Gender Sensitive** category. There were seven (58%) countries (Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, and Uganda) with a score of 5/5 (Gender Transformative), two (Guatemala and Somalia) (17%) countries with a score of 4/5 (Gender Sensitive), and three (25%) countries (Colombia, Palestine, and South Sudan) with a score of 3/5 (Some Elements of Gender Sensitivity). Notably, five of these countries (Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, and Uganda) are the five gender targeted countries.

The GEM score exercise, supplemented by interviews with staff at SCN, SCI, and the CO level and the review of programme documents, suggests that significant progress has been made in integrating gender sensitive or in some cases potentially gender transformative approaches into the Norad framework (in comparison to previous GEM scoring exercises – see main text for details). Staff respondents across almost all COs said that the GEM tool was used primarily (and most often exclusively) at the design or proposal stage of a project or programme, though in several countries, staff said they were attempting to use the tool to help guide the implementation of activities.

The review found a wide range of opinions regarding the value of the GEM tool. Some respondents found GEM to be a useful and practical tool at the design and proposal stage to help guide staff when considering how a programme responds to gender-related issues. On the other side of the spectrum are those who view GEM primarily as a “box-ticking” exercise, with little practical value. In the middle are those who see the actual GEM checklist and scoring as a formality, but nonetheless find value in the tool itself to help frame reflection and thinking around project or programme design. Overall, respondents highlighted three broad challenges regarding their use of the GEM tool. One of the main critiques put forward regarding the GEM tool and the scoring process was that the tool is difficult to apply to some specific CO contexts. A second challenge is that most COs, with few exceptions, reported limited value of the tool beyond the proposal and design phase, with information about the GEM score often limited to those involved in its completion. Finally, staff identified challenges in translating a strong GEM score into programming that was truly gender sensitive or gender transformative, given the realities of their intervention contexts and funding limitations. The review also found that there are varied experiences of conducting gender analyses ahead of (and during) the implementation of the Norad Framework Agreement, along with varied understandings across COs regarding what constitutes a “gender analysis.”

After the GEM scoring, the review team reflected on the limitations of using the GEM tool for an external gender review of the Norad Framework Agreement. The team also reflected on the tool itself. The review team found there to be a high level of subjectivity within some criteria in the tool, for example, with multiple questions or considerations within one criterion. The review revealed varied interpretations or sometimes inaccurate understandings of some GEM criteria at the CO level. The subjectivity of the tool made it difficult to offer robust comparisons between countries, or even between a CO’s self-score and the external score calculated by the review team. In the external review, the team also found that there were often insufficient details within proposal documents to enable the team to follow the specific GEM tool instructions, as well as some unavailable details across all documents provided for specific COs, making consistent and accurate scoring difficult.

Phase 2: Country Offices and SCN

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

All COs reported consistent disaggregation by sex in their work under the Norad framework. Several countries noted that while they knew this was a requirement for Norad, it was also aligned with their policies at the CO level, as well as the larger institutional approach of SCI. Respondents reflected that this capacity had been steadily improving over time, though still with some differences between COs.

The review also explored the extent to which considerations related to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression (SOGIE) and LGBTQI+ rights were integrated into the Norad Framework Agreement 2019-2023 (or in other programming), and whether any relevant data was collected by CO

teams. The team found a wide range of views and experiences in this regard. While the COs in Colombia, Guatemala, Lebanon, and Nepal indicated that there were some activities and openness regarding SOGIE and LGBTQI+ rights, stakeholders from the other eight countries clearly highlighted the social, religious, cultural, and legal barriers that prevented such a focus. Country offices, with few exceptions, were able to provide clear examples of how they had used (mostly sex and disability) disaggregated data to inform changes to programming or implementation approaches. However, some COs identified that more could be done to enhance their analysis and usage of the data they collect.

Disaggregation by other parameters varied across COs. Staff across the COs spoke clearly about progress in disaggregation by disability, while also highlighting ongoing challenges in the quality of data and the need for more consistent attention to this data, and how to use it effectively. The collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity was relevant and useful in some contexts, such as Nepal and Myanmar, but was actively avoided in other contexts such as Niger, South Sudan, and Uganda, where the collection of such data was highly sensitive and potentially inflammatory.

GENDER CAPACITY AND TRAINING

The review found that all countries had at least a *gender equality policy*, *gender equality action plan*, or *structures for ensuring gender equality in the CO*. While the Gender Equality Policy was cited most frequently (10; 83%), it is important to note that only four (25%) countries (Guatemala, Lebanon, Malawi, and Uganda) explicitly stated that they had developed the own CO Gender Equality Policies based on the SCI's movement wide Gender Equality. This was followed by the Gender Equality Action Plan (5; 42%) and the structures for ensuring gender equality in the CO (4; 33%). Respondents emphasized the importance of recognising and responding to the local and regional contexts in establishing these three outputs. Currently, all countries except one (Palestine) have a gender focal point, in different capacities and roles. This review found a range of Levels of Effort (LOE) across the 12 countries. In some countries, the LOE is 100% across the CO (e.g., Colombia, Lebanon, and South Sudan where full-time gender advisers are working for the CO across grants). In other countries, the LOE is between 10%-20% specifically for the Norad programme (e.g., Mozambique, Nepal, and Uganda). The COs stated strongly that a greater LOE with technical and financial support was required to strengthen the Gender Adviser role. In discussions on gender training, staff respondents indicated that from their knowledge, specific gender training had been undertaken in seven COs. The five countries where no specific gender training has been conducted are Lebanon, Nepal, Niger, Palestine, and Somalia. It should be noted that in four of these five countries (Lebanon, Nepal, Palestine, and Somalia), all staff receives a mandatory pre-employment orientation of which gender is a part. For those countries that do conduct gender training, the most common types are gender equality, GBV, and GEM tool training. In seven of the COs, respondents reported that they feel that they have the necessary gender competence and expertise. A strong review finding was the challenge related to the recruitment and retention of Gender Advisers. Respondents spoke positively about the Gender Adviser role, but they highlighted the difficulties in "selecting and keeping" these individuals. The CO staff respondents argued that a larger budget is needed to strengthen their gender capacity and expertise in terms of a larger LOE for the Gender Advisers (as mentioned above) and more gender training. While there are examples of COs partnering with other gender, inclusion, or women-led organisations (e.g., Colombia, Malawi, and South Sudan), this is an area that requires input and strengthening. There is a wide range of training needs covering both specific gender content (e.g., GBV) and programming issues (e.g., gender budgeting), as described more fully in the main text.

CHILD PARTICIPATION

The review found some clear examples of how gender equality considerations have been integrated into child participation activities and structures in some COs, both in terms of gender-related content and the equal representation of girls and boys. In some COs, efforts to ensure gender parity and girls' leadership within Child Participation structures were perceived to have led to better representation of issues that differentially impact girls. In other countries, respondents shared examples of how child participation activities that were not necessarily designed with an explicit gender focus nonetheless raised important gender issues. There may be opportunities across many COs for more intentional and focused gender-related engagement with children through child participation activities and structures.

COVID-19

While not a key focus of this review, respondents across COs readily provided examples of the gender-related impacts of COVID-19 on programming for boys and girls. Respondents highlighted issues such as heightened risks of child marriage, SGBV, sex trafficking, survival sex, early age pregnancy, and school dropout. Importantly, some respondents noted the importance of the flexibility of the Norad funding in enabling them to develop responses to these emerging gender-related challenges. Addressing the differential impacts of the pandemic on girls and boys will undoubtedly be an important consideration for the next Norad framework agreement.

REFLECTIONS TOWARD THE NEXT NORAD FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

In this review, stakeholders from SCN, SCI, COs, and Norad offered a wealth of reflections regarding possible strategic directions and approaches that could shape and strengthen how gender is incorporated into the next Norad Framework Agreement. Internationally, Save the Children continues to build and refine its approaches to gender, within a broader ambition to deepen and strengthen the movement's overall approaches to inequality, inclusion, and justice. Moreover, the Norwegian government's new Action Plan for women's rights and gender equality in foreign and development policy into which SRHR and harmful practices will be integrated. Women's rights and gender equality are a priority of the current government in their foreign policy. Norad's "Strategy towards 2030" outlines Norad's new strategic directions, with climate change and food security high on the agenda and the Norwegian policy priorities related to gender (e.g., targeted bilateral aid on gender equality, SRHR, SGBV, and education priorities). Gender considerations will continue to be important (and are deeply intertwined with issues of climate change and food security), as will disability and inclusion considerations, including continued disability disaggregation and inclusion activities. A human rights-based approach will continue to be useful in effectively identifying and addressing needs from an intersectional approach. Moving forward, care will be required to ensure that gender equality is not lost or subsumed within other priorities, but that it is entrenched as an underlying and fundamental working principle of SCN and partners. SCN and CO stakeholders highlighted the need for continued efforts in the next Norad Framework towards meaningful and effective partnerships with local women's and feminist organisations, etc. to focus on gender priorities as well as localised and contextualised bottom-up approaches to working.

For the next phase of Norad, there may be opportunities for SCN to strengthen engagement with COs regarding the GEM tool, to support COs in unpacking the concepts within GEM in relation to their own context and programming needs during the planning and design phase and throughout implementation. Irrespective of the GEM score and the KPI connection, there may be opportunities to engage more fully with COs to ensure GEM is not simply a box-ticking exercise, but that it is supported by processes and tools that can assist COs to track their progress and make necessary changes to programming throughout the implementation of the framework. Some stakeholders (SCN and Norad) highlighted that there may also be opportunities in the next Norad Framework for COs to take even better advantage of the degree of flexibility offered with Norad funding. SCN respondents also highlighted opportunities to engage more closely and meaningfully with COs around gender in the next phase and enhance intercountry sharing and learning around gender. Finally, there are important opportunities to apply contemporary and relevant regional learning, such as lessons or recommendations from the Sida's recent "spot check" on Save the Children Sweden's Sida CSO 2016-2021 programme, and the subsequent evaluation management response.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PHASE 1: GEM TOOL

1. **GEM Usage and Scoring.** Review CO engagement with the GEM tool to improve its use at the proposal phase and its adaptation for implementation. The GEM tool needs to move away from a “box-ticking” exercise to being used to review and meaningfully inform design and adaptations. This process could include more direct engagement between COs and SCN gender expertise and support (e.g., through the Awards Managers, Technical Advisers, and the Special Adviser Gender Equality & SRHR) at the design phase and during implementation. It could also include the design of a tool or other support that enables COs to assess progress towards gender-related goals at specific points during implementation and adapt as needed. Management could play a stronger role in ensuring that GEM is included in reporting and shared and discussed throughout programming. In terms of cross checking, if feasible, SCN’s Special Adviser Gender Equality and SRHR could (1) check the scores and provide feedback to the COs, or (2) develop and manage a peer scoring system to promote learning across COs.
2. **Providing Evidence.** Consider altering the “Comments” column of the GEM tool to become a “Supporting Evidence” column in which the person or team completing the tool supplies clear evidence to support the decision to award a checkmark or not for each criterion. This information could also help SCN and COs to jointly better understand where ongoing skills and capacity strengthening may be useful regarding the GEM tool, and potentially gender equality more broadly. Some selected GEM criteria could also be adapted and included in reporting templates to bolster accountability towards commitments made during programme design.
3. **Contextualisation.** Review the reports from some COs that the GEM tool is not adequately responding to their specific country contexts and realities. This could be done through, for example, the inclusion of a final comments section that asks COs to describe how the GEM scoring exercise was (or was not) able to consider local contextual factors.

PHASE 2: COUNTRY OFFICE GENDER WORK

STRATEGIC GENDER PROGRAMMING ISSUES

1. **Targeted Gender Programming.** In addition to the more consistent mainstreaming of gender considerations across programmatic components, this review noted the value of targeted gender programmes in five countries as well as the *Choices, Voices, Promises* (albeit on a smaller scale). SCN could explore an expansion of these targeted programme approaches within relevant and interested countries, bolstered by specific training, support, and learning opportunities, for example, webinars for other COs.
2. **Working Principles.** For the new Norad agreement, establish key working principles, for example, child participation, gender equality, and disability inclusion, to systematically inform all work on children. As working principles, these guidelines should go beyond cross-cutting issues and inform how COs plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate their work with children.
3. **Intersectionality.** While it is the policy of SCI and SCN to include gender under inclusion and equality, some countries are requesting that local structural systems and challenges are acknowledged and that they receive more input and support regarding the understanding and application of intersectionality.
4. **LGBTQI+/SOGIE.** SCN should continue to explore CO support needs regarding the integration of LGBTQI+ and SOGIE considerations into programming, where this is feasible. There may be opportunities for facilitated learning, sharing of experiences and dialogue across those COs that are beginning to work on these issues, or are interested in doing so. However, this aspect should continue to be country-driven and sensitive to the contextual challenges and potential risks in settings where these issues are more complex and restricted.
5. **Inclusion of Boys and Men.** Through training and the sharing of country experiences, reinforce the importance of including boys and men in gender programming by providing more input and support as well as sharing relevant examples from other programmes.
6. **Systematic Gender Approach.** Despite the notable successes highlighted throughout this report, SCN requires a more systematic approach to gender for the next Framework. For example, following SC Sweden’s initiative, SCN could develop specific CO gender requirements (that is, establishing Gender Technical Partners, ensuring that each CO has a Gender Focal Point with at least a 30-50% LOE, and conducting a Gender Analysis at the beginning of the programme) to provide specific evidence-based guidelines on what components are required in the next Framework and demonstrate that SCN takes

gender equality seriously.

7. **Linkages to Livelihoods.** Continue strengthening gender's links to the COs other livelihoods programmes.

CAPACITY AND TRAINING

8. **Capacity Review and Resources.** In the next Framework, assess gender capacity at the CO level and ensure the availability of necessary human and financial resources at the country level including adequate budgets for the Gender Advisers and Gender Focal Points associated activities. This approach includes gender training for administration, finance, and human resources staff.
9. **Exploring the Gender Values and Attitudes of SC Staff.** SCN could consider an approach to providing SCN and CO staff with the structured opportunity to explore and challenge their personal gender attitudes and norms. The Guatemala team is starting to work with this approach, as is the Malawi team through funding from another project. SCN could monitor these efforts to learn from the successes and challenges of these experiences, as a potential approach moving forward.
10. **Field Staff.** Provide support for field and project staff, including partner staff, on implementing contextualised gender-sensitive and gender-transformative approaches at the community level. COs want to increase their capacity to 'operationalize' gender transformative theory and principles into tangible programmatic actions (within the context of programme funding cycles and resources). Such training requires dedicated funding.
11. **Gender Capacity and Systems Strengthening within SCN.** Continue to build SCN staff capacity to support gender sensitive and gender transformative programming. While staff highlighted that there has been significant progress in recent years, it is important to ensure gender equality remains firmly on the agenda, to continue institutionalising this capacity, and to ensure that new staff have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and capacity over time. Institutional gender strengthening involves strong and consistent leadership support and highlighting gender as a strategic priority.
12. **Enhanced Engagement between COs and SCN.** More systematic engagement and dialogue between SCN and the COs may be useful for the sharing of gender capacity and knowledge, and to identify opportunities for strengthening gender-related programming both at design and during implementation. This recommendation includes the strengthening of SCN's gender work across internal roles and functions based on existing capacity and capacity gaps.

PARTNERSHIPS

13. **Strengthen Gender-related Partnerships.** Recognising there are contextual differences across COs, the next phase of the Framework could expand and strengthen gender-related partnerships with relevant local and regional partners. These activities could be more strongly represented in the programme planning and monitoring. These partnerships would support learning from each other and sharing resources, where possible. This could include partners reviewing and supporting the CO gender work, where relevant.
14. **Partner Capacity Building.** Support the capacity building of smaller and newer partners in the areas of gender and inclusion. Part of the partner budget could be specified for concrete partner capacity building actions that are closely monitored and evaluated.

M&E AND LEARNING

15. **Programme Data Use and Sharing.** While much interesting programme data has been generated, there is an opportunity for more collation and sharing and utilisation of this data to enhance learning within and across the countries. A common review theme in the CO KIIs was the need for more consistent and formalised sharing of lessons, good practices, successes, challenges, etc. For example, develop a database of examples of adaptations resulting from sex (and other) disaggregation that can be shared across countries. These examples could be shared regularly in collated reports and linked webinar presentations.
16. **Qualitative Data.** SCN to ensure that COs develop and utilise qualitative M&E approaches and indicators to enhance gender-related data collection. This could include the consistent collection of, for example, case studies, most significant change, or stories of change.

CHILD PARTICIPATION

17. **Gender Issues in Child Participatory Approaches.** Expand opportunities across COs for more intentional and focused gender-related engagement with children through child participation activities and structures.

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Gender equality is a priority for Save the Children International (SCI) and Save the Children Norway (SCN), articulated in the Gender Equality Policy, the SCN Gender Equality Action Plan, SCI and SCN strategies, the Gender Equality Marker, and several supporting documents. In addition, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) requires all aid recipients to work and report on gender equality. Further to this, the Norwegian government has included Gender Equality as one of their top six priorities for Norwegian development aid, implying that this aspect will become even more pertinent in the future.

In 2016 and 2017, SCN commissioned two gender reviews of its international programs.¹ According to the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the present review, “The reviews concluded that only 20% qualified as gender sensitive.” Since 2017, SCN has adopted a gender equality policy, developed a gender equality action plan, and made mandatory the use of a scorecard, the gender equality marker (GEM), on all new proposals. Equally, all new proposals must be underpinned by a gender analysis. As of 2018, all SCN proposals must be gender sensitive at a minimum, and by 2030, all must address the root causes of gender inequality. SCN is continuously working to increase organisational knowledge and capacity through cooperation with partners. Internal teams have been established in SC, which work systematically to keep Gender Equality and Inclusion on the agenda. To increase capacity locally, country offices (COs) have been encouraged and supported to establish Gender and Inclusion positions and facilitate learning between them.²

NORAD PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

SCN’s Norad programme “Leaving No Child Behind” within the 2019-2023 framework agreement aims to secure children’s right to education and protection, focusing on gender equality and inclusion. To achieve this, Save the Children and partners have designed an intervention that addresses three key issues affecting the rights of girls and boys (1) children learn and are safe, (2) children are protected, and (3) children’s rights are implemented.

The Norad programme is implemented in 12 countries, including Colombia, Guatemala, Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda. It has also been implemented in four countries where Norad support has been phased out during the agreement period, including Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe. Save the Children Norway has set out to mainstream gender equality throughout all interventions and implement gender transformative programmes in five countries. These targeted programmes focus on reducing teenage pregnancies and child marriages in Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Niger, and Nepal.

The programme proposal emphasizes the prioritisation placed on gender equality and inclusion of children with disabilities (CWD), given SCN’s “commitment to reaching the most deprived and marginalised children. Therefore, in the coming programme period, SCN aims for its programming and advocacy to be inclusive of *all* children and to address discrimination and barriers faced by boys and girls in their communities.”³

¹ Osman, S. 2016: Gender Analysis of Save the Children Norway’s Education Program; Cano Vinas, M. 2017: Gender Review of Save the Children’s Programs within Child Rights Governance, Child Protection and Health and Nutrition.

² SCN. Terms of Reference. Review of Save the Children Norway’s Gender Equality work. 2022.

³ SCN. Leaving No Child Behind. Framework Agreement Application to Norad 2019-2023. Norad Framework Proposal, Updated. p.28.

GENDER REVIEW OVERVIEW

Gender equality is a cross-cutting issue within SCN's programmes, as opposed to a stand-alone thematic area. Therefore, monitoring data and mid-term review data only provide limited or fragmented information on progress, achievements, challenges, and lessons learned. This review is timely for two key reasons. First, SCN has not undertaken a gender review of its international portfolio since 2016 and 2017/2018. Second, as the Norad programme is approaching the end of its cycle and a new proposal will soon be developed, assessing results, progress, challenges, and lessons learned is essential.

Purpose. This gender review assesses SCN's gender equality work within the Norad programme. The review also addresses how SCN's COs are progressing with gender equality in programming and beyond. Learnings and recommendations from this gender review will be used to strengthen the gender equality aspects of SCN's work.

Specifically, the purpose of the review is to:

1. Provide information on how COs are progressing with gender equality within and beyond the Norad Framework Agreement
2. Identify needs and ways to strengthen gender equality programming in the COs.⁴

The review aims to enhance internal learning to strengthen the integration of gender equality into SCN's programming, including targeted and mainstreaming efforts. The review process itself was also designed to generate reflection, learning, and new ideas among relevant staff in SCN and COs.

Audience. The primary audience for this review is SCN. The review report will be used by SCN and COs to extract learnings and recommendations to build on for designing a high-quality gender-responsive proposal for the new Norad agreement. Moreover, the review will likely be of interest to SCI, notably the Gender Equality Technical Working Group and other SC members and COs. Documentation of SCN's gender equality work may also interest Norad. Finally, the review aims to provide a sound basis for further technical discussions with Norad and other Norwegian NGOs.

Scope. The review covers SCN's framework agreement with Norad. Within the agreement, all three key issues (children learn and are safe, children are protected against violence and abuse, and children's rights are implemented) are covered to obtain a representative picture of the level of gender mainstreaming. All 12 countries of Colombia, Guatemala, Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda have been included within the scope of this review. However, the four phase-out countries (Cambodia, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Zimbabwe) have not been included. The review team also engaged with key stakeholders in the Programme Quality department and the International Programme department within SCN.

During the initial internal planning of the gender review within SCN, there was some discussion regarding the inclusion within its scope of both the Norad programme and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) agreement. The latter is SCN's main home donor for its humanitarian work, which is necessarily organised and implemented differently than the Norad programme, in which education is the main technical component of the agreement, with child protection, health and nutrition, and child rights governance also featuring. However, the decision was taken within SCN and agreed by the review team to focus solely on the Norad programme. This decision was taken to ensure a feasible, large, and diverse scope that would allow for a thorough, in-depth, and useful review of the Norad programme. Further, a new Norad framework will be developed during 2023 for implementation starting in 2024, meaning that a gender review of the Norad programme at this point is particularly timely. By contrast, the MFA programme was recently extended, meaning that a new humanitarian proposal will not be required in the coming year.

⁴ Save the Children Norway. Oct 2022. Terms of Reference. Review of Save The Children Norway's Gender Equality Work.

APPROACH & METHODOLOGY



APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

The evaluation was conducted by a team consisting of Dr Stephen Van Houten, PhD (Team Lead, Canada), Dr Sarah Pugh, PhD (Research and Evaluation Consultant, Canada), Dr Jasmin Lilian Diab, PhD (Research and Evaluation Consultant, Lebanon), Dr Mari Dumbaugh, PhD (Research and Evaluation Consultant, USA), and Ms Vanessa Di Cecco, MPH (Research and Evaluation Consultant, Argentina). This team covered the conceptual and four language requirements of the review, namely, English, Arabic, French, and Spanish.

This review was designed to be participatory in nature, ensuring the engagement of various stakeholders both in SCN as well as the relevant CO. The review aimed to facilitate reflection, understanding, and learning among staff. Through the process, the review also aimed to provide an opportunity for respondents to consider how to ensure the integration of gender into future programming.

As per the ToR, two main objectives guide this review, which are to (1) assess and document to what extent the Norad programme is gender sensitive/gender transformative and (2) assess how COs work on gender issues and identify capacities and needs. Good practices have been highlighted under both objectives, with specific recommendations made for each objective.

METHODS

Following this approach, mixed methods were used in the data collection and analysis. These methods were participatory, inclusive, and target group sensitive. These methods ensured that the findings have been derived from the collective contribution of a wide range of individuals, and that data are triangulated and validated. Primarily, these methods included a desk study, GEM scoring, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and a validation meeting. Following the ToR, the data was collected in two phases:

1. **Phase 1 (Objective 1).** The review began with a desk study using the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) to score relevant documents (project proposals, annual reports, annual plans, mid-term reviews, etc.). This allowed for the assessment of the first objective (to determine whether the Norad programme is gender sensitive/gender transformative). The GEM scores were also compared with those submitted by the COs during the proposal stage. This component of the review followed two earlier studies scoring SCN portfolios with the GEM (2016/2017).
2. **Phase 2 (Objective 2).** The second phase entailed KIIs, and FGDs (online with Save the Children Norway, SCI, and CO stakeholders) to assess how the various COs are currently working on gender issues and to identify existing gender capacities within COs, along with outstanding gaps and needs.

DATA COLLECTION

Desk Study. A comprehensive review of specific CO programme documents was undertaken to enable screening using questions from the SCI GEM tool. Documents included proposals, annual plans, budgets, baseline reports, narrative reports, mid-term reviews, and results frameworks.

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions. The consultancy team undertook in-depth KIIs and FGDs with relevant key stakeholders. A set of initial KIIs was conducted remotely with key SCN management and programme staff to gain the necessary understanding of the programme background and key issues. The data from these KIIs was then used to further inform the CO level interviews and discussions. Key informant interviews and FGDs were held with relevant CO staff who have experience implementing and managing gender work, particularly within the Norad programme. The COs were assigned to various review team members, according to language skills, experience, and availability. The

semi-structured interview guide was translated into Spanish, French, and Arabic and sent to participating CO staff ahead of interviews to allow participants time to prepare and consider their responses ahead of the interview, should they wish.

SAMPLING AND STAKEHOLDER LIST

Purposive sampling was used to select participants for the KIIs and FGDs. The review team worked with SCN to identify key personnel in the 12 COs and SCN who would be best positioned to contribute to the review from a range of perspectives. Some additional respondents were added throughout the process, referred by others, and based on the incoming data and analysis.

Child Participation. The remote nature of the review presented challenges to the direct facilitation of child participation within the review process. Challenges included the ethics of undertaking remote discussions with children on sensitive relevant themes at the CO level (e.g., child marriage, early pregnancy, school related GBV) as well as logistical challenges and time constraints. The review team consulted with SCN, including the Senior Adviser for Child Participation, regarding how best to ensure that issues of child participation were integrated into the review, given these limitations. The team decided to draw on interviews and FGD data with CO staff, along with exploring available secondary data sources. During KIIs and FGDs, the review team systematically explored whether the COs had collected any relevant data from consultations with children that could be used to inform this review. Team members posed specific questions related to child participation during data collection, and a separate section on child participation is presented in this report.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

As per the ToR, there were specific questions for Phases 1 and 2. For Phase 1, SC's GEM tool was used to answer the specific questions under the following five areas:

1. Have gender equality considerations been integrated into needs assessments, context, and/or background sections?
2. Have gender equality considerations been integrated across project activities?
3. Have gender equality considerations been integrated into the results frameworks/monitoring and evaluation work?
4. Have technical and financial resources been set aside for gender equality?
5. Does the project address the root causes of gender inequalities?

For Phase 2, specific questions were asked under the headings:

1. CO experience of the GEM tool
2. Sex and other disaggregation in programming
3. Gender capacity and training
4. Child participation
5. COVID-19.

The specific questions were discussed and further refined with SCN during the Inception Phase. The specific Interview Guidelines can be found in Annex 4.

DATA QUALITY CONTROL AND ANALYSIS PLAN

The team leader managed the data quality control and analysis plan. All data was initially analysed by the relevant team member, after which the team leader reviewed and verified all data. Various international humanitarian and development tools were utilised to collect, triangulate, and validate the data. This review ensured data quality through the application of the BOND Evidence Principles (Voice and Inclusion, Appropriateness, Triangulation, Contribution, and Transparency)⁵ and ALNAP's Quality of

⁵ BOND. Evidence Principles. <https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/evidence-principles>

Evidence Criteria (Accuracy, Representativeness, Relevance, Generalisability, Attribution, and Clarity around contexts and methods).⁶

The collected data was uploaded onto a shared team OneDrive folder for Phase 1 and Phase 2 data. The consultants also designed a shared Excel template for the team for the Phase 2 data. Regular online team meetings were held throughout both phases to share experiences, address emerging questions, and ensure a common understanding of the next steps. The team leader and SCN also communicated regularly throughout the review process. The Team Leader presented the draft findings to the SCN team, partners, and key stakeholders in February 2023.

ETHICS

All interviews, FGDs, and other discussions were conducted in accordance with best ethical practices in research, particularly with respect to ensuring participants' safety, anonymity, the protection of data, and risk mitigation. Safeguarding principles and practices were integrated into the review, and a Do No Harm approach was strictly followed. Informed verbal consent was obtained ahead of KIIs and FGDs, outlined in a common template shared by all members of the review team. The reviewers explained that participation is voluntary and that participants could withdraw at any time from the discussion. The purpose of the review was explained ahead of stakeholder interviews.

DATA SUMMARY

There were 65 responses comprised of 20 responses from SCN, SCI, Save the Children Sweden, and Norad, and 45 responses from the COs. Of the 65 responses, 43 (66%) were from female stakeholders and 22 (34%) were from male stakeholders.

LIMITATIONS

One limitation of this review was the large team size, including five team members across four different countries and multiple time zones. While this large team size and geographic distance sometimes presented a challenge for communication and coordination, it was not a significant limitation and was outweighed by the language skills and regional experience of the team members. Another challenge was ensuring the consistency of the data gathered through qualitative interviews by five different team members. Consistency was promoted through the use of clear semi-structured interview guides for SCN management and CO staff, which allowed each team member to collect comparable information while still leaving room for the unique contributions of respondents. Further, the team used shared Excel spreadsheets to carefully manage data and ensure consistency, as discussed above, along with regular feedback and sharing meetings.

Another challenge was the busy schedules of the CO staff, particularly during the weeks leading up to the end of the year when many were preparing for leave. While some staff members were not available due to illness, leave, or busy schedules, this was not a significant limitation given the availability, cooperation, and responsiveness of many different staff members across the COs and within SCN.

⁶ ALNAP. Strengthening the quality of evidence in humanitarian evaluations. May 2017.
www.alnap.org/system/files/content/resource/files/main/alnap-eha-method-note-5-2017.pdf

FINDINGS



FINDINGS

The findings are presented under the two review objectives (1) Assess and document to what extent the Norad programme is gender sensitive/gender transformative (Gender Equality Marker Assessment: Phase 1), and (2) Assess how the COs work on gender issues and identify capacities and needs (Country Office Assessment: Phase 2). The one-page “Country Summaries” are included in Annex 1.

GENDER EQUALITY MARKER ASSESSMENT

This section is comprised of (1) an overview of the GEM tool, (2) country scores, (3) a discussion of the targeted gender transformative programming, (4) a discussion of the limitations of this external GEM analysis, and (5) other GEM-related findings from the qualitative research.

OVERVIEW

Introduction. Save the Children’s GEM is a “tool that provides guidance on and measures - at the design stage - whether or not a project proposal/concept note meets Save the Children’s (SCI’s) essential quality standard to be gender sensitive at minimum, and gender transformative whenever possible.”⁷ The GEM is applied to all concept notes and proposals before submission to donors. SCI aims to implement gender sensitive and transformative programmes to fulfil its vision of a world where every last child attains their equal right to survival, protection, development, and participation. SCI’s GEM tool is an adaptation of the IASC Gender Marker. The tool is available in English, French, and Spanish. The following five sections are scored according to specific questions.

1. Gender equality considerations in needs assessment, context and/or background section
2. Gender equality considerations in project activities
3. Gender equality considerations in the results framework/monitoring and evaluation section
4. Technical and financial resources for gender equality
5. Project sustainability: gender transformative approaches

The resulting score is then categorised as (1) gender unaware, (2) some elements of gender sensitivity, (3) gender sensitive, or (4) gender transformative.

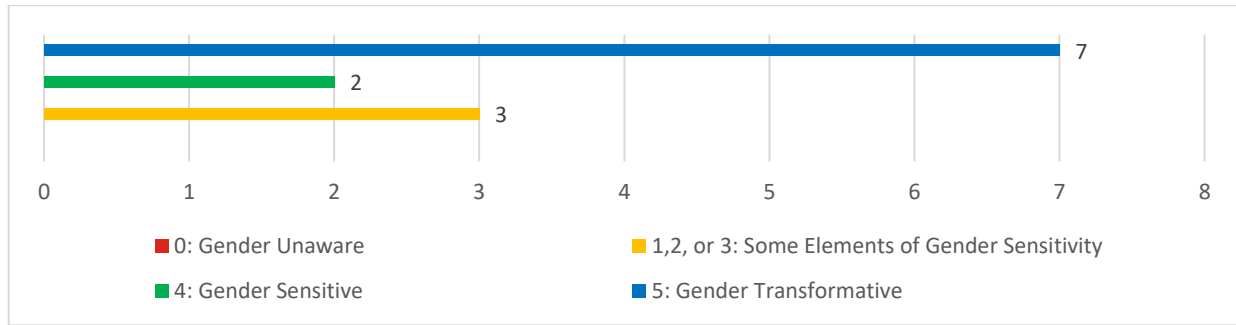
Methodology. This review followed the ToR: “The starting point will be a desk study using the Gender Equality Marker (GEM) to score relevant documents (project proposals, annual reports, annual plans, mid-term reviews, etc.). This will create a basis for assessing the first objective of determining whether the Norad programme is gender sensitive/gender transformative. The GEM scores will also be compared with those submitted by the country offices at the proposal stage.” Following this precise methodology was important to ensure that the data was comparable to the CO self-scoring GEM scores. To allow this comparison, the GEM scoring exercise followed the instructions of the tool and relied on the information available in project documents. Details of the overall GEM, country, and section scores are discussed below. A full discussion of limitations is also presented at the end of this section.

COUNTRY SCORES

Average Score. The consultants scored the Norad programmes in the 12 countries using the GEM tool. The **average score was 4.33** (out of 5) which falls into the **Gender Sensitive** category. There were seven (58%) countries (**Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, and Uganda**) with a score of 5/5 (Gender Transformative), two (**Guatemala and Somalia**) (17%) countries with a score of 4/5 (Gender Sensitive), and three (25%) countries (**Colombia, Palestine, and South Sudan**) with a score of 3/5 (Some Elements of Gender Sensitivity) (Figure 1).

⁷ SCI. 2017. Gender Equality Marker. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/gender-equality-marker/>

Figure 1. Summary of the GEM scores



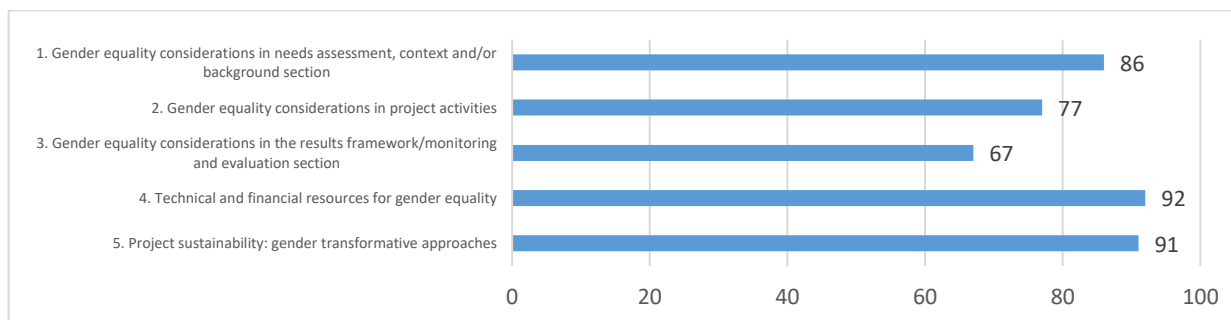
Baseline vs Review Score. There were baseline self-scores for 10 countries (no baseline scores available for Lebanon and Palestine) with an **average of 4.4**. The comparison between the scores shows the same review and baseline scores for 5 (50%) countries (**Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Somalia, and Uganda**) (Table 1). The review scored three (30%) countries (**Colombia, Myanmar, and Niger**) higher and two (20%) countries (**Guatemala and South Sudan**) lower. For various reasons, particularly the level of discretion in the tool and the inability to know the rationale for the scoring of many criteria in the GEM completed by the CO, it is not possible to know the exact reasons for the higher and lower scores (these reasons are discussed below in the Limitations section). However, it is important to note that four countries (**Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, and Uganda**) out of the five that had the same score for the baseline and the external review are the targeted countries for implementing gender transformative programmes, suggesting the consistency and strength of this targeted approach to gender work within the Framework.

Table 1. Comparison of baseline and review scores

	Col	Guat	Leb	Mal	Moz	Myan	Nep	Nig	Pal	Som	S. Sud	Ugan
Review Scores	3 SE	4 GS	5 GT	5 GT	5 GT	5 GT	5 GT	5 GT	3 SE	4 GS	3 SE	5 GT
Self-scores (baseline)	2 SE	5 GT	No Score	5 GT	5 GT	4 GS	5 GT	4 GS	No Score	4 GS	5 GT	5 GT
Difference	+1	-1	N/A	0	0	+1	0	+1	N/A	0	-2	0

Section Scores. When analysed per section, the assessment showed the highest score (92%) for Section 4 (Technical and financial resources) and the lowest score (67%) for Section 3 (Gender equality considerations in the results framework/monitoring and evaluation) (Figure 2).⁸ The two lowest scores in that Section 3 (#3.1 and #3.5) significantly lowered this section’s overall score.

Figure 2. Scores per section (percentage)



⁸ It should be noted that the scores of all 12 COs were used for the first 4 sections, while the scores of the 7 countries that qualified for Section 5 were used for the last section (the other 7 countries not being scored on Section 5 as per the GEM instructions).

Further Section Data. Further analysis is provided across the five sections of the GEM tool.

(1) INTEGRATION OF GENDER EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS INTO NEEDS ASSESSMENTS, CONTEXT, AND BACKGROUND SECTIONS

Figure 3. Scores per section 1

1. GENDER EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS IN NEEDS ASSESSMENT, CONTEXT AND/OR BACKGROUND SECTION														
	QUESTION SUMMARY	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.1	Sex & age disaggregation										9			
1.2	Distinguishes between girls, boys, women & men												11	
1.3	Discriminatory social norms & Gender-based barriers and gaps											10		
1.4	Gender inequalities will impact project objectives												11	

The first sub-section of GEM is designed to help determine whether gender equality considerations have been meaningfully integrated across the needs assessment, or context/background section, in a proposal, concept note, or programme plan. **The GEM scoring process found that overall, COs scored highly in this section.** While most COs included sex and/or age disaggregated data in their Norad proposals, some countries (**Colombia, Guatemala, and Malawi**) did not include or only partially included this data. This may be because the secondary data informing the narratives of some proposal documents is not disaggregated.

(2) INTEGRATION OF GENDER EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

Figure 4. Scores per section 2

2. GENDER EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS IN PROJECT ACTIVITIES														
	QUESTION SUMMARY	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2.1	Sex & age disaggregation												11	
2.2	Identify specific measures to address the gender-based barriers or gaps												11	
2.3	Equitable participation & access								7					
2.4	Build capacity on gender equality for staff and partners											10		
2.5	Gender partners								7					

This sub-section of GEM is designed to help determine whether gender equality considerations have been meaningfully integrated across project activities. The GEM tool directs the user to consult the section in the proposal, concept note, or document that may “be called the program plan, description of intervention, etc.” The review found that the two criteria with the lowest overall scores across the COs were 2.3 (“*Activities are designed to ensure girls, boys, women and men participate equitably, and have equitable access to project services and resources*”), and 2.5 (“*The project aims to partner with at least one organization focusing on gender equality and/or the rights of women and girls*”). Interestingly, all five countries targeted for the implementation of gender transformative programming under the Norad framework (**Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, and Uganda**) scored a point for 2.3, while only two non-targeted countries (**Myanmar and Colombia**) scored a point in this section. For 2.5, three of the seven countries that scored a point were also targeted countries (**Malawi, Mozambique, and Uganda**). A more in-depth discussion of partnerships is included below, in the findings from CO interviews.

(3) INTEGRATION OF GENDER CONSIDERATIONS INTO THE RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND M&E WORK

Figure 5. Scores per section 3

3. GENDER EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE RESULTS FRAMEWORK/MONITORING & EVALUATION SECTION														
	QUESTION SUMMARY	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3.1	Gender-safe spaces		2											
3.2	Close gender gaps										9			
3.3	Ongoing gender analysis									8				
3.4	Disaggregated quantitative indicators													12
3.5	Qualitative indicators						5							
3.6	Results statements are included in the M&E plan													12

This sub-section of GEM is designed to determine whether gender equality considerations have been meaningfully integrated across the project outcomes, logical frameworks, indicators, or M&E/MEAL strategy of a project proposal. In this sub-section, criterion 3.1 (“M&E methodology includes working in gender-safe spaces [e.g., conducting data collection separately with girls, boys, women, and men, and using female enumerators with female stakeholders and male enumerators with male stakeholders]”) was consistently low. As discussed in more detail below, the review team posits that in some cases, this is because a fully developed M&E/MEAL plan or strategy may not yet be available at the time of the GEM scoring during the proposal or design phase, and this level of detail is seldom discernible from project outcomes, log frames or indicators. Therefore, importantly, this low score does not necessarily mean that M&E is not ultimately conducted in a gender sensitive manner. **However, the review also found there was inconsistent understanding regarding how to create gender-safe spaces at the proposal phase of the programme.** A CO respondent, for example, noted that it would be useful to have this issue specified and outlined in the proposal document to assist with the definition and planning of these spaces.

Criterion 3.5 (“The results framework includes qualitative indicator(s) that track changes in knowledge, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours related to gender equality at the outcome level”) also received a low overall score, with only five countries receiving a mark. Of these five, two (**Malawi** and **Uganda**) were targeted countries for gender transformative programming. This result suggests that it may be useful to **further support the COs regarding the integration of qualitative M&E approaches and indicators to enhance gender-related data collection.** This could include the collection of, for example, case studies, most significant change, and stories of change.

(4) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES SET ASIDE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Figure 6. Scores per section 4

4. TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR GENDER EQUALITY										
4.1	Allocates financial resources									12
4.2	Budget line(s) - gender equality technical support								10	
4.3	Budget line(s) - equality training									11

This sub-section of GEM is designed to help determine whether the necessary technical and financial resources have been included to fully implement the gender equality related components of a project proposal. Overall, **this was a high-scoring sub-section.** All Norad Framework Agreement COs allocated financial resources in the budget to fulfil the projects’ gender-related activities (although of course, the scope of those activities varied).

(5) PROJECT ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF GENDER INEQUALITIES

Figure 7. Scores per section 5

5. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY: GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES (Score out of 7)										
5.1	Discriminatory social norms									7
5.2	Advocacy								6	
5.3	Enabling environment								6	

This sub-section of GEM is designed to help determine whether the proposal/plan addresses the root causes of gender inequality, supporting positive, transformative, and sustainable change for girls, boys, women, and men, including those who are most deprived and marginalized. In accordance with the GEM instructions, this sub-section applied only to those countries that scored 1 point in each of the previous four sub-sections. As noted above, the seven countries that met the criteria for being “gender transformative”, according to the GEM exercise, were **Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, and Uganda.** Interestingly, five of these countries (**Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, and Uganda**) are the five gender targeted countries.

The following observations from the Review Team’s GEM scoring exercise highlight some possible opportunities for COs to strengthen proposals and to better reflect gender sensitive or transformative approaches in programming.

To inform the context/background section, look for secondary sources that include sex disaggregated data.

Include enhanced intersectional analysis.

Include a discussion of the discriminatory gender norms that prevail in the programme context and how these will be addressed in the programme.

Specify quotas for girls’ and boys’ participation in activities in the proposal or design phase, where relevant.

When describing gender-related partnerships, clearly describe the partner, their expertise, and how they will add value to the gender equality focus of the programme.

Describe in the proposal, where possible, how M&E will be gender sensitive (including qualitative indicators and other qualitative approaches to data collection).

Include a clear discussion of gender-focused capacity building plans for staff, partners, and other stakeholders, as relevant.

Describe how the programme will engage with policy, legislation and/or advocacy towards systemic change.

Outline how the CO’s guiding gender strategy will be applied within the programme.

Include a discussion of the programme’s approach to adaptive management, based on the disaggregated data (by sex or other parameters) collected during implementation.

Where possible, make clear in the proposal the dedicated gender expertise (exact title and LOE) available for the programme, and how the programme’s human resources match the needs of the proposed gender-related programming.

Clearly describe whether and how the programme is informed by the gender analysis.

Ensure that gender is clearly integrated across all pillars of programming – even when gender-related issues may be the core focus of one pillar.

TARGETED GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMES

Understanding whether programmes (or aspects of programmes) at the country level are truly gender transformative in their impact would require the availability and analysis of in-depth and robust evaluation and impact data that are beyond the scope of this review. However, the GEM score exercise, supplemented by interviews with staff at SCN, SCI, and the CO level and the review of programme documents, suggests that **significant progress has been made in integrating gender sensitive or in some cases potentially gender transformative approaches into the Norad framework.**

Progress is also suggested through a comparison of findings from the previous Gender Reviews of 2016 and 2017/2018. In the 2016 Review, of the 26 proposals reviewed, 2 (8%) were found to be gender transformative, three (12%) were gender sensitive, 19 (73%) incorporated some elements of gender sensitivity, and two (8%) were gender unaware.⁹ In the 2017/2018 Review, of the 30 proposals reviewed, two (7%) were gender transformative, two (7%) were gender sensitive, nine (30%) incorporated some elements of gender sensitivity, and 17 (56%) were gender unaware.¹⁰ By contrast, in this review of the 12 proposals within the current Norad Framework Agreement, 7 (58%) met the GEM criteria to be considered gender transformative, two (17%) were gender sensitive, and three (25%) incorporated some elements of gender sensitivity. None were found to be gender unaware.

As noted above, of the seven proposals with a “gender transformative” score in GEM, five of them are programmes that were targeted during design. In **Malawi**, a strong focus on the reduction of child marriage and teenage pregnancies has constituted the focus of the Child Protection component of the Norad programme. The programme has been designed to address social, cultural, and gender norms to ensure a sustainable reduction in child marriage and teen pregnancies. In the proposal documents, the gender transformative approach is most clear within the Child Protection pillar, but the issues of teenage

⁹ SCN. 2016. Gender Analysis of Save the Children Norway’s Education Programme (author: Osman, S.)

¹⁰ SCN. 2018. Gender Review of Save the Children’s Programs within Child Rights Governance, Child Protection and Health and Nutrition (author: Cano Vinas, M.)

pregnancy and child marriage are closely linked to the other pillars (Children learn and are safe, and child rights). Among many other activities, the programme trained Child Protection Workers and others in Child Protection and SGBV case management to work towards improved identification and referral of child marriage and teenage pregnancy cases. In the programme documents and interviews, the role of mobile courts was highlighted as an important mechanism to help survivors of child marriage and other abuses access justice in hard-to-reach areas, simultaneously helping to raise awareness regarding the illegality of child marriage in communities.



The Norad programme in **Mozambique** also entails a strong focus on addressing child marriage and teenage pregnancies through transforming social, cultural, and gender norms. The programme aims to increase access to quality education for girls and boys at risk of and affected by GBV, including child marriage and teenage pregnancies. The programme also attempts to track attitudinal changes in its M&E (e.g., result indicator 2.1: a % of community members who have demonstrated a change in attitude towards early marriage). Like Malawi, this gender-focused (and potentially transformative) work is clearest within the Child Protection pillar, although these issues underpin safe learning and child rights objectives as well.

In **Nepal**, the programme (again, particularly under the Child Protection pillar) has also been designed to transform community behaviour, social, cultural, and gender norms to reduce early marriage and teenage pregnancies. The programme aims to increase access to quality education for girls and boys at risk of and/or affected by gender-based violence including child marriage and teenage pregnancies by intensifying their return to and continuation of school. The programme is also working at a systemic level, for example, by attempting to improve the implementation of the law against child marriage. The CO respondents in **Nepal** emphasized the increasingly intersectional nature of its approach. The Norad programme in **Niger** was also designed to address the social, cultural and gender norms that contribute to child marriage as well as teenage pregnancy, making clear linkages between these issues and access to safe and quality education, particularly for girls. The programme was also designed to build the capacities of local CSOs to advocate at the local and national levels for decision makers to enhance efforts to address child marriage, and for child rights-based legislation and policies that prevent child marriage.

Similarly, in **Uganda**, the Norad programme targets child marriage and teenage pregnancy as important barriers to quality education access, noting the need to address negative cultural practices that hinder

the well-being and protection of children. The programme identifies the need to engage with communities in sensitive ways to uncover and address harmful beliefs and norms through, for example, the holding of community dialogues facilitated by trained volunteers, awareness raising, mother support groups, coordination with duty bearers and parents, mentorship sessions for girls and boys in safe spaces, and capacity building for teachers. This focus also falls under the Child Protection pillar, but again, with implications for safe learning and child rights.

These different targeted programmes all have in common the identification of child marriage and teenage pregnancy as key issues differentially affecting girls and boys, which negatively impact children's rights to access safe, quality education. These programmes also all attempt to effect **long-term and sustainable change in communities** through a range of strategies such as addressing harmful social norms and attitudes, engaging with key decision-makers, engaging with legal reform and policy development (or implementation), promoting access to justice, and partnering with or building the capacity of local CSOs to engage with issues (such as child marriage and teenage pregnancy) more effectively.

The two other countries that achieved a gender transformative score on the GEM exercise were **Lebanon** and **Myanmar**. In both countries, the project documents presented programmes that met the GEM criteria. However, at present, both programmes are operating in deeply constrained country contexts, facing multifaceted and overlapping social, economic, and political crises. As will be discussed in more detail below, staff in both countries highlighted that while achieving the GEM score on paper was possible, the real challenges were to be found in how to truly implement gender transformative programmes in these very difficult contexts.

LIMITATIONS: APPLYING THE GEM TOOL IN AN EXTERNAL REVIEW

This section presents the limitations identified by the review team regarding the GEM tool and the approach of utilising the tool for an external gender review. An in-depth review of the GEM tool itself is out of the scope of this consultancy. However, the team felt it was important to include this discussion to address limitations to the process and the findings. The discussion first explores challenges the team identified in the GEM tool itself, as well as in the application of the GEM tool by the COs in their own self-assessments. This is followed by the review team's findings related to the external application of the tool, particularly in terms of the tool's subjectivity and the limited level of detail available in the programme documents.

High level of interpretation and subjectivity in the tool

Multiple questions or considerations within one criterion. The review team noted that in the GEM tool itself, **many of the criteria leave significant room for varied interpretations and subjectivity.** One of the key challenges highlighted by the team is that the individual GEM criteria often ask more than one question or include more than one criterion to address with the awarding of a single checkmark. If one aspect of the criteria is met, but not the other or others, this can easily be masked within a GEM score.

To illustrate, in Section 1, one of the criteria explores whether data is disaggregated by sex and age, but it is unclear whether a checkmark should be awarded if the proposal illustrates disaggregation by one but not the other. Another criterion in Section 1 includes the following: *"When describing the specific needs of girls, boys, women and men, the proposal highlights additional stakeholder information including differences based on ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, ability, health status, location (rural/urban), etc."* In this example, it is also unclear at what point a checkmark should be awarded. Does the proposal, for example, have to address all of those elements, some of them, or even just one of them, to warrant a checkmark? Clarification from SCI is needed on this issue which should be communicated to the COs.

There is **significant discretion in these and other questions, which means that the GEM scores for a CO are likely to differ depending on the interpretations and positionality** of the individual undertaking the scoring. This degree of discretion and interpretation also complicates any comparison of GEM scores across COs, as well as within a particular CO over time. In the case of internal self-assessments, the GEM tool is often completed by someone closely connected to the development of the proposal. Given this, it is likely that the discretionary nature of the tool contributes to some degree of bias towards a higher

score, particularly given the connection to SCI Program Key Performance Indicator (KPI) 15, which looks into the percentage of “new proposals submitted by a Country Office that are gender sensitive or transformative, using the Gender Equality Marker.”¹¹ This observation of potential bias was also raised by some key SCN and CO informants during discussions about GEM (as outlined above). One way to address this challenge is for teams to do a joint review.

Varied or inaccurate understandings of GEM criteria at the CO level. During the review team’s own GEM scoring process, team members consulted CO’s self-assessed completed GEM score documents. This consultation was done to better understand not only how (and why) COs have self-scored, but also to understand where there may be challenges or difficulties with the tool itself. The team found numerous examples in which the **comments provided by the CO to support the awarding of a checkmark did not match the review team members’ understanding of the specific criterion being addressed or did not contain enough information to demonstrate that the criterion was understood.**

Figure 8, for example, highlights an example in which the comment is not reflective of the actual criterion, which specifically relates to the strategic setting of targets, while the comment is much broader in scope, and does not respond to the issue of targets.

Figure 8. Examples from Section 3 of a completed country office GEM tool

CHECKLIST [CRITERION]	CHECKBOX	COMMENTS
Targets have been strategically set to close gender gaps (e.g., disproportionate differences between sexes).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The project proposal intends to close the gender gaps to equitable and inclusive education.

Figure 9 below provides another example of a comment that does not closely match the criterion being explored in the GEM tool. In this instance, the comment is perhaps more closely related to sustainability considerations, rather than a description of how the project explicitly identifies and addresses discriminatory social norms and institutions. Importantly, a mismatch between the comment and the criterion does not mean the project does not meet the criterion (which may or may not be the case), but rather, it means that the criterion has likely not been well understood by the individual or team completing the GEM.

Figure 9. Examples from Section 5 of a completed country office GEM tool

CHECKLIST [CRITERION]	CHECKBOX	COMMENTS
The project explicitly identifies and addresses discriminatory social norms and institutions which reinforce gender inequalities (such as persisting gender stereotypes that prevent women, girls, men and/or boys from fully realizing their rights and their full potential). This is clearly reflected throughout project activities and outcomes.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The project seeks to build the capacity of CSOs and government organisations to take over the key aspects of service delivery, advocacy, and capacity-building in which one of the focus areas would be gender equality.

Figure 10 below provides another example of how criteria may be interpreted differently by those completing the GEM tool. In Country A, the CO awards itself a checkmark, believing it meets the criterion by monitoring results and adjusting them if needed to address any gender inequalities that may be observed. In Country B, the CO does not award itself a checkmark, seeing the gender analysis as a discrete piece of work accompanied by specific measures, steps, and tools.

Figure 10. An example of a criterion from Section 3 in two completed country office GEM tools

CHECKLIST [CRITERION]	CHECKBOX	COMMENTS
The MEAL framework explicitly includes ongoing gender analysis, enabling the identification of gender gaps (e.g., key differences between	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	COUNTRY A: Interventions will be adjusted based on monitoring results for gender inequalities

¹¹ SCI. Implementing Program Key Performance Indicators. KPI15: Gender Equality Marker. Learning Document. August 2018.

females and males) and information to appropriately address them.		
CHECKLIST [CRITERION]	CHECKBOX	COMMENTS
The MEAL framework explicitly includes ongoing gender analysis, enabling the identification of gender gaps (e.g., key differences between females and males) and information to appropriately address them.	No Check	COUNTRY B: There is a need to deliberately come up with clear measures and steps on how and when the gender analysis will be done, tools must also be in place for this important activity.

The challenge of **understanding how COs interpret specific GEM criteria is compounded when the comments included in the GEM tool by the CO do not include information that verifies the criterion or provides a source of evidence** that the criterion has been met, or when no comments are provided at all. In such cases, there are no means of understanding whether or how a CO has interpreted the criterion, and what the basis has been for the CO’s decision to self-award a checkmark for that criterion, or not.

Finally, the review team noted that gender diverse identities and categories beyond a binary framework were not included in any criteria in the tool. This exclusion significantly limits the understanding of gender transformative work to only include two gender identities. Given the varied social, legal, religious, and cultural contexts of the COs, the addition of SOGIE or LGBTQI+ criteria or considerations into the GEM tool could present challenges for some COs, particularly given the link to SCI’s KPIs. One option, as a minimal threshold or entry point, could be a criterion that invites countries to consider how they will ensure that non-binary individuals are not excluded from programming.

Challenges in applying the GEM tool externally

In the review team’s own application of the GEM tool to an external review of Norad programming across 12 COs, three key challenges were raised (1) **the subjectivity of the tool**, (2) **insufficient detail within proposal documents to enable the team to follow the actual GEM tool instructions**, and (3) **some unavailable details across all documents for specific COs**.

As noted above, team members found that the decision to award a checkmark for some of the criteria was very subjective at times, given the multiple questions posed within one criterion. The team also found that in following the instructions of the GEM tool, **some of the information that was required to answer the GEM tool questions was not included in sufficient detail in the proposal**, as per the GEM instructions, or in the other available documents. One example of this is the first GEM criterion in Sections 1 and 2, which is *“All data is disaggregated by sex and age (whenever such data is available).”* While the individual or team preparing a project or programme proposal will know if “such data was available,” an external reviewer is only able to assess whether the disaggregated data is actually in the proposal.

Similarly, another GEM criterion in Section 3 explores whether targets have been strategically set to close gender gaps. While the CO staff and others involved in the programme design may be able to articulate the strategic rationale behind the setting of a specific target, an external reviewer can only view the targets as presented in the log frame. Generally, the team assumed that all targets have been strategically set within a log frame, so if the indicator was already related to closing a gender gap, a checkmark was awarded for that criterion.

Another example is the first criterion in Section 3, which aims to assess whether the M&E methodology includes working in **“gender-safe spaces”** (also the significantly lowest score, as discussed above). This degree of detail regarding M&E practices was not available in the programme documents. In some cases, team members could extrapolate from examples of strong gender sensitive M&E data in the reports or other available documents, but this remains a problematic criterion for an external review based on programme documents. The team found that the details of activities were also not generally included in the proposals. While log frames and programme budgets contain descriptions of activities, they generally also do not contain the level of detail required to respond thoroughly to the GEM tool criteria.

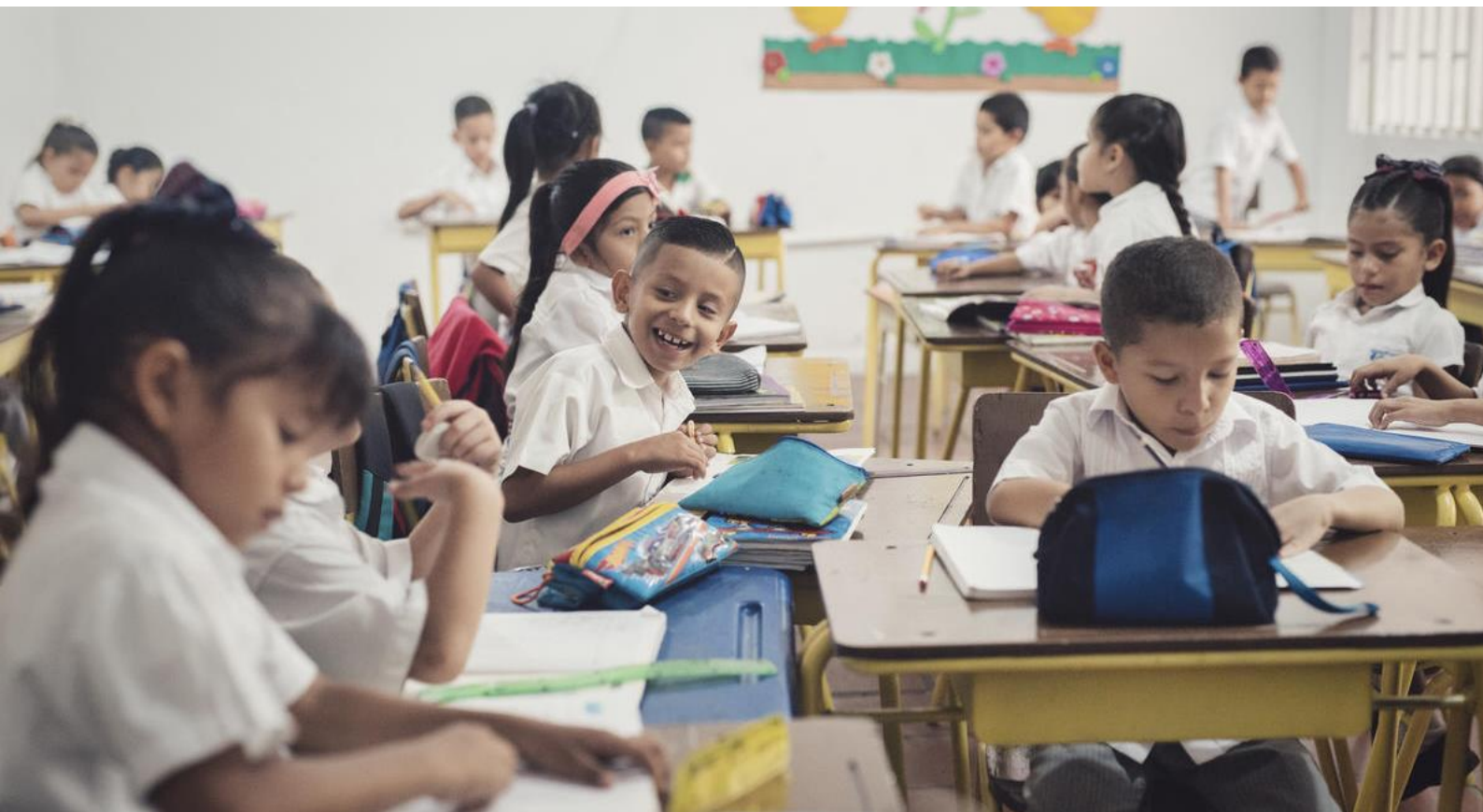
In collective reflections regarding the application of the GEM tool for the external review of gender with the Norad programme, the review team noted that for some countries, **programming related to gender**

equality was noticeably stronger within one of the three outcomes than others. For example, in Malawi and Uganda (both of which ranked as “Gender Transformative” in the external GEM scoring exercise), much of the programmes’ focus on gender falls within the Outcome “Children are Protected,” while it was less obvious within “Children Learn and are Safe” and “Children’s Rights.” Further exploration of this issue would be valuable to better understand the extent of the differences and the reasons behind this. This is not to imply that the other outcomes are not gender sensitive, however, it raises an important question about the extent to which the strength of a gender focus in one area of programming can impact a GEM score and result in a “Gender Transformative” ranking for the whole programme.

The review team also highlighted that **some GEM criteria can yield a checkmark at a minimal threshold, which may yield a stronger score than may actually be warranted.** In Section 4, for example, a criterion explores whether there is a budget line for technical expertise or support regarding gender, but theoretically, the same checkmark could be ascribed equally whether there was a budget line for a gender advisor at a 10% Level of Effort (LOE) shared across programmes, or a full-time dedicated gender advisor for the Norad programme. In another example, if a CO proposal or other document mentions “gender training,” a checkmark may be awarded in the GEM tool, even in the absence of further information about training content, suppliers, purpose, frequency, and impact.

Another reflection raised by review team members through the external GEM scoring exercise was that in different COs, the **approaches and activities addressing gender equality still predominantly appear to focus on girls or women**, while the damaging effects of gender-based norms on boys, men, or non-binary individuals appear to be less discussed or highlighted.

For the reasons outlined above, the review team found that while the GEM tool may be useful at the proposal and design phase to help guide COs in the integration of gender considerations into their projects or programmes (as discussed below), there are **limitations in the use of this tool for the external assessment of gender programming beyond the design phase.**



OTHER GEM FINDINGS

Importantly, interviews with key SCN and SCI stakeholders highlighted the **substantial progress that has been made in recent years within SCI towards ensuring that gender equality considerations are integrated into programming across country offices**. Staff respondents acknowledge that the GEM tool (like other versions of gender equality markers that are used in humanitarian and development practice) has both strengths and challenges, but that it has nonetheless played an important role in contributing to the new conversations and momentum in SCN and country offices, shifting programmes and implementation towards more gender sensitive or even gender transformative approaches. As one SCN stakeholder shared, *“For SCI and SCN, there is a much broader understanding that gender is important.”* Another SCN stakeholder noted that their team had noticeably internalised the work related to gender, and had become well-acquainted with the tools, what to look for in proposals, and how to identify programmatic aspects that are gender-related: *“Many of us have stepped up our knowledge and capacity around gender.”* Discussions in this review have highlighted the value placed on learning and adaptation within SCN and SCI more broadly, with evidence of ongoing discussions and plans to continue strengthening the GEM tool specifically, and to continue building and refining SCI’s global approaches to inclusion and equality.

When the GEM tool is used. Across most COs, staff respondents said that the **GEM tool was used primarily (and most often exclusively) at the design or proposal stage** of the programme. An exception was **Colombia**, in which staff reported using the tool at all stages of the programme to monitor progress and challenges across the programme cycle. Other countries, such as **Myanmar, Niger, and South Sudan** also suggested that they sometimes used the tool after the submission of the proposal to help guide the implementation of activities. This is an interesting area that could be explored further in the future. It was commonly highlighted by staff that the tool was compulsory at the proposal stage, being linked to the KPIs of SCI.

Staff members’ perceptions of the value of the GEM tool. The review revealed a wide range of opinions regarding the value of the GEM tool among staff at the CO level and other SC respondents. These perspectives can be broadly summarised in three groups.

In the first group are those respondents who were very positive about the GEM tool, believing it to be useful and practical at the design and proposal stage to help staff consider and strengthen how projects or programmes consider and respond to gender-related issues. The GEM tool allowed for an opportunity to reflect on the project early on and adjust the design and inception phases as needed. Some suggested that the tool helped them consider whether a project’s design was working towards sustainable change with relation to gender, for example, through lasting policy-level change. Others suggested it assisted them to identify how and where the team could adjust their programming to address disparities. One staff member shared, *“If you give it [the GEM tool] time, it is very useful. It only depends on how faithful you are to it. For us, we take it as important because it helps us to see how our proposals address needs and ensure gender transformation. We want to look at it.”* Another staff member shared that the tool provides an opportunity *“to address some of the hidden practices. It gives us a reflection. [...] It helps us ask provocative questions.”*

In the second group are those who view the GEM tool largely as a formality and a “box-ticking” exercise. Some staff argued that the usefulness of the tool was very limited and that the GEM tool was *“not very effective beyond being a checklist.”* Some spoke about the tool as mainly a compulsory checklist that needed to be ticked off and submitted as one requirement of many at the proposal phase. One respondent shared, *“It is a ticking boxes exercise, if I’m being honest.”* Another shared, *“There is not much there to work with. It is more of ensuring we ask all important gender related questions before we begin. Not too much beyond that.”* Some respondents also voiced concern that there was a potential bias within COs when scoring their own proposals, particularly when this process was tied to SCI KPIs. For the next Framework, it might be useful to consider some kind of cross checking of the GEM scores. For example, if it were realistic in terms of time, the Special Adviser Gender Equality and SRHR (SCN) could (1) check

the scores and provide feedback to the COs, or (2) develop and manage a peer scoring system to promote learning across COs.

Finally, in the middle ground, a third group consists of those who see the actual GEM score as a formality, but, nonetheless, find some value in the tool itself to help frame reflection and thinking around project or programme design. One stakeholder shared, for example, *“It’s useful and important to use, not so much for ticking boxes but as a reminder, as an expectation and requirement in program design – a reminder that all of our programs should be at least gender sensitive if not gender transformative.”*

Some COs also use either different GEM tools or adaptations of the SCI GEM tool (divorced from the scoring or checklist) in their planning and programme design work. The Colombia CO team reported that they more regularly use the IASC Gender with Age Marker (GAM), rather than the SCI GEM tool (which is applied in the Award Management process). The team noted that the tools are similar, but their other funders require the IASC version, which they have been using for a long time. Another stakeholder argued that in the Malawi CO, *“it happens very fast that it [the GEM tool] just becomes checked, so it is probably not a tool in that sense. It is probably not still alive in the sense of being useful at all after the proposal stage.”* The team has adapted the GEM document into a more specific and contextualised “Discussion” tool that poses specific questions to the team during the planning and design concerning each of the GEM tool’s criteria (Figure 11). A stakeholder shared that this has helped to reframe the tool *“not as a checklist, which made it seem like bureaucracy,”* into a more useful discussion tool during design, at the time of the first review. Moving forward, across all COs, there are opportunities for management to play an important role in ensuring that the GEM is used as intended and integrated into relevant programme discussions.

Figure 11. Example of a GEM based discussion tool developed by the Malawi CO (screenshot)

Gender Equality Marker proposal discussion tool

Checklist	Questions at proposal stage	Notes
<i>Needs assessment, context, background sections</i>		
All data is disaggregated by sex and age (whenever such data is available).	Which sources reliably provide disaggregated data? Are there any gaps we can help to fill in this project’s monitoring?	
The section distinguishes between girls, boys, women and men, rather than only/mostly referring to adults, children, adolescents, families or communities. When describing the specific needs of girls, boys, women and men, the proposal highlights additional stakeholder information including differences based on ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, ability, health status, location (rural/urban), etc.	<p>What are the gaps in our knowledge/ existing data on the specific needs of <u>g,b,w,m</u>? What data do we have (and is it of high quality, recent, child centred)?</p> <p>Do <u>G,B,W,M</u> have equal access to and control over resources, services, information and networks relevant to achieving our outcome(s)?</p> <p>What do we know about the specific experience of girls and boys:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - with <u>disabilities</u>; - from different <u>tribes</u>; - from different <u>districts</u>; - different socio-economic statuses: 	

Challenges. In discussions with the CO teams and other SC stakeholders, three key challenges with the GEM tool were identified, including (1) a **perceived lack of contextualisation in the tool**, (2) **the one-time use of the tool at the proposal/design stage only**, and (3) **challenges in implementing gender-sensitive or transformative programmes, despite a strong GEM score**.

Lack of contextualisation. One of the main critiques put forward by CO staff regarding the GEM tool and the scoring process was that the **tool is difficult to apply, containing some criteria that are not seen to be realistic or feasible in certain CO contexts**. In Palestine, for example, stakeholders suggested that staff struggled with the top-down approach and the contextualisation of the tool as it relates to specific local and national social, cultural, political, and economic considerations. One stakeholder shared, *“You know how specific the Palestinian case is. The GEM tool is overambitious and very blind at times. We think that is why not too many people from our staff engage with it.”* Staff members reported that they have developed their own Gender Checklist at the CO level that they utilise at the planning and design phase,

and which some find more relevant to the context than the GEM tool, *“especially regarding what is feasible in the volatile Palestinian environment when it comes to security concerns, instability, lack of access, emerging realities, and unforeseen shocks.”*

In **Lebanon**, respondents also suggested that the GEM tool and objective were *“too broad”* and disconnected from local realities. Some staff felt that the GEM score itself was in many instances misleading, and not necessarily reflective of the true situation (as described in the following quote). One staff member shared, *“We know that there are many different areas where we need to improve. We are working on this. We are also not unrealistic or exaggerating in our reporting on gender. We know where our gaps are. The GEM score does not really reflect these realities. It is very limited in its ability to point out real areas of solid work, and real areas to improve. It is not a reliable tool in that sense. The score is also quite a weird exercise. How could a tool like this depict so many diverse gender realities from so many countries effectively? This is impossible.”*

In **Somalia**, some respondents also felt that the GEM tool was impractical for the context and unable to effectively inform programming or assist at the implementation phase. In **Nepal**, the team provided a specific example from the GEM tool that was irrelevant to their context, in the question “Do you have partnerships with women-led organisations?” The team noted that the answer for their CO was always necessarily “no”, as existing women-led community-based organisations in Nepal currently do not have the capacity to handle the scale of work required of partner organisations.¹²

One-time use of the tool at the proposal/design stage only. As noted earlier, most COs, with few exceptions, reported **using the GEM tool only at the proposal and design phase of a project or programme**. Staff in **Somalia**, for example, noted that once the proposal is submitted, they do not interact with, or use the tool. Similarly, in **Lebanon**, respondents shared that the tool was not revisited later within programming or programme implementation, and that while gender indicators were reported on through a programme, the GEM specifically was a *“brief exercise”* at the early stages of inception and proposal development.

Some CO staff felt that it could be useful in their context to have a tool (potentially an adapted version of GEM) that assisted COs not just to assess the gender sensitive or transformative nature of a project or programme at the design or proposal phase, but also to **assist the CO teams in the continued monitoring and strengthening of the integration of gender throughout the programme cycle**. In **South Sudan**, for example, a stakeholder shared, *“I think it is a weakness that we do not use GEM to continuously evaluate ourselves.”* Similarly, in **Uganda**, staff shared that a challenge for the team was that they did not see the tool being used throughout a programme, in everyday implementation. One respondent said, *“As we move along implementation, things change. It would be good to check if we are still on track through implementation.”* In **Mozambique**, a stakeholder shared, *“There are [...] issues of a lack of oversight, continuity, and integration into the whole programme cycle.”* GEM, or adaptations of the tool, could be more widely used at different programme stages, not only at the design phase as currently mandated.

In this review, CO respondents also **highlighted the challenge that engagement with the GEM tool is generally limited to staff involved in the initial design and does not necessarily filter into the field**. In many cases, other staff members may know about the GEM score, but engagement beyond that is limited. In **Malawi**, some staff suggested that while some staff know about the GEM score and the GEM tool, *“it doesn’t really filter down,”* while in **Mozambique**, staff suggested that because it is part of the proposal process, it does not get discussed beyond that, during the programme cycle. One staff member said, *“We are not all part of this process. We are now trying to involve all staff more by sharing any related GEM scoring and adjustments.”* In **Somalia**, respondents said that while all staff know about the GEM score and GEM tool, not all staff engage with it, unless needed or on their own initiative. In **Uganda**, respondents felt that the score was not necessarily filtering down to the field teams, as it was mainly

¹² An SCN reviewer noted that SCN in Nepal is partnering with the “very strong Blue Diamond Society working on LGBT rights and which would fall into this category.” Other strong capital-based women’s rights organisations could be strategic partners contributing to, for example, gender training for Save the Children. The Nepal CO’s response may also highlight the differences in thinking around partnership, a point that is relevant to the localisation debate. COs may also partner with “weaker” women’s rights or women led organisations and help strengthen them as part of SCN’s gender equality objective.

filled in at the proposal stage. In **Myanmar**, staff respondents shared that the GEM tool and process were still new to them, and were difficult, particularly because they do not have a gender adviser. One respondent said, *“Only some staff have been trained in the GEM tool and not everyone understands the tool or why we are using it.”* This challenge could be mitigated by management playing a role in ensuring that GEM is, for example, shared more widely, discussed throughout the programme cycle, and looked at when reporting.

Challenges in implementing gender-sensitive or transformative programmes. Finally, staff in some COs highlighted **the challenges of translating the GEM score into programme implementation that was truly gender sensitive or gender transformative.** In **Nepal**, CO staff highlighted that ensuring that a programme is gender transformative is deeply challenging, requiring structural and systems-level change, and broad actions that addressed root causes (such as addressing social norms, effecting policy change, working with government, and ensuring sustainability). Staff respondents shared that the highly diverse socio-cultural context of Nepal, with many intersectional factors to consider, created challenges in their attempts to ensure programs were gender transformative in concrete ways. As one stakeholder said, *“Getting the GEM score is easy, but transforming each of the indicators into tangible activities is challenging.”* In **Colombia**, a staff member echoed this sentiment, noting of the GEM score, *“It is a guide, they are ideals, but we are working in difficult areas, we try to implement and bring these ideals to the complex realities in which we work. We try to guarantee this and do our best.”*

In **South Sudan**, staff respondents also indicated that operationalising proposals into concrete activities and action plans was challenging, particularly because gender sensitive activities often required additional resources which were not always available. Staff highlighted that this meant that more innovative or involved gender sensitive or gender transformative programme activities were sometimes ignored, aside from basic actions such as disaggregation of data by sex. One stakeholder shared that the GEM tool was not particularly useful when it came to implementation, *“because it skews or does not consider what realities or limits there are on the ground.”*

Changes resulting from GEM Scoring Process. Overall, there were **mixed reports from county office staff regarding whether the GEM process had resulted in changes to programmes.** Largely, staff respondents shared that the process was more likely to contribute to shaping the project or programme at the design stage, but not again after that, due to the timing of when the tool is used, as discussed above. While the team in **Nepal** did not offer specific examples, staff respondents said they could recall several instances when the team paused after scoring a proposal, and then revised the proposal to meet the criteria for a “Gender Sensitive” score in GEM. In **South Sudan**, staff respondents noted that in their use of the GEM tool, they identified a lack of gender balance in the teacher population, leading to discussions about how best to adjust activities to achieve a gender balance. Other CO respondents noted that while the GEM tool was used during the design phase, they then relied on sex disaggregated data to inform any necessary shifts in programme implementation.

COUNTRY OFFICES AND SCN GENDER ASSESSMENT

This section presents findings related to (1) sex disaggregation, (2) gender capacity and training, (3) disaggregation by other parameters, (4) child participation, and (5) COVID-19.

SEX DISAGGREGATION

Consistent disaggregation by sex. All COs reported consistently disaggregating by sex in their work under the Norad framework. Several countries noted that while they knew this was a requirement for Norad, it was also aligned with their policies at the CO level, as well as the larger institutional approach of SCI. For example, in **Niger**, staff shared that the collection of sex disaggregated data was an organisation-wide initiative or standard that was useful for programme planning at all levels, rather than something the CO undertakes in response to the requirements of specific donors. Respondents in **Malawi** highlighted that sex disaggregation was embedded in the very design of the Norad programme, given the strong focus in the programme on issues such as child marriage and early pregnancy. Importantly, staff and Award Managers for some COs had noticed steady improvements in the collection of sex

disaggregated data over time. One Award Manager, for example, shared, *“We used to have to ask for sex disaggregation in the past. Now they [CO staff] are doing it themselves. We see it in the reports.”* In another example, one staff member in **Uganda** shared that disaggregation *“gets better every day within our office,”* while another highlighted that *“It is part and parcel of our tools and programmes. It has become part of the staff way of doing work.”* Within SCN, other stakeholders also acknowledged there had been improvements over time in sex disaggregation, though with some variation across COs. One SCN stakeholder said, *“In some contexts, you still have to ask and require. Even though sex disaggregation is there, it’s not like it’s clicked into their minds. So, they have the data, and some countries are very good at doing sex disaggregation as automatic, with no enquiries, but others need reminding.”*

Challenges related to disaggregation by sex. CO staff in **seven of the twelve countries reported no significant challenges in the collection of sex disaggregated data.** Staff in **Malawi** and **Mozambique** noted that at times, sex disaggregation within large groups or during large community events presented a challenge. In **Malawi**, for example, staff shared that they sometimes need to estimate numbers at large community events, and sometimes go back to leaders in the community to cross-verify. Staff in **Guatemala** said that because they work closely with local partners to implement activities, these partners first had to be trained in how to collect sex disaggregated data as well. In reference to one CO, a stakeholder highlighted that a low level of staff capacity and understaffing contributed to *“operational constraints which make the quality of our data not always optimal.”*

There were also some specific **contextual challenges to sex disaggregated data collection** cited by staff in some countries. For example, staff shared that conflict and instability presented significant challenges to data collection in **Myanmar**, while staff in **South Sudan** pointed to challenges in finding female enumerators in certain geographic areas and during certain agricultural seasons (e.g., planting and harvesting time) when women are busy with household responsibilities, which can present significant obstacles to collecting data from women and girls. Staff shared that they attempt to mitigate these challenges through open communication with communities while scheduling data collection, with one staff member sharing, *“If we say we want to collect data in the morning hours, and the community says no, we are going to the fields then, we move data collection to the afternoon hours.”*



Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression (SOGIE)/ and LGBTQI+ Rights. This review also explored the extent to which considerations related to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression (SOGIE) and LGBTQI+ rights were integrated into the Norad Framework Agreement 2019-2013 (or in other programming), and whether any relevant data was collected by CO teams. **The team found a wide range of views and experiences in this regard.** While the COs in **Colombia, Guatemala, Lebanon,** and **Nepal** indicated that there were some activities and openness regarding SOGIE and LGBTQI+ rights, staff from the other eight countries clearly highlighted the social, religious, cultural, and legal barriers that prevented such a focus.

In **Colombia**, staff members shared that they had carried out various actions related to LGBTQI+ rights in educational institutions with teachers, school authorities, and young people. They highlighted that within much of their work (for example, work related to gender-based violence) LGBTQI+ issues are included. At present, existing data collection tools do not enable LGBTQI+ individuals to self-identify, though team members shared they have come across young people in their activities who would like to be able to self-identify in this way. The team has opened a conversation about this with the MEAL team and feels that the inclusion of such data would be viable for the Norad Framework. However, since all country tools are standardised, the tool would need to also suit the needs of the entire country team.

In **Guatemala**, staff acknowledged that issues related to SOGIE and LGBTQI+ rights were deeply sensitive. Staff interviewed in this work did not feel that increased work towards inclusion was impossible but suggested that any steps toward an increased focus on these issues should be taken slowly. Staff also shared that one of the first ways they are working towards this goal is sensitising the CO staff on issues of gender and sexuality, which they see as a pressing need. In **Lebanon**, team members also expressed interest in collecting this data. Staff noted the CO's ambitions to work towards ensuring that the gender lens adopted at the CO level, and the Norad programme level specifically, is *"inclusive and encompasses the full spectrum and understanding of gender."*

In **Nepal**, work is being done on the integration of LGBTQI+ and SOGIE considerations into programming, but *"not in a very mainstreamed way."* Currently, these projects for LGBTQI+ populations are small in scale and limited to particular geographic areas. Staff reported making a concerted effort to ensure the names of individuals identifying as LGBTQI+ are confidential, but they do maintain data on the raw number of project beneficiaries identified as such. The team in Nepal felt that they had made a *"good start"* but were still in a learning process to understand how best to serve this population while maintaining beneficiaries' confidentiality and safety. Further, the team highlighted that one of their colleagues worked as a SOGIE Advisor to the SC Global team, which provided them with access to in-house expertise. They also shared that they have partnered with a CBO focusing on advocacy for LGBTQI+ populations for six years.

In another seven countries (**Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, South Sudan, and Uganda**), stakeholders raised a range of challenges regarding any potential work in this area, while staff in one country requested that all questions related to SOGIE/LGBTQI+ be removed from the interview. In **Malawi**, stakeholders highlighted the country's strong religious context, including the faith-based nature of some of its national and local partners, as one of the obstacles to work in this area. However, there are other critical cultural and legal barriers that restrict the CO from engaging with SOGIE and LGBTQI+ issues. As one staff member shared, *"We need to work within the law of the country."* Similarly, in **Uganda**, staff shared that given the legal framework and the fact that government is against it, they do not really engage with LGBTQI+ issues, as it is *"one of the forbidden cultural contexts."* Importantly, staff highlighted that they were careful in their work not to discriminate or exclude on the basis of sexual orientation or identity but would never want to expose anyone by highlighting this, thus potentially increasing the risk for these individuals or populations. As one team member put it, *"We have to be very quiet."* In **Niger**, stakeholders also noted that there was no targeted support for or focus on LGBTQI+ issues, but they also stressed that they did not discriminate or exclude in their programming.

Some staff highlighted that a focus on LGBTQI+ issues would be inappropriate, irrelevant, or potentially alienating in the communities they work with, though LGBTQI+ rights were considered within the Child Protection component of the Norad programme. In **Mozambique**, for example, team members shared

that there was currently no demand and that they are continuing to monitor this issue. In **South Sudan**, one stakeholder shared, *“In the context of South Sudan, there are some questions we are not even asking. They [community members] will look at you because it is something that some of them have not even heard about. Even talking about gender equality in some communities, we are still struggling to talk about this, as it is not even understood.”* In **Myanmar**, a staff member shared, *“This is a traditional culture, and even though there are needs, it is not too relevant in our programming.”* Staff members also highlighted that well-established LGBTQI+ organisations were working in the same communities who were responding directly and positively to such issues. Speaking of the **Niger** context, one stakeholder felt that given the current socio-cultural context of the country, work in support of LGBTQI+ rights would *“put our acceptance and relations with local communities in danger.”*

Use of disaggregated data. Country offices, with few exceptions, were able to provide **clear examples of how they had used (mostly sex and disability) disaggregated data to inform changes to programming or implementation approaches** (examples are provided below in Figure 6). In **Colombia**, staff reported that they held periodic meetings with the MEAL team to brainstorm based on the data they collected, and that changes to the programme could result from this data, but also from feedback from communities and other accountability mechanisms. In **Guatemala**, team members said that the data was used to assess the effectiveness of interventions, who was participating, and whether any corrections needed to be undertaken. Similarly, in **Mozambique**, staff members shared that it is an explicit programme principle to use data to inform programming and adapt activities. For example, the team reviews disaggregated data monthly and discusses whether their approach or intervention requires change. Staff in **Nepal** shared that needs assessment data specific to new projects, along with data that had already been collected from other M&E activities, were systematically used to design new programmes, and adjust current activities. In **Niger**, staff respondents shared that they used disaggregated data to identify root causes of differences in outcomes or impact, which they then attempt to address in their activities. One staff member said, *“Disaggregated data [by sex and age] from different studies, monitoring and evaluation activities in the field orient all of our planning and forecasting.”*

Importantly, disaggregated data is not just analysed at the CO level only. **At SCN, the MEAL team working on the Norad Framework Agreement also employs statistical analysis of log frame results to identify gender disparities.** For example, a statistical analysis of data from South Sudan found that girls performed three times less proficient than boys in reading, which assisted the team in planning the following year’s interventions which could focus on improving this result for girls.

This review also found examples of **how sex disaggregated data had led to changes in how the application of a gender lens was understood within some COs**, for example, when the CO’s disaggregated data showcased that gender disparities could be experienced by both boys and girls. Staff in some COs, such as **Mozambique, Myanmar, and Uganda**, shared examples of disaggregated data having highlighted specific examples of where boys and men, rather than girls and women, appeared to be at a disadvantage, challenging common ideas that a focus on gender equates to a focus on girls and women.

Some **challenges regarding the use of sex disaggregation were also identified.** In **South Sudan**, for example, respondents indicated that data collection could help inform the kind of support required by different groups but also argued that this data collection was somewhat ad hoc, and not necessarily consistent. In **Somalia**, staff members shared that while data was primarily collected through programme reviews for Norad and the education programme in general, it was used more for advocacy rather than informing programming. In **Palestine**, staff respondents indicated that gender conversations largely take place at inception, but that, *“mid-programme or mid-project, we do not have these conversations.”* Country office staff in **Somalia** also reflected that their main challenges related to how the data was analysed and used. One staff member, for example, said, *“We collect the data, but this does not necessarily show us a clear overview of the contextual reality, and there is no outcome.”*

Figure 12. Examples of how country offices have used sex and disability disaggregated data

<p style="text-align: center;">Colombia</p> <p>After seeing low attendance of men in parenting sessions (mirroring cultural gender roles in the area), given that the sessions were scheduled at times that were good for women (and safe for the project team) but when men were generally working, the team sought out alternative strategies: the creation of guides and booklets for home distribution, the use of WhatsApp calls, the creation of sessions on Sundays and personalised sessions, and, most creatively, the purchase of a single smartphone and speakers to broadcast a session in a public space during times men could attend.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Malawi</p> <p>Having noted that boys volunteered more in school activities and leadership positions, the team introduced a requirement for the equal representation of boys and girls in the executive committees of child-led clubs. This approach was also adopted during the institutionalisation of learners' councils, whose membership consists of equal numbers of boys and girls. Girls were encouraged to take up leadership positions, such as Chairpersons, Vice Chairs, and Secretaries. In addition, the SC Malawi team guided schools to ensure that child-led clubs and learners' councils are headed by one male teacher (patron) and one female teacher (matron).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Mozambique</p> <p>Following recent SCN input on the importance and use of sex disaggregation, the team identified, in one programme school, boys who were Out of School (OOS) in the afternoon classes. Further investigation showed that these boys were engaged in inappropriate and illegal employment, e.g., mining. <i>"From the data, we investigated the causes ... Now we are targeting boys too and not only girls."</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Myanmar</p> <p>Staff realised that in the Norad programme information sessions, it was mostly mothers who joined the sessions. There were very few fathers or other men from the community who joined these sessions. From studying the sex disaggregated session attendance data, the team realised that they needed to respond to this. They consulted with the targeted communities on how to improve this situation. Through the active and direct engagement of male community leaders and fathers, this gender balance is beginning to improve in these groups. They also use community social workers to continuously encourage and promote gender balance.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Nepal</p> <p>Project monitoring activities for the Norad-funded Home School Programme showed CWD were performing lower than children without disabilities. Further investigation revealed teachers were not adequately trained in teaching CWD. Adapted and focused teacher training resulted in increased teacher sensitivity to the needs of CWD and improved learning outcomes for CWD. This programme focuses on addressing children's learning, development, and protection from violence; teenage pregnancy and child marriage; and the underlying framework of CRG.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Niger</p> <p>A high percentage of schoolteachers in Niger are female, while a high percentage of school headmasters are male. A midterm project review of teacher self-assessments showed that female teachers had lower scores than male teachers. The programme team responded by adapting educator training to focus on empowering female educators, including female-only training on school management and leadership, to increase female educator confidence and, ultimately, the number of female school headmasters.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">South Sudan</p> <p>A midterm evaluation showed that girls were scoring lower on literacy and numeracy than boys. Further qualitative investigation revealed that social norms and gendered divisions of labour required most girls to complete household chores as soon as they arrived from school, leaving them no time to complete schoolwork or reading. The programme team responded by setting aside dedicated time and creating a conducive environment to complete their homework and reading before leaving school. They also developed a <i>Female Role Model</i> programme activity and engaged in community dialogue at community and parent support groups to raise awareness of the importance of girls' education.</p> <p>As part of the midterm report, the team also analysed literacy and numeracy rates by ability and realised CWD were achieving lower rates than those without disabilities. The team developed targeted activities to respond to these gaps, including teacher training/ sensitivity training, community/ parent training, and referrals to comprehensive medical assessment including eyeglasses, crutches, and wheelchairs (through ICRC partner referrals).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Uganda</p> <p>The team shared that when they looked at the disaggregated attendance data in Karamoja schools, they found something that surprised the team. They had been seeing a lot of teenage pregnancies linked to school closures during COVID-19, but the attendance data actually showed there were more girls than boys in school. The difference was not major, but when the team looked into it, they found that boys were at home, taking care of animals and looking for ways to support basic family needs. The team found that now they needed to address this gap and better integrate a focus on male children in their work.</p> <p>In another example from its education programming, the team shared that data collection at the start of the school term to determine enrolment is disaggregated by sex, and by age brackets. The team found that in the lower level, there were more girls than boys, but in the middle level, there were more boys than girls. They explored the reasons for this and saw that more girls drop out of school over time. This knowledge helped them focus their programming on menstrual hygiene management and creating a conducive environment for girls (e.g., by also engaging boys within this menstrual hygiene management work, to better tackle stigma). The data also helped them identify their programmatic focus on child marriage and GBV. The disaggregation <i>"helps us to know how our intervention meets our needs."</i></p>

GENDER CAPACITY AND TRAINING

Gender Equality Policy, Action Plan, and Structures. The review found that **all countries had at least a gender equality policy, gender equality action plan, or structures for ensuring gender equality in the CO.** While the Gender Equality Policy was cited most frequently (10; 83%), it is important to note that only four (25%) countries (**Guatemala, Lebanon, Malawi, and Uganda**) explicitly stated that they had developed their own CO Gender Equality Policies based on the SCI's movement wide Gender Equality Policy. This was followed by the Gender Equality Action Plan (5; 42%) and the structures for ensuring gender equality in the CO (4; 33%).

In discussing the policy, action plan and structures, the following key themes arose. In order **to review the CO gender needs in terms of these three outputs, different approaches were used by different countries.** For example, in **Guatemala**, the CO set up a Gender Committee (made up of six people) that includes the Norad Project Manager as well as programme and MEAL staff, to review the CO gender needs and develop an action plan and structures. The **Nepal** CO is currently undergoing a gender equality self-assessment to guide the development of the action plan and support the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policy amendments. The **South Sudan** respondents noted the CO Gender Equality Action Plan resulted from the CO Gender Audit (2020-2024). The Gender Focal Point led the planning with support from SC UK gender advisers.

Following on from the last point, respondents noted **the support that they received in developing these three outputs.** For example, in **Malawi**, the Women's Legal Resources Centre (WOLREC) – a women's rights NGO based in Blantyre – supported the development of the Gender Equality Policy. The **SC Guatemala** team approached SC Bolivia (perceived to be more advanced in their gender work) to support their gender initiatives through consultation and the findings from SC Bolivia's gender analysis.

Respondents also emphasized the **importance of recognising and responding to the local and regional contexts in establishing the three outputs.** For example, in **Palestine**, respondents stated that their "policies are tailored to the local context, especially in the areas that remain socially and culturally sensitive." This approach ensures that staff have relevant and useable guidelines that they are comfortable implementing. In **Lebanon**, respondents stated that the Lebanese landscape is "**perceived to be much more advanced**" than other countries in the region in the areas of "women and gender rights." A staff member noted, "*In Lebanon, we find more and more that social and cultural barriers are not as strict as in other countries in our region. We have a better human rights record in all honesty. The integration of women into programming, and even conversations on the LGBTQI+ community, for instance, are easier to have. This assists us in realising this policy on the ground and having discussions openly with stakeholders.*" The respondents argued that this recognition strengthens staff members' ability to expand their definition and understanding of gender and the extent to which they can expand conversations on gender at the national level. Moreover, this approach has ensured significantly better participation of women and girls in programming.

In the review, CO respondents were asked whether they conducted a **gender analysis** at the start of the Norad programme. Importantly, responses revealed that there is **no common understanding of what a "gender analysis" is across the twelve COs and even amongst specific CO staff.** In **Colombia**, respondents pointed to the fact that the baseline study included information disaggregated by sex, gender-related analysis regarding teachers and teaching-learning methods; and other questions related to gender and inclusion. In **Guatemala**, respondents pointed to a study done prior to the Norad programme regarding school dropout, which found that girls were not going to school to undertake domestic work or care for younger siblings. In **Lebanon**, staff shared that while no gender analysis was carried out for Norad specifically, other gender analyses had been carried out at the CO level, though an updated analysis was perceived to be necessary amidst what staff described as "**a drastic shift in the Lebanese context at all levels**" since late 2019. Country office staff in **Myanmar** and **Somalia** also highlighted that they relied on CO level gender analyses, which included the Norad programme. The **Mozambique** team noted that they are guided by a Gender Action Plan that applies across all projects.

In **Nepal**, staff shared that they used already-existing data to inform proposal development, but also completed needs assessments to triangulate data and inform programme design and implementation. They argued that they would not call their needs assessments and ongoing M&E activities “gender analyses” specifically, but rather intersectional studies that looked at context and needs *“from different thematic lenses,”* with gender automatically included in each study. One respondent explained, *“We incorporate more intersectional aspects than gender analysis [in our M&E activities] – age, caste, disability, geography and more.”* In **Uganda**, while respondents could not point to specific gender analysis documents, they highlighted that gender considerations informed and underpinned the whole design of their Norad programme.

Why is a Gender Analysis important?

Gender analysis is important for many reasons, including the following:

- (1) **A gender analysis provides essential information that will help us to understand the context better.** A gender analysis can help us understand the position and roles of girls, boys, women, and men in society, as well as the distribution of power between them. A gender analysis will also help us to have greater clarity on existing stereotypical attitudes and practices, including existing positive practices, among different stakeholders at the household and community levels. With this information, we can identify what makes someone, or some groups, vulnerable or empowered, and take actions in our programs to account for this.
- (2) **A gender analysis can prevent us from making incorrect assumptions.** Very often, we assume that all people are able to participate in activities and processes, or to influence and benefit equally from our interventions. However, this is rarely the case. A gender analysis is key to assess how girls, boys, women, and men can be affected by our work, and how they can participate in, contribute to and benefit from it.
- (3) **A gender analysis supports high-impact and high-quality programming.** When we understand a context well and when we know the different priorities, needs, and capacities of girls, boys, women, and men, we can design more relevant and effective programs. Gender-sensitive and gender-transformative programs have a greater potential to be innovative and create opportunities to develop high impact models for scale-up.

Source: SCI. 2014. Gender Equality Program Guidance and Toolkit: Engendering transformational change.

Respondents in nine out of the twelve COs (75%) said there had been a gender analysis and/or other related studies at a later stage of the Norad programme, though not all provided clear examples. The **Colombia** team shared that before initiating activities, they often carry out a pre-test and undertake focus groups to better understand the gender issues within a target community. They also noted that the protection component is now working with the MEAL team to develop an instrument for qualitative research regarding protective environments, with strong components related to gender and disability. In **Guatemala**, a tool has been developed to gauge target groups’ understandings of gender to establish appropriate content for that group. The team is also working on the development of qualitative questions to explore in more depth the results of gender- and sex-related disaggregated data that they collect. For example, the team created an instrument to explore the perception of the safety and wellbeing of boys and girls in

school, with a question related to differential punishments for boys and girls. A staff member shared, *“These analyses show us the next steps to take, they are windows of opportunity regarding how to orient the project.”*

In **Nepal**, the CO conducted self-initiated child marriage study that highlighted gender considerations such as discrimination and GBV. The team also highlighted an assessment of the effectiveness of their parenting without violence programme, which specifically looked at gender equality KPIs. They have also undertaken studies exploring outcomes for CWD, disaggregating by gender to observe any differential trends between girls and boys with disabilities. In addition, the team highlighted that ethnicity is an important data point in Nepal, which can determine many outcomes for children and families. In **Myanmar**, a gender analysis was undertaken at the CO level, with the Norad programme included. This was an intersectional gender analysis. The team prepared a report with their partners that looked at their main gender challenges. A staff member said, *“This analysis has been used to promote and strengthen gender equality in our staff and partner organisations, as well as our programming. For example, this analysis contributed to us embedding gender awareness in our Child Protection training.”*

A final observation was that CO respondents mostly spoke about the gender analysis being done at the proposal phase. Ideally, a gender analysis should be conducted in all the phases of the programme cycle,

that is the strategic planning, proposal design, implementation, M&E, and accountability and learning phases.¹³

Role of Gender Adviser/Focal Point. When asked about the existence of the Gender Adviser/Focal Point in the CO, 11 (92%) of the COs currently have someone in this position. The exception is **Palestine**, where a staff member has informally stepped into this role after the position of Gender Focal Point was cut due to budgetary restrictions. This review found a range of Levels of Effort (LOE) across the 12 countries. In some countries, the LOE is 100% across the CO (e.g., **Colombia** where Global Affairs Canada funds the position, **Lebanon**, and **South Sudan** where the role covers the whole CO, and **Guatemala** where the Gender Focal Point is fully funded by Norad). In other countries, the LOE is between 10%-20% specifically for the Norad programme (e.g., Mozambique, Nepal, and Uganda).¹⁴ Some of these people are also advisers in the areas of child protection, CRG, and health. It was also noted that such a person appointed as a Gender Focal Point might not have the necessary gender capacity. Moreover, respondents also noted that some Gender Focal Points are junior staff with limited organisational influence. In **Malawi**, gender responsibilities fall under the inclusion person.

Notably, the **consensus was the current Gender Focal Point approach was not working in the Norad programme** because (1) in countries where the LOE was 100% for the CO, the Norad programme did not receive adequate coverage, and (2) in countries with 10% LOE for the Norad programme, the Gender Focal Point respondents reported that this was not enough time for the Norad programme and their other gender duties across other programmes and projects. For example, one of the Gender Focal Point respondents stated, *“Given the high work burden, I cannot currently give much individual attention to Norad. It has become so difficult for me and also for the CO.”* Respondents were clear that the role of the Gender Focal Point is important. A respondent from **Uganda** said, *“I have noticed that when I first came to SC, they did not have a specific gender staff. As time went by, getting a gender specialist helped a lot. This has led to great improvement. I have also seen that it just became part of our work.”* The COs stated strongly that a **greater LOE with technical and financial support was required to strengthen the Gender Adviser/Focal Point.**



¹³ SCI. 2014. Gender Equality Program Guidance and Toolkit: Engendering transformational change. https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/gender_equality_program_toolkit_2014.pdf/

¹⁴ SCN staff noted that Mozambique and Uganda have gender LOEs in the budgets. For Uganda, the LOE was reprioritized to another TA (although it was not changed in the budget).

Gender Training. In discussions on gender training, staff respondents indicated that from their knowledge, **specific gender training had been undertaken in seven (58%) of the COs.** The five countries where no specific gender training has been conducted are **Lebanon, Nepal, Niger, Palestine, and Somalia.** It should be noted that in five of these four countries (**Lebanon, Nepal, Palestine, and Somalia**), all staff receives a mandatory pre-employment orientation of which gender is a part. For those countries that do conduct gender training, the most common types are gender equality, GBV, and GEM tool training. A common theme among the respondents was that gender training was not regularly conducted or budgeted for. One exception was the **South Sudan** CO where respondents underscored that gender training for staff is always integrated into project budgets at the beginning of the project. Overall, the Gender Focal Points conduct the gender training with some COs supported by external organisations, for example, WOLREC and Sonke Gender Justice (**Malawi**). Respondents spoke highly of the value of the gender training, for example, a participant from **Mozambique** stated, *“In meetings, I can now see how staff are taking up the issue of gender. For example, they are discussing sex disaggregation and mentioning the needs of both boys and girls now.”* A respondent from **Uganda** said, *“The staff are much inspired by the training.”*

Gender Expertise and Competence. In **seven (58%) of the COs, respondents reported that they feel that they have the necessary gender competence and expertise.** In five other countries (Malawi, Myanmar, Niger, Palestine, and Somalia), at least some staff felt that they did not have this competence and expertise. It is interesting to note that the last three countries reported not having received any gender training (see above). Notably, out of the seven COs in which staff respondents felt they have the necessary competence and experience, respondents in five (71%) of these COs stated that much more gender training was still required to meet gender needs. This highlights the necessity for ongoing and consistent gender equality training based on specific CO gender needs.

Support Required. A strong review finding was the challenge related to the **recruitment and retention of Gender Adviser/Focal Point.** Respondents, as noted above, spoke positively about the Gender Adviser/Focal Point role but they highlighted the difficulties in “selecting and keeping” these individuals for various reasons. For example, in **Palestine**, budget cuts were cited as the reason that the *“country lacks a full time Gender Expert in any capacity. At the moment, the Gender Focal Point at the CO is the only staff member carrying out gender-related tasks. This is due to budget cuts.”* In **Somalia**, respondents spoke about the Gender Specialist and Coordinator being overburdened *“because they work at the CO-level across all lines of programming. We are understaffed in the areas of gender. We need more technical and implementation experts for all programs.”* In **Mozambique**, respondents detailed their challenges in finding the right person for this role and maintaining them in the position, noting there had been three different people in the role *“over the last few years.”* The respondents highlighted the lengthy and difficult recruitment processes to find the person with the correct experience and qualifications as well as the problem of these people leaving for more lucrative government or corporate jobs. A respondent stated, *“There is a high demand for people with such qualifications and experience in Mozambique. They get hired but they move on quickly.”*

An important conversation with the CO and SCN respondents related to the observation that in some contexts, some SC staff members (like most people) may hold deep-seated and potentially harmful gender attitudes or beliefs that may be reflected or expressed within their own lives and in the workplace. How best to engage this is a strategic issue in terms of the approach to gender transformative work. An interesting refrain from SCN interviews was the fact that the gender approach was only formalised comparatively recently within the international organisation with SCI’s Gender Equality Policy in June 2017.¹⁵ SCN adopted this policy in the same year and an internal action plan was developed. While SCN respondents stated that much had been achieved in the area of gender since 2017 in terms of strengthened awareness, capacity, and engagement, some questioned whether the right approach to gender training was being undertaken at the CO level. For example, during the interviews, there were discussions on SCN’s gender training approach and the roles of SCN, the Award Managers, CO senior

¹⁵ SCI. June 2017. Save the Children Gender Equality Policy: Transforming Inequalities, Transforming Lives. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/save-children-gender-equality-policy-transforming-inequalities-transforming-lives/>

management, Gender Focal Point/Advisers, and support staff in bolstering the CO staff's capacity to show gender transformative behaviour at work, home, and in communities. CO respondents questioned how much staff had really changed as a result of the awareness training. For example, a respondent in **Guatemala** stated, *"We feel that much of the staff still needs to truly integrate and embody equality in relation to gender and sexuality in their daily lives at work and home."* In **Lebanon**, a respondent noted, *"While the CO team is perceived to have gender knowledge, and being "gender sensitive," there remains an overall lack of understanding around how to be "gender transformative" in programming."* Similarly, in **South Sudan**, a respondent said that they needed training on how to take programs from gender sensitive to gender transformative, especially *"considering different cultural norms which make it difficult to achieve some of the gender balances in programming."* Other respondents argued that the gender training is not long enough and that more consistent training is needed over longer periods of time. For example, in **Myanmar**, a respondent stated, *"We need to strengthen our country-wide gender capacity. While management tries to promote gender, they need significantly more consistent gender training."*

Other gender transformative training approaches exist that emphasize the importance of working with staff for longer periods and in more personal and intense ways to challenge potentially harmful gender beliefs and attitudes. For example, Concern Worldwide (Ireland) is in partnership with Sonke Gender Justice (South Africa) to provide training to challenge the gender norms and attitudes of Concern staff, improve their ability to promote gender equality in the workplace, and build their capacity to implement gender transformative programmes.¹⁶ While the training has been mandated by the head office, it is tailored according to the self-identified needs of COs. They also use the training of trainers (ToT) model to ensure that experience is institutionalised to improve the impact and sustainability of the gender training. This model uses experiential exercises and interaction to stimulate reflection and encourage personal changes in staff in the belief that staff first need to make substantial personal changes in their own lives before they can begin working in communities and contribute significantly to gender programming. Such an approach is not without its challenges as it is resource intensive (time-consuming and costly). Furthermore, even with the tailored approach to training, there are important tensions between a "top-down" institutional approach to gender equality as opposed to a localised and contextualised approach that begins at the CO level. However, this model has seen notable successes, and highlights that working towards gender transformative approaches require more than building gender awareness. In this review, some CO staff are asking for *"more training and more intensive and personal training that results in true gender transformative changes."* Interestingly, the **Malawi** CO has recently engaged Sonke Gender Justice (outside of the Norad programme) to support the strengthening of its gender transformative programming. While it is too early to demonstrate any results or impact, staff spoke positively about the engagement so far.

In almost every CO, staff respondents, at some time in their KII and FGDs, mentioned that a **larger budget is needed to strengthen their gender capacity and expertise** in terms of a larger LOE for the Gender Focal Advisers (as mentioned above) and more gender training. For example, in **South Sudan**, a respondent argued, *"We need support and funding to see longer gender transformative projects through."* A **Guatemala** respondent noted, *"We are strained to find funds to produce the materials to communicate the gender equality policy to the target populations served by Save the Children."*

Other support required included boosting regional coherence for gender, for example, a respondent mentioned the existence of a gender adviser at the regional office in Panama, yet the **Colombia** CO has not yet been introduced to this person. The **South Sudan** team spoke about the importance of developing a ToT approach for their gender training. They plan to use their Gender Champion team to train the trainers so that gender training can be cascaded into the field for partners when the CO Gender Focal Point is not available.

Partnering with other Gender, Inclusion or Women-led Organisations. The CO respondents were asked whether they were partnering with any gender organisations, for example, women's or girl's rights organisations, masculinity networks, LGBTQI+ organisations, etc. **Staff in five (42%) COs reported that**

¹⁶ Concern Worldwide. 21 July 2021. Knowledge Matters – Diverse Partnerships in Concern. <https://www.concern.net/knowledge-hub/knowledge-matters-diverse-partnerships-concern>

they were partnering with other gender organisations (Colombia, Lebanon, Malawi, Mozambique, and South Sudan). For example, the Colombia CO has identified organisations (e.g., Mujeres de Catatumbo) to support GBV work. The South Sudan CO works with WEDO (women-led CBO) in supporting vulnerable groups including women and girls. Staff respondents in other COs (e.g., Myanmar and Uganda) noted that they partner with other organisations but not directly around gender even though gender might be a part of the larger training. In Myanmar, staff stated that before the coup (Feb 2021) they actively worked with the various gender networks, but this collaboration has subsequently stopped.

In Malawi, the CO has received gender training from a partner gender organisation, that is, WOLREC (as discussed above). Staff respondents in other country offices (e.g., Lebanon and Mozambique) noted that while they did not receive direct training from partner organisations, they did share expertise and learning. For example, respondents in the Mozambique CO discussed a Child Protection event (February 2022) and a Child Rights platform wherein the skills of each organisation were identified for sharing and learning between organisations. In two countries (Niger and South Sudan), staff emphasized the weaknesses of local NGOs. Respondents in the Niger CO noted that while civil society exists in Niger, few CBOs exist and those that do are weak and small in capacity. They said that this was the case for gender and other areas. In South Sudan, respondents argued that CBOs are not necessarily specialised in gender mainstreaming, so they require training from SC and not the other way around.

Training Needs. While some of these needs were discussed more broadly above under Support Required, the specific gender equality training need will now be outlined. **All 12 (100%) COs stated that they have training needs related to gender equality issues.** The main gender training needs are outlined below (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Training needs

International training opportunities (Col)	Integrating gender into HR and supply chain (Moz)
LGBTQI+ (Guat)	Gender budgeting (Moz, Myan, S. Sud)
More advanced gender training (Leb)	Gender monitoring and reporting tools (Mya)
Gender strategy development (Leb)	Communicating a gender policy (Myan)
Measuring the impact of gender training (Leb)	More extensive gender training (Myan, Som)
Best practices from other countries (Mal)	Gender mainstreaming (Myan, S. Sud, Ugan)
Implementing cash programming for children (Mal)	ToT approach (Nep, S. Sud)
Gender analysis (Mal, Myan, Nep)	Gender transformative training (S. Sud)
Intersectionality (Mal, Nep)	Advanced GBV training (Ugan)

Respondents in Palestine highlighted that it was difficult to discuss specific training needs without having a gender specialist, while the respondents from Niger and Somalia noted the difficulties of discussing gender training needs when no gender training exists beyond the mandatory staff orientation.

DISAGGREGATION BY OTHER PARAMETERS

All COs shared that in addition to disaggregation by sex, they collected other types of disaggregated data. All COs, for example, shared that they collected age disaggregated data, although there were differences in perspective even within some COs regarding how consistently this was done. Most agreed that disaggregation by age was a routine component of data collection in the Norad programming, given the focus of country level programmes on different groups of children. Disaggregation by age was not always done for adult programme participants, or in some cases, where this data was collected, it was in broader age categories than those used for children.

Disaggregation by disability. To contribute to the fulfilment of its “Leave No Child Behind” ambitions, SCN identified CWD as among those groups of marginalised children to prioritise in the 2019-2023 Norad Framework. Recognising the need to improve the identification of CWD, as well as the reliability of disability data, SCN decided to use the conventionally recommended Washington Group Questions

(WGQ).¹⁷ SCN has closely monitored and supported COs in administering the WGQ, for example, through a Lessons Learned report based on the experience of COs in collecting disability data at baseline.¹⁸ SCN recognised challenges at baseline with the quality of and reliability of disability data from five COs (Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda).¹⁹ As part of its response, SCN developed and rolled out training materials for SC staff and enumerators to develop CO capacity to **collect reliable and comparable disability data**, and to enable COs implementing the Norad Framework Agreement 2019-2023 to collect good quality disability data by the midterm of the programme. While not a key focus of this review, CO staff were clear that there had been both **successes and challenges in their efforts to disaggregate by disability**. Across most COs, staff and stakeholders felt there had been improvements in recent years in terms of capacity at the CO level to disaggregate by disability, though most were also clear that further efforts were needed to improve this capacity, and to ensure that the data collected could be effectively utilised. Further related findings can be found in Annex 5.

Disaggregation by ethnicity. Country offices' **experiences of disaggregation by ethnicity are highly varied, depending on the specific context**. In some COs, it is a highly relevant factor. In **Nepal**, for example, staff shared that data regarding ethnicity, as well as caste, are considered important socio-demographic markers. These data are often related to class, and therefore may be relevant to programming such as identifying and addressing barriers to school attendance. The team in Nepal emphasized that their approach to work attempted to be intersectional, considering a range of sociodemographic factors in their analyses, planning and implementation.

In **Myanmar**, staff indicated that they also collected ethnicity-related data, using it to highlight the needs of, and responses to, children from different ethnic and religious minorities in their programme planning and implementation. One staff member commented, *"We especially use the ethnicity disaggregation to highlight the needs of children from ethnic and religious minorities, and how we can respond to these needs."* In **Guatemala**, staff indicated that data on ethnicity was important to their programming and was regularly collected depending on the project or event, while in **Malawi**, staff members indicated they did not generally collect this data, though they felt at times it might be appropriate (for example, for projects focusing on issues of migration). For other COs, not unexpectedly, the collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity was considered extremely sensitive, and potentially discriminatory (e.g., **Niger, South Sudan, and Uganda**).

CHILD PARTICIPATION

As per the Norad framework, all 12 countries have implemented child participation activities. **The review found some clear examples of how gender equality considerations have been integrated into child participation activities and structures, both in terms of gender-related content and the equal representation of girls and boys.** In some COs, efforts to ensure gender parity and girls' leadership within Child Participation structures were perceived to have led to better representation of issues that differentially impact girls. **In other countries, respondents shared examples of how child participation activities that were not necessarily designed with an explicit gender focus nonetheless raised important gender issues.**

Some strong examples of the intentional consideration of gender equality in child participation activities in Norad programming come from Colombia and Nepal. In **Colombia**, the CO carried out FGDs with children during the midterm review that included topics related to gender equality and understanding gender roles and stereotypes. Under Education, the team carried out work with children analysing their roles in educational institutions, noting that, *"The experience was significant in allowing girls to gain more space, learn how to keep themselves safe, recognise what goes outside of the appropriate limits of family love, where they can go if they have a problem, and how they can ensure their rights are respected."* In

¹⁷ SCN. 16 Dec 2022. Midterm progress report on quality of disability data and disability inclusion in countries included in Norad Framework Agreement 2019-2023

¹⁸ SCN. March 2019. Report on Lessons Learned from Administration of Washington Group Questions during the Baseline Data Collection for NORAD Framework Agreement 2019 – 2023

¹⁹ SCN. 16 Dec 2022. Midterm progress report on quality of disability data and disability inclusion in countries included in Norad Framework Agreement 2019-2023

Nepal, the respondents stated that participatory exercises with children are integrated throughout the Norad programming. During these activities, children discuss gender-related issues, for example, gender norms and child marriage. Through the Child Champion Clubs and Choices Voices Promises programme, children are encouraged to raise and discuss relevant gender issues, which have included gender norms, gender and education, gender and child protection, child marriage, and LGBTQI+ issues.

Staff respondents in some countries (e.g., **Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, and Niger**) highlighted that they work to ensure gender parity in terms of the numbers of girls and boys participating in activities and child-representative structures (e.g., Child Parliaments or School Councils) which has provided a platform for both girls and boys to raise the issues that affect them. In **Malawi**, for example, staff had noticed in their interactions with children that boys were often more assertive and volunteered more in school activities and leadership positions, so the team deliberately worked to ensure that girls were equally represented in the leadership positions of such structures, and that child-led clubs and councils were led by one male and one female teacher. The team shared that this approach has resulted in girls taking up leadership positions such as Chairpersons, vice chairs and secretaries in these structures. One staff member in Malawi shared, *“We engage school councils to ask them about gender issues that affect education. They are able to answer and suggest ways forward, and they question us, asking us what we are doing for them.”* Another respondent in Malawi shared that the Child Parliaments have now *“grown into one of the strongest structures for children, permitting them to defend their issues including child marriage, and teen pregnancy.”*



There are also examples of how child participation activities that were not necessarily designed with an explicit gender focus nonetheless raised important gender issues. In **South Sudan**, the team shared that participatory exercises (mostly FGDs) with children occur throughout the programme cycle to better understand children’s challenges. While these discussions are designed to explore social issues facing children and are not specifically focused on gender, gender-related themes are raised in these conversations. In **Uganda**, there have been CO level child participatory assessments (not specifically on gender), in which children do raise gender issues, for example, child marriage, rape, and the challenges of school drop out for child mothers and fathers. A respondent said, *“During child participation activities, it has almost become a norm that when children are participating, they always look at the gender issues.”*

While this data is limited, these examples suggest that **child participation contributes to a greater focus on gender issues**. Respondents highlighted the associated challenges of equal gender participation in terms of who is physically allowed to attend these activities (e.g., girls not being allowed to attend in some contexts) and the levels of agency and participation (e.g., boys being less interested and girls not

being able to make substantial contributions in public). Overall, while the review showed that gender-related issues are often discussed to varying degrees within child participation exercises and programming, there may be opportunities across the majority of COs for more intentional and focused gender-related engagement with children through child participation activities and structures.

COVID-19

While not a key focus of this review, COVID-19 has had unprecedented impacts on development and humanitarian programming globally, with significant and often different impacts for men, women, boys and girls. Given this, the review briefly explored how COVID-19 has specifically affected gender equality programming in the Norad framework. Respondents readily provided examples of the **gender-related impacts of COVID-19** on programming across COs. In **Colombia**, respondents highlighted that during lockdowns, children lost contact with schools and contact with armed groups increased. This resulted in *“many children, especially boys, being recruited into these groups.”* In **Lebanon**, the team noted the significant impact of COVID-19 on women and young girls as evidenced in the increased rates of child marriage, school dropout rates for girls, GBV, sex trafficking, and survival sex. The team highlighted that these challenges are part of the larger intersectional challenges in Lebanon linked to the economic and financial crises. In **Malawi**, staff shared that school closures resulted in increased household chores for girls as well as having to work, such as selling goods on the side of the road (which exposed girls to increased risks). Staff in Malawi also highlighted that the shutting down of some industries largely affected women workers, affecting household incomes and children’s well-being. In **Palestine**, respondents spoke about the *“exacerbated vulnerabilities for young girls and the conversations on child marriage, child labour, GBV and the dropout of girls from school.”* In **South Sudan**, a respondent said that a *“number of young girls were married off by their families, boys joined cattle camps, and there was a high rate of adolescent pregnancy.”* Importantly, some respondents noted the importance of the flexibility within the Norad funding in enabling them to develop responses to these emerging gender-related challenges. Addressing the differential impacts of the pandemic on girls and boys will undoubtedly be an important consideration for the next Norad framework agreement.

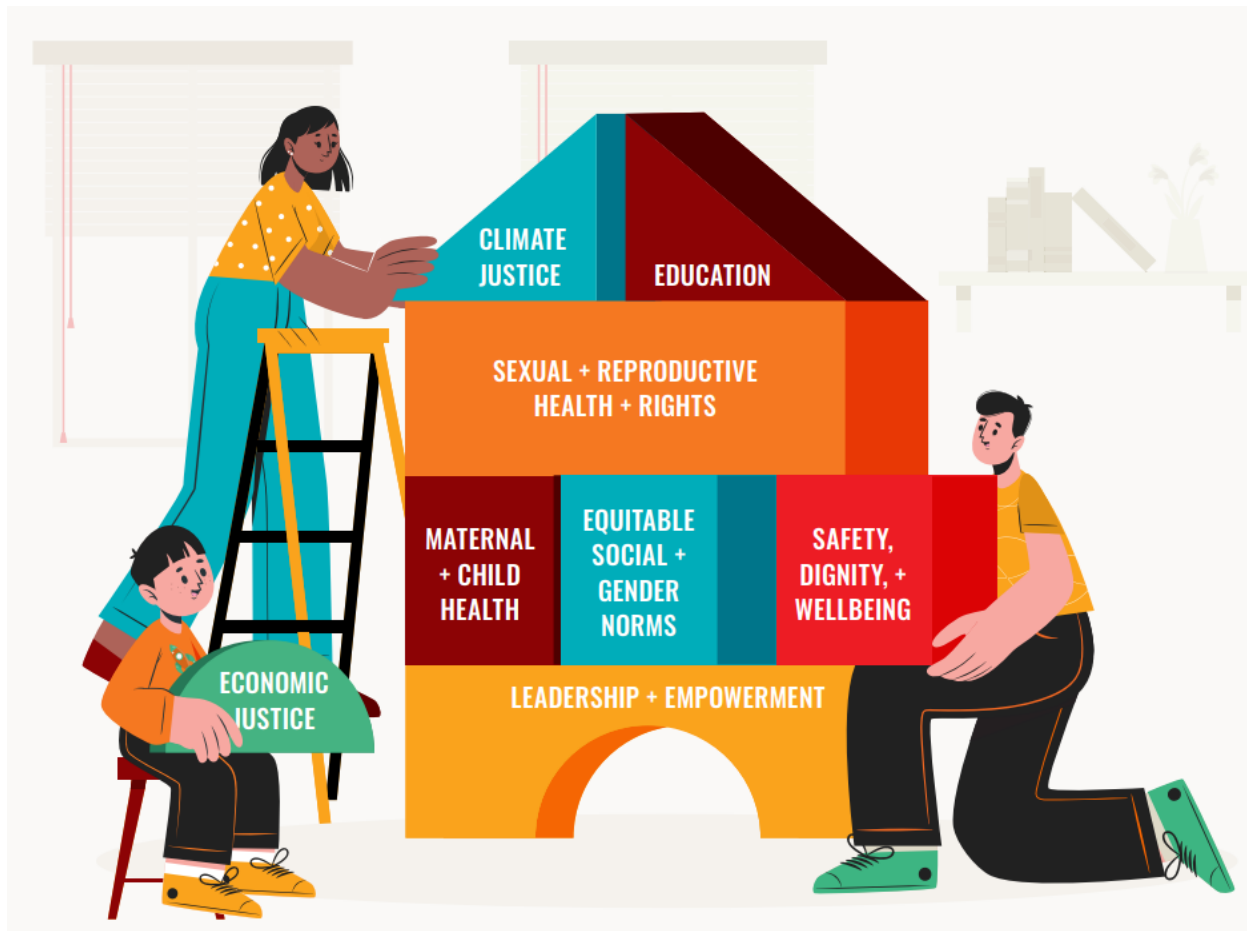
REFLECTIONS TOWARD THE NEXT NORAD FRAMEWORK

Strategic directions and approaches. Staff and stakeholders from within SCN, SCI, COs, and Norad offered a wealth of reflections regarding possible strategic directions and approaches that could shape and strengthen how which gender is incorporated into the next Norad Framework Agreement.

Internationally, **Save the Children continues to build and refine its approaches to gender, within a broader ambition to deepen and strengthen the movement’s overall approaches to inequality, inclusion, and justice.** Currently, SCI is considering what a broader KPI related to inequality, inclusion and justice might look like, and revisions to the GEM tool are being considered, though dramatic changes are unlikely due to the tool’s linkage with the existing KPI. Save the Children International continues work on its Gender and Power analysis (GAP) tools, which it is looking to scale up and roll out during the year ahead.²⁰ A pilot is also underway through Save the Children US around gender competency certification, which may also present important opportunities for learning and potential scale-up. At the SCI level, a Gender Equality Self-Assessment tool is also available, through which staff at the CO level are guided through a process to reflect on aspects such as political will, capacity, and gender awareness, with the goal of creating a Gender Action Plan. At SCI, work is also underway to redefine “impact” and provide reflections and guidance on how SCI defines and understands impact globally. While the work continues, key considerations will be sustainability and inclusion, alongside questions of how best to operationalise this into programme design.

²⁰ SCI. 2021. Gender & Power (GAP) Analysis Tools. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/gap-analysis-tools/>

SCI's building blocks that are considered essential for closing the gender gap in childhood, transforming children's life trajectories, and building a more just and equal world for all.



Source: SCI. 2022. Envisioning Gender Equality for the Next Generation 2022-2024 Strategy

Intersectionality and a Human Rights-Based (HRB) Approach. The Norwegian government is in the process of developing a new Action Plan for women's rights and gender equality in its foreign and development policy to be released in 2023. Within Norad, in late 2021, the SCN Framework agreement was moved from the Department for Civil Society to the Department for Human Development, and specifically the Section for Human Rights. A Norad stakeholder shared that they believe a **HRB approach is useful in guiding partners in the right direction in relation to effectively identifying and addressing needs from an intersectional approach.** Further, Norad's "Strategy towards 2030" outlines Norad's new strategic directions, with climate change and food security high on the agenda. Gender considerations will continue to be important and are deeply intertwined with issues of climate change and food security.

Some stakeholders raised the **concern that as some cross-cutting issues rise higher on international and donor agendas, other issues, including gender, may risk being deprioritised.** For example, one respondent raised a caution that attempts to introduce too many themes or issues simultaneously may result in some issues *"disappearing a bit."* This respondent cautioned that discussions on intersectionality and discrimination could be very academic or theoretical, and potentially alienating for some country offices if not framed appropriately. Another staff member highlighted that cross-cutting issues such as gender equality, child participation and disability inclusion need to be conceptualised as fundamental "working principles" underpinning all programmatic approaches and components, rather than add-on issues that may not be consistently or adequately integrated into programme design. This requires clear guidelines and suggested methods that are communicated at the beginning of the next programme and can be monitored and shared between countries. One SC stakeholder emphasized the recent learning that COs are requesting clearer evidence-based guidelines from head office and *"they are telling us to stop being so sensitive; they do not want to discover everything by themselves."*

It is likely that COs will vary in their own thinking and readiness to take a more intersectional approach, but some are already considering how to do this more effectively. In **Nepal**, for example, a stakeholder shared, *“I see room for widening the horizons [of Norad] to embrace the other aspects of intersectionality. But it is up to us [the CO team] how we propose, how we design our interventions as well. It is up to us to come up with interventions within the fixed framework.”* On the other hand, stakeholders in some COs also highlighted that for many staff members, even the idea of gender is still largely understood as equivalent to a focus on girls.

This review, as noted in the discussion on GEM scoring, found that even where programmes reached a Gender Sensitive or Gender Transformative score, this score may have been given on the basis of specific aspects of programming (e.g., specific approaches or interventions under the TP/CEFM programmes in countries addressing child marriage/teenage pregnancies), while gender equality may have been less of a focus in other components. SCN and CO staff highlighted the importance in the next Framework Agreement to **work towards the integration of gender across all thematic areas or components**. Another complementary approach may involve the option to include targeted approaches focussing on gender equality, such as “Choices, Voices, Promises,” a gender-focused curriculum for very young adolescents between the ages of 10-14 years that aims to create positive social and behaviour change.²¹ While recognising the sensitivities and the need to tread lightly in different contexts, SCN and some CO stakeholders stated that SCN should working towards the integration of SOGIE and LGBTQI+ considerations in the new Norad Framework, where there is CO interest and capacity.

Localisation and Partnerships. Stakeholders highlighted the need for **continued efforts in the next Norad Framework towards meaningful and effective partnerships and localised and contextualised bottom-up approaches to working**. At the same time, stakeholders from SCI, SCN, Norad and the COs recognised the tensions and challenges inherent in encouraging a localised and contextual approach while still working within the parameters and institutional approaches of SCI. One SCN stakeholder reflected that at the time of the design of the last Framework, COs had different levels of capacity and experience related to gender so the interventions and approaches that they designed varied and may have been *“a little bit disjointed, and a little bit difficult to report.”* As one SCN stakeholder shared, *“It’s always difficult to strike a balance between the work that has a positive effect and the work that can backfire because we push too much in a way that is not sensitive to the local culture.”*

Stakeholders also spoke about the **importance of building and strengthening local collaborations and partnerships within the new Framework**, with a stakeholder from Norad reflecting that field visits to explore how country offices coordinate with other actors is likely to be a priority for the coming year. There are, however, both opportunities and challenges to expanding partnerships regarding CO’s gender-related work, as discussed earlier in the section on partnerships with gender, inclusion, or women-led organisations, with significant variation in the possibilities and approaches across different CO contexts.

GEM tool. This review has highlighted that as it is currently used, the **GEM tool has been useful in many respects to assist some country offices in the planning and shaping of proposals. However, for other country offices, the value is less clear or pronounced, particularly in cases where it is viewed largely as a box-ticking exercise**. Several times in the review, stakeholders referred to the GEM-related KPI as a “watermelon KPI,” (green on the outside but red on the inside). Despite the critiques, it is widely acknowledged that the GEM tool and the larger organisational conversations about gender that have accompanied it have played an important role in the ongoing shift within SCI and COs towards a greater degree of gender sensitivity, capacity, and transformative potentials within programming.

For the next phase of Norad, there may be opportunities for SCN to **strengthen engagement with COs regarding the GEM tool, to support COs in unpacking the concepts within GEM in relation to their own context and programming needs during the planning and design phase and throughout implementation**. Irrespective of the GEM score and the KPI connection, there may be opportunities to engage more fully with COs to ensure GEM is not simply a box-ticking exercise, but that it is supported

²¹ SCI. Choices, Voices, Promises Program. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/collection/choices-voices-promises-program/>

by processes and tools that can assist COs to track their progress and make necessary changes to programming throughout the implementation of the framework. One SCN respondent shared that there were discussions underway with MEAL staff to explore how some of the elements of GEM (e.g., the gender transformative aspects) could be turned into reporting questions, in order to build in follow-up and accountability beyond the submission of the tool at the design phase. There may also be opportunities to strengthen the evidence component in the GEM tool itself, for example, requiring that those completing the tool provide sources of evidence to explain and support the self-score.

Cash-based programming. The topic of **cash-based programming was raised in some discussions as a possible approach or useful instrument for addressing some aspects of gender inequality.** Some stakeholders at the CO level highlighted that the drivers of child marriage, for example, or school drop-out affecting boys and girls (often differentially) were deeply connected to issues of poverty and vulnerability. One SCN stakeholder shared, *“Cash-based programming has to be addressed. It is being considered. We cannot close our eyes to this, and the challenges have been especially exacerbated by COVID-19 and climate effects. It has to come in, and to a much larger extent.”* Questions of whether or how cash-based programming could contribute to the gender equality or gender transformative programming in the next Norad framework could be taken forward by the SCN team and respective COs, based on the available evidence and the specific country contexts.

Leveraging the flexibility of Norad funding. Some stakeholders highlighted that there may be **opportunities in the next Norad framework for COs to take even greater advantage of the degree of flexibility offered within Norad funding.** The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the critical need for the flexibility of funding, particularly as it relates to being more adaptive to specific gender issues (e.g., out of school boys and girls). Regarding gender equality and inclusion, these efforts should be continued to support the COs in moving beyond the collection of sex and disability disaggregated data, towards using that data more effectively to inform programme adjustments or adaptations. One SCN stakeholder noted that there had also been emerging good practices in the education field through using Kobo Toolbox to immediately access results that allow stakeholders and partners in the field to see data in real time. There is also the need for more qualitative data to better inform some key criteria related to gender transformative work. There may be opportunities in the next Framework to explore how the collection of real time gender-related data through tools such as Kobo could assist COs and partners to inform programme adaptations.

Training and capacity. SCN staff also reflected that there had been a **great deal of work done on internal awareness raising and training for SCN staff in recent years**, with some staff members even coming from a background in gender. SCN respondents considered there to be substantial gender capacity and knowledge in the SCN office. Stakeholders also stressed the importance of senior management buy-in and support for ongoing gender work, including support for ongoing training and capacity strengthening. However, respondents also highlighted that now, more time is needed to engage meaningfully with COs around gender, *“which we really haven’t done enough.”* Part of the challenge of engagement is the lack of clear staff counterparts in COs for cross-cutting issues such as gender. Another challenge is that COs may not be fully aware of what kind of gender-related support is available to them in SCN.

Reflecting on training and capacity-sharing opportunities in the next Norad Framework, some SCN and CO stakeholders highlighted that there was a **need to move beyond the provision of tools or training within COs, towards changing the minds and values of staff within some COs.** Some SCN stakeholders reflected that there were deep gender issues within some COs, and often, where the context was harder, there were fewer female staff. The need for enhanced intercountry sharing and learning was also raised by respondents at SCN and within COs. At SCN, one stakeholder shared that many plans related to internal learning had been scuttled by COVID-19, but there were opportunities to explore how to do this differently, through online platforms, with planning underway for the next phase. It is important to note that there was the expressed need by multiple COs to increase their capacity to ‘operationalize’ gender transformative theory and principles into tangible programmatic actions (within the context of program funding cycles and resources).

Applying regional learning. In 2020-2021, Sida carried out a “spot check” on Save the Children Sweden’s (SCS) Sida CSO 2016-2021 programme, which provided an additional opportunity to boost the ongoing efforts to strengthen gender equality programming through SCS’s work.²² **The spot check report includes a set of recommendations, many of which speak to challenges and opportunities identified within this review.** For example, the subsequent management response committed that SCS will ensure all programmes include a partner organisation with strong gender equality expertise and requested that COs and the regional office budget for a percentage of a “dedicated gender advisor to programmes at country and regional level, to support gender sensitive and gender transformative programming according to SC global standards.”²³ The management response also commits that in year one of the next phase of the programme, “an intersectional gender analysis will be undertaken in all country and regional programmes.” The document contains strategies and approaches that could be considered and integrated into the design of the next Norad Framework.



²² SC Sweden. Evaluation Management Response. Gender Spot-check 2021. Commissioned by Civil Society Unit (CIVSAM), Sida.

²³ Ibid.

CONCLUSIONS



CONCLUSIONS

impressive strides toward the integration of gender equality considerations into programming. Country offices have made substantial headway in designing programmes that strive to be at least gender sensitive and gender transformative. In this review, SCN stakeholders, alongside many CO staff, spoke clearly and passionately about this work and the need to continue building and strengthening these efforts moving into the next Norad Framework Agreement. SCN has made notable efforts to build its own capacity in gender, equality, and inclusion, and its learning culture was also apparent throughout the review, underpinning conversations, and dialogue during the process. This work has been bolstered by the gender-related commitments and strategic directions of SCI across the movement.

The focus on gender, equality, and inclusion in the Norad Framework remains highly relevant and necessary, particularly in a global context deeply impacted by the effects of COVID-19, economic upheaval and inflation, food insecurity, climate change adaptation, armed conflict, resistance and pushback on women and girl's rights from well-funded conservative political and religious groups (e.g., women and girls rights in Afghanistan and Iran, and the USA's abortion rights), and other challenges. The long-term nature of SCN's collaboration with Norad and the COs implementing the Framework Agreement provides a welcomed opportunity to identify gender challenges and build and share gender capacity over time.

However, many challenges remain. The review found that the GEM tool is useful for some COs in the planning and design of gender sensitive or transformative programmes, while other COs tend to view the tool as a "box-ticking" exercise, with little perceived value in their own context. By all accounts, the collection of sex disaggregated data has steadily improved at the CO level, although there remain varied levels of capacity regarding how to interpret and use that data for programme adaptations. Staff within COs are working within vastly different contexts, with a continued need for context-specific responses and interventions. There are also different levels of capacity within different COs, in terms of gender experience and expertise. The need for sufficient, consistent, and dedicated gender capacity within COs was a strong theme in the review, and CO staff identified a wide range of gender-related themes and issues they would like to learn more about. The review also identified examples of how children have been participating in the different country level programmes, and how issues of gender (intentionally or not) are often raised or included in these activities. Programme responses to LGBTQI+ and SOGIE rights vary across the COs. This review emphasized the importance of continuing to support some COs to strengthen their existing responses and gently support the other countries that are considering such responses or where no such responses exist.

As SCN and the COs wrap up this Framework Agreement and turn their thoughts towards the planning and design of the next phase, there is much progress to be celebrated. Across all three programme areas of Education, Child Protection and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and Child Rights Governance, there is emerging evidence that gender considerations are being integrated into programming, especially in the five targeted countries, which highlights the importance of targeting specific gender issues in each country. Exciting and important opportunities exist for SCN and the COs to strengthen and expand this targeted gender programming. Moving forward, it is important to consider (1) strengthening and expanding targeted gender programming, (2) establishing and supporting Gender Focal Point positions in all COs with an LOE of at least 30-50%, (3) ensuring that all COs conduct a gender analysis across all phases of the programme cycle, that is, the strategic planning, proposal design, implementation, M&E, and accountability and learning phases, (4) monitoring and sharing the adaptations and challenges related to sex disaggregation, and (5) strengthening CO partnerships with relevant national organisations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

PHASE 1: GEM TOOL

1. **GEM Usage and Scoring.** Review CO engagement with the GEM tool to improve its use at the proposal phase and its adaptation for implementation. The GEM tool needs to move away from a “box-ticking” exercise to being used to review and meaningfully inform design and adaptations. This process could include more direct engagement between COs and SCN gender expertise and support (e.g., through the Awards Managers, Technical Advisers, and the Special Adviser Gender Equality & SRHR) at the design phase and during implementation. It could also include the design of a tool or other support that enables COs to assess progress towards gender-related goals at specific points during implementation and adapt as needed. Management could play a stronger role in ensuring that GEM is included in reporting and shared and discussed throughout programming. In terms of cross checking, if feasible, SCN’s Special Adviser Gender Equality and SRHR could (1) check the scores and provide feedback to the COs, or (2) develop and manage a peer scoring system to promote learning across COs.
2. **Providing Evidence.** Consider altering the “Comments” column of the GEM tool to become a “Supporting Evidence” column in which the person or team completing the tool supplies clear evidence to support the decision to award a checkmark or not for each criterion. This information could also help SCN and COs to jointly better understand where ongoing skills and capacity strengthening may be useful regarding the GEM tool, and potentially gender equality more broadly. Some selected GEM criteria could also be adapted and included in reporting templates to bolster accountability towards commitments made during programme design.
3. **Contextualisation.** Review the reports from some COs that the GEM tool is not adequately responding to their specific country contexts and realities. This could be done through, for example, the inclusion of a final comments section that asks COs to describe how the GEM scoring exercise was (or was not) able to consider local contextual factors.

PHASE 2: COUNTRY OFFICE GENDER WORK

STRATEGIC GENDER PROGRAMMING ISSUES

1. **Targeted Gender Programming.** In addition to the more consistent mainstreaming of gender considerations across programmatic components, this review noted the value of targeted gender programmes in five countries as well as the *Choices, Voices, Promises* (albeit on a smaller scale). SCN could explore an expansion of these targeted programme approaches within relevant and interested countries, bolstered by specific training, support, and learning opportunities, for example, webinars for other COs.
2. **Working Principles.** For the new Norad agreement, establish key working principles, for example, child participation, gender equality, and disability inclusion, to systematically inform all work on children. As working principles, these guidelines should go beyond cross-cutting issues and inform how COs plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate their work with children.
3. **Intersectionality.** While it is the policy of SCI and SCN to include gender under inclusion and equality, some countries are requesting that local structural systems and challenges are acknowledged and that they receive more input and support regarding the understanding and application of intersectionality.
4. **LGBTQI+/SOGIE.** SCN should continue to explore CO support needs regarding the integration of LGBTQI+ and SOGIE considerations into programming, where this is feasible. There may be opportunities for facilitated learning, sharing of experiences and dialogue across those COs that are beginning to work on these issues, or are interested in doing so. However, this aspect should continue to be country-driven and sensitive to the contextual challenges and potential risks in settings where these issues are more complex and restricted.
5. **Inclusion of Boys and Men.** Through training and the sharing of country experiences, reinforce the importance of including boys and men in gender programming by providing more input and support as well as sharing relevant examples from other programmes.
6. **Systematic Gender Approach.** Despite the notable successes highlighted throughout this report, SCN requires a more systematic approach to gender for the next Framework. For example, following SC Sweden’s initiative, SCN could develop specific CO gender requirements (that is, establishing Gender Technical Partners, ensuring that each CO has a Gender Focal Point with at least a 30-50% LOE, and conducting a Gender Analysis at the beginning of the programme) to provide specific evidence-based

guidelines on what components are required in the next Framework and demonstrate that SCN takes gender equality seriously.

7. **Linkages to Livelihoods.** Continue strengthening gender's links to the COs other livelihoods programmes.

CAPACITY AND TRAINING

8. **Capacity Review and Resources.** In the next Framework, assess gender capacity at the CO level and ensure the availability of necessary human and financial resources at the country level including adequate budgets for the Gender Advisers and Gender Focal Points associated activities. This approach includes gender training for administration, finance, and human resources staff.
9. **Exploring the Gender Values and Attitudes of SC Staff.** SCN could consider an approach to providing SCN and CO staff with the structured opportunity to explore and challenge their personal gender attitudes and norms. The Guatemala team is starting to work with this approach, as is the Malawi team through funding from another project. SCN could monitor these efforts to learn from the successes and challenges of these experiences, as a potential approach moving forward.
10. **Field Staff.** Provide support for field and project staff, including partner staff, on implementing contextualised gender-sensitive and gender-transformative approaches at the community level. COs want to increase their capacity to 'operationalize' gender transformative theory and principles into tangible programmatic actions (within the context of programme funding cycles and resources). Such training requires dedicated funding.
11. **Gender Capacity and Systems Strengthening within SCN.** Continue to build SCN staff capacity to support gender sensitive and gender transformative programming. While staff highlighted that there has been significant progress in recent years, it is important to ensure gender equality remains firmly on the agenda, to continue institutionalising this capacity, and to ensure that new staff have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and capacity over time. Institutional gender strengthening involves strong and consistent leadership support and highlighting gender as a strategic priority.
12. **Enhanced Engagement between COs and SCN.** More systematic engagement and dialogue between SCN and the COs may be useful for the sharing of gender capacity and knowledge, and to identify opportunities for strengthening gender-related programming both at design and during implementation. This recommendation includes the strengthening of SCN's gender work across internal roles and functions based on existing capacity and capacity gaps.

PARTNERSHIPS

13. **Strengthen Gender-related Partnerships.** Recognising there are contextual differences across COs, the next phase of the Framework could expand and strengthen gender-related partnerships with relevant local and regional partners. These activities could be more strongly represented in the programme planning and monitoring. These partnerships would support learning from each other and sharing resources, where possible. This could include partners reviewing and supporting the CO gender work, where relevant.
14. **Partner Capacity Building.** Support the capacity building of smaller and newer partners in the areas of gender and inclusion. Part of the partner budget could be specified for concrete partner capacity building actions that are closely monitored and evaluated.

M&E AND LEARNING

15. **Programme Data Use and Sharing.** While much interesting programme data has been generated, there is an opportunity for more collation and sharing and utilisation of this data to enhance learning within and across the countries. A common review theme in the CO KIIs was the need for more consistent and formalised sharing of lessons, good practices, successes, challenges, etc. For example, develop a database of examples of adaptations resulting from sex (and other) disaggregation that can be shared across countries. These examples could be shared regularly in collated reports and linked webinar presentations.
16. **Qualitative Data.** SCN to ensure that COs develop and utilise qualitative M&E approaches and indicators to enhance gender-related data collection. This could include the consistent collection of, for example, case studies, most significant change, or stories of change.

CHILD PARTICIPATION



17. **Gender Issues in Child Participatory Approaches.** Expand opportunities across COs for more intentional and focused gender-related engagement with children through child participation activities and structures.

ANNEXES





ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: One-page Country Summaries

COLOMBIA

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Girls' and boys' learning and wellbeing is ensured in environments that are inclusive, safe, and protective, where a strong civil society and government work together to implement and fulfil children's rights.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 1,500 (F 50%) direct beneficiaries and 17,080 (F 52%) indirect beneficiaries
SCHOOLS: 15 (in 5 municipalities)
ADULTS: 725 (F 52%) direct beneficiaries and 725 (F 49%) indirect beneficiaries

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

All data related to attendance and monitoring are disaggregated by sex. The country reported no key challenges in doing so. The country office has standardised attendance forms in which each person can also indicate ethnicity, migration/refugee status, disability, and age. For young children or adults with difficulties, these sheets are filled out with help from SC staff. LGBTQI+ people cannot yet self-identify using the existing SC tools, but this is something they have begun talking about with the MEAL team and feel is viable for the Norad project. However, as all country tools are standardised it must be seen as viable by the entire country team. They have come across young people in their activities who would like to be able to self-identify in this way.

GEM TOOL

The Colombia team more regularly uses the IASC Gender with Age Marker (GAM) rather than the SCI GEM tool. The team noted that the tools are very similar, and many funders require the global version, which they have been using for some time. They apply the SC version in the award management process. In addition to using the tool to evaluate the proposal design, they use it as part of monitoring the project to reflect on their progress and at the end of the project to see if their gender work has improved. The team felt that the GEM tool is a guide that reflects ideals that while shared by the CO, can be difficult to translate into the complex context and realities in which they work.

GENDER CAPACITY

The CO has a gender coordinator, a position that is funded by another project. This coordinator has developed a gender quality training tool to support the training of all teams. The tool's content is also used for trainings on-the-ground. In addition, the CO has identified gender point-people who are responsible for training any new teams. The CO provides opportunities for all members to improve their gender training and implementation, but interest was expressed in the possibility of receiving international training with recognised certification. The organisations on the ground have little experience in gender, but the SC team trains them and accompanies any gender-related initiatives that emerge. Gender work is also focused on teachers and educational institutions and has expanded to include the development of training in gender violence certified by the local university.

“There are structural issues that cannot be solved with a training in gender equality in the community. It is an intergenerational issue. You need time and you have to work at the socioecological level, not just with girls [...]. You have to cover it all, otherwise it's just an activity that looks good.”



GUATEMALA



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To improve compliance with Children’s Rights in Guatemala through better laws and public policies; more and better investment in children; better operation of protection systems, and better quality of education; with the engagement of boys, girls, local civil-society organisations, and key government institutions.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 27,950 (F 51%, M 49%)

SCHOOLS: 40

ADULTS: 9,500, incl. teachers, principals & parents’ organisations (no disaggregation in proposal)

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

Disaggregation is carried out to allow for analyses by sex. No difficulties have been encountered as the collection tool is standardised. Activities are carried out through partners who had to receive training in how to meet this requirement; they do so consistently. Disaggregation by age and ethnicity is done based on the event or activity. There are difficulties with disability disaggregation that have been recently improved upon with the incorporation of a new partner, however it is not a variable included in the attendance sheets. Such information is collected in specific research processes or as a part of annual information. SOGIE is a very sensitive issue in Guatemala. The team feels that it is possible to incorporate SOGIE and LGBTQI+ issues, but that steps toward this goal should be taken slowly. One of the initial ways the team is working towards this goal is sensitising the country office staff, which they see as important.

GEM TOOL

Several Guatemala project teams were given a training in GEM when it was first implemented (it is a recent requirement), and then they applied the tool to ensure that the projects were gender sensitive. As the CO has worked with Norad previously, they felt that they were already conscious of gender issues given the funder’s requirements in the previous cycle, such as sex disaggregation. The gender advisor for the project and the current project manager, both leading gender experts in the CO, were brought in after the proposal stage.

GENDER CAPACITY

The CO has recently developed a gender equality policy and is working to raise awareness within the office. A six-person gender committee has been formed that includes the Norad Project Manager (who is the CO’s gender focal point) and the Norad Gender Adviser (at 100% LOE). An initial goal of this committee is to work internally with the whole SC Guatemala team on issues related to gender and sexuality, to sensitise all office staff (from management to technical implementation). The training aims to be transformative in nature, with potential impacts in staff members’ lives at home and at work. Staff training is still in its initial stages and is a priority for the next working year. The committee will start with a survey of the office staff to understand how they understand and practice gender equality in the organisation and with their families in order to establish training priorities. The CO further signalled the need to have a separate, well-defined budget for gender work. For example, they are strained to find funds to produce the materials to communicate the gender equality policy to the target populations served by SC Guatemala.

“We want to start at home, with our colleagues ... so that it becomes something truly lived by all of us and from there, expand to other sectors, because we can’t give something that we don’t have ourselves.”



LEBANON



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Strengthening civil society capacity to better respond to the rights of refugee children in Palestinian camps to learning in a safe and protective environment.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 17,560 (F 50%) refugee children aged 3-18 residing in deprived Palestinian camps

SCHOOLS: Unspecified (32 schools trained on Child Protection)

ADULTS: 6,170 (F 50%) teachers and school leadership at non-formal schools; **8,990** (F 50%) parents and community leaders will engage and support children’s learning and wellbeing



DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

Lebanon is collecting sex disaggregated data for Norad and all other programmes. This is typically collected as a requirement from donors. There are no perceived key challenges to collecting this data, rather challenges are perceived in the way the data is utilised, interpreted, and analysed – a matter that has hindered this data significantly impacting programming. Lebanon collects data disaggregated by disability and age. Respondents suggest that more could be done in the areas of disability. There is minimal engagement around LGBTQI+/SOGIE but a willingness to do so.

GEM TOOL

The GEM tool is used at the beginning of programming as an exercise that the Gender Specialist carries out predominantly, and the MEAL team engages with. This takes place at the early stages of inception and design only and is not engaged with or revisited later, throughout the implementation of the programme. A perceived strength is that *“It permits for an early checklist of different things to consider. Like a reminder of things to elaborate on as we write.”* A key perceived weakness is that it does not delve into “intersectional considerations,” and is perceived to be “binary” in its approach. Another key challenge is that it is not programme-specific and is over-arching. According to some staff, it is *“not helpful”* in many cases.

GENDER CAPACITY

The Gender Expert and Gender Focal Point are not “full time staff,” but rather viewed as team members with gender experience. There is no specific gender role specifically allocated to Norad. Capacity training on gender for staff (incoming or otherwise) is very minimal. The CO receives an automated online gender orientation that is mandatory before hiring, described by staff as very “introductory” and “limited.” Follow-up training in the areas of gender that are more advanced are not required and not frequent. There are no innovative external partnerships for training staff. All training/orientation is received from the HQ. There are no perceived challenges (or resistance) to conversations on gender or receiving more advanced training. Currently, each staff member undertakes gender development training *“as they deem fit for their area of focus.”*

“I would say Lebanon is significantly more open to gender discussions that are non-binary and more inclusive than other countries in the region that I am aware of. Lebanon could have the discussion on expanding conversations on gender identities, diversity, and expressions for the future. Yes.”



MALAWI



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

All girls and boys learn and are safe in a quality learning environment, children are protected from violence and abuse, and Governments are held to account by a strong civil society and meet their obligation to implement children’s rights.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 284,650 children, incl. CWD
SCHOOLS: 302
ADULTS: 4,110 teachers
OTHERS: 200 child led clubs, including child parliamentarians, youth clubs, and 14 village and local leaders that includes parents, traditional and faith leaders

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

The team consistently disaggregates by sex, seeing this not as a challenge, but as something embedded in the design, particularly within the Norad programme. It can be a challenge with large community events. Sometimes staff goes back to community leaders to cross-verify numbers. Increasingly, the team disaggregates by disability and age, and have noted improvements in their capacity to use the simplified Washington tool during the programme. While ethnicity is not usually a major factor in their work, some reflected that it may be useful in work relating to migration. The team also highlighted the importance of determining social and economic status through vulnerability assessments and mapping. In the religious, social, and legal context of Malawi, staff felt LGBTQI+ programming or disaggregation was still far away for their CO.

GEM TOOL

Malawi’s Norad programme team used the GEM tool mostly at the proposal phase, but not during implementation. For some, the tool is mainly a “box-ticking” exercise that needs to be included at the proposal stage. However, others viewed the tool as a useful basis for discussion and planning of a project. To increase the usefulness of the tool and contextualise the conversation, the Malawi team has adapted it into a discussion tool, taking it out of the “checklist” format and re-working the most relevant questions in a tool designed to guide and inform proposal development in workshops.

GENDER CAPACITY

Malawi has an inclusion person under which the gender responsibilities fall. Staff shared that there are also many CO staff who would not say they are “gender people” but who have actually been trained quite a lot in gender issues. The Malawi CO, through a Sida project, has begun working with Sonke Gender Justice as a Regional Technical partner to assist in training staff in gender transformative approaches. Through Norad, the CO also works with the Women’s Legal Resources Centre (WOLREC) which assists with gender-related policy development and training for SC Malawi and local partners. Staff shared that more training and capacity is needed, particularly related to intersectionality and approaches to transforming harmful social norms. Staff turnover was highlighted as a challenge, contributing to the need for further support and training.

“We engage school councils to ask them about gender issues that affect education. They are able to answer and suggest ways forward, and they question us, asking us what we are doing for them?”



MOZAMBIQUE



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To ensure that girls and boys, including CWD, enjoy their rights to quality education that are safe and inclusive

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 88,600 incl. CWD and 16,560 child parliament members (F 56%)

SCHOOLS: 122

ADULTS: 1,760 teachers and 114 members of School Councils and Community Child Protection Committees

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

At the country level, the team consistently collects sex, age, and disability disaggregated data across the Norad programme. The principle is to use the data to inform programming and adapt activities. Respondents were unsure whether sex disaggregated data was being collected across their other projects. A respondent noted, *“We used to have to ask for sex disaggregation in the past; now they are doing it themselves. We see it in the reports.”*

The main challenges related to the collection of sex disaggregated data were (1) as this is not a consistent requirement from all funders and partners, it still does feel like extra work, and (2) the team is still learning about this approach and struggles to do it well especially with large groups. A specific challenge related to disability disaggregated data was that there is a perceived discrepancy between what staff see in communities (high) and what the Washington Group tool shows as disability (lower).

Respondents stated that SOGIE and LGBTQI+ rights are currently not being tracked or responded to in the Norad programme because currently *“there is no demand from communities for this.”* The team noted that it continues to monitor this issue for possible future responses.

GEM TOOL

The team uses the GEM mostly in the proposal phase but also to track gender progress through implementation. The team is familiar with the tool because of a Sida-funded project where it is also a requirement. Respondents stated that the GEM tool is useful, especially at the beginning of programme, to assess response and compliance with gender requirements at the design phase.

The main challenges include (1) it is an additional process especially as they have other projects where the GEM tool is not being used, and (2) uncertainty about how the whole team is using it. As one respondent said, *“We are not all part of this process.”*

GENDER CAPACITY

Currently, there is a Gender Adviser (GA) who is based in the country office in Maputo. This is a full-time position with 10% LOE for the Norad programme. Respondents noted that the GA has influence and staff take the position seriously. One challenge is that this GA is the third person in the position (in four years) and recruitment and selection processes are long because of the lack of required skills. Moreover, because of the high demand for such skills in the country, once a person is selected, they are approached by other corporate, government, and corporate organisations and they leave.

The GA (supported by gender staff in the project districts) has conducted (ToT) training on, e.g., gender equality and GBV in emergency interventions. There is the need for more gender awareness training and concrete gender responses at the country office level to respond to gender issues in, e.g., human resources, recruitment, supply chain, and budgets.

“In meetings I can now see how staff are taking up the issue of gender. For example, they are discussing sex disaggregation and mentioning the needs of both boys and girls now.”



MYANMAR



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To address children’s concerns on learning and safety in schools, protection against violence, and child rights

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 57,470 including CWD and other marginalised children such as those from religious and ethnic minorities

SCHOOLS: 180

ADULTS: National Human Rights Commission, parliamentarians, Women and Child Rights Committee, Department of Social Welfare, and Ministry of Education

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

At the country level, the team is consistently collecting sex, age, disability, and ethnicity disaggregated data across the Norad programme. This data is being used for programme planning, implementation, and monitoring. For example, *“We especially use the ethnicity disaggregation to highlight the needs of children from ethnic and religious minorities, and how we can respond to these needs.”*

Programme staff stated that the consideration of SOGIE and LGBTQI+ rights is not currently done in Myanmar because of “traditional barriers,” less demand, and the response of other well-established organisations responding to these needs.

GEM TOOL

The Norad programme team used the GEM tool mostly at the proposal phase, and, to a lesser extent, during the implementation. The team highlighted the GEM strengths as a guide in the proposal phase to assist the team to better understand their gender approach. The GEM tool helped the team to *“work towards improved gender representation in our activities.”*

The team noted that using the GEM tool was difficult because it is a new tool, only some staff have received training, and not everyone understands its purpose and use despite the score being shared with staff.

GENDER CAPACITY

There is a Gender Adviser (based in Thailand) that covers the country office and the Norad programme. Moreover, various staff advise on gender within different projects. The Gender Adviser provides gender training (e.g., Gender and Inclusion, 2022). Respondents agreed that despite the Gender Adviser and the related training and research, there is a need to strengthen the country-wide gender capacity. While management promotes gender, the team felt they need significantly more consistent gender training. The Gender Adviser and team are currently trying to create and expand the space for gender. *“I feel that Save the Children Myanmar needs to improve a lot in terms of gender capacity at the country office, and the programme and partner levels.”*

“There is a lot of flexibility in Norad that has allowed us to adapt to COVID-19 and the coup ... Having 5-year support is good for us because it is long-term. This is very important for us especially in this context. We need more of this long-term support. It is not only good for the children, but it allows us to learn.”



NEPAL



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Enhanced institutional capacity of local and state governments and civil society to respond to child rights violations and create and environment for survival, protection, development, and participation.

TARGET GROUPS

- CHILDREN:** 110,000 children
- SCHOOLS:** 246 schools and 217 Early Childhood Care and Development centres
- ADULTS:** 1,800 teachers. 6,500 parents and School Management Committee members

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

Nepal consistently disaggregates data by sex: ‘female,’ ‘male’ and ‘other.’ Any data collection identifying gender minority groups must be sensitive and confidential. Data is also consistently disaggregated by age, disability, ethnicity, and caste. Activities targeting LGBTQI+ populations exist, but are small scale and cover limited geographic regions. In-house SOGIE expertise is available from a team member, who is also a SOGIE Advisor to the SC Global Team (this was a temporary position, mainly due to the lack of funding). A good foundation for serving this population exists while the team continues to learn how to mainstream and scale-up programming while maintaining beneficiaries’ trust, confidentiality, and safety.

GEM TOOL

Proposal writing teams, including Technical Advisors and the GESI Focal Point, use the GEM tool to review project proposals to ensure they meet the SCI minimum benchmark of Gender Sensitive. The GESI Focal Point is the last to review the proposal before submission. If the proposal is not Gender Sensitive, the team adjusts relevant activities to meet the minimum score. The country team has embedded an intersectional perspective in their approach to cross-disciplinary work, so it is not difficult to achieve the Gender Sensitive benchmark. It is challenging, however, to translate Gender Transformative proposals into concrete actions which address root causes through structural and systems-level change.

GENDER CAPACITY

The programme has a Gender Focal Point at 10% LOE. The team in Nepal feels well equipped to address and integrate gender aspects into programming. However, the highly diverse socio-cultural country context requires an intersectional approach to programming. The team would like training on intersectional analysis using the ecological model to adequately address the needs of diverse populations, improve programme activities’ gender transformative potential and enable the training of partners on this analytical framework as well. The team notes that intersectional perspectives need to be integrated across all thematic areas, including health, education, and child protection.

“GEM is a tool to understand whether a project proposal is gender sensitive or gender unaware.”

“Teams are always working to make project proposals gender transformative.”

“Achieving the [GEM] score is easy but transforming each of the indicators into tangible activities can be challenging.”



NIGER



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To increase literacy, numeracy, life skills and wellbeing as well as ensure a protective and inclusive learning environment for boys and girls including the most marginalised.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 44,700 pupils

SCHOOLS: 80

ADULTS: 460 teachers, including 80 directors

OTHERS: Department and regional education supervisory staff, Associations of the Mother Educators, parents' associations, Community Early Warning and Emergency Response System

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

The Niger team consistently disaggregates by sex, using the categories “girl/ woman; boy/ man.” There are some operational constraints within Niger, including challenges with understaffing, which can present challenges to maintaining the consistent collection of quality data. In Niger, data is also disaggregated by age and disability. Disability is not further disaggregated by type of disability. This could “ignore” children living with disabilities which are not physical and visible, such as developmental or learning disabilities, and limits the team’s ability to develop programming for these populations. Ethnicity is a sensitive topic in this context, and ethnicity-related data is only collected during one-on-one surveys and not as a part of regular monitoring activities. Currently, LGBTQI+ identities and rights are not openly discussed in Niger. There is a sense that working in visible support of LGBTQI+ rights would “*put organisation acceptance and relations with communities in danger.*”

GEM TOOL

The proposal development teams use the GEM tool at the beginning of project design and during proposal development. The Programme teams use the GEM tool to guide the implementation of activities and ensure the incorporation of gender aspects. The team shared that GEM is a reminder to prioritise gender transformation in proposals and gives them a reference point for making a proposal more gender inclusive. However, GEM does not fully respond to gender criteria demanded by certain funders, who require the use of more rigorous gender assessment tools. Stakeholders highlighted that there is also the potential for bias when using the tool if the authors of the proposal are also scoring the proposal.

GENDER CAPACITY

The Technical Advisers support the CO gender work. More investment is needed in gender training and capacity building at the country office level. The team shared that programmes and project activities across sectors, such as food security and protection, should work to consistently integrate gender perspectives into their activities. The team also highlighted the need to increase child participation in the development of project activities to strengthen the links between child rights, participation, and inclusion. In Niger, structural determinants such as traditional socio-cultural values, mounting economic and food crises and legislation which legalises early marriage can impede efforts to implement large scale, sustainable changes.

“Disaggregated data [by sex and age] from different studies, including monitoring and evaluation activities in the field, orient all of our planning and forecasting.”



PALESTINE



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To ensure access to quality education in a safe learning environment by strengthening the capacity of national authorities along with civil society actors.

TARGET GROUPS

- CHILDREN:** 70,000 (F 50%) children
- SCHOOLS:** 22 UNRWA schools in Gaza and 28 Ministry of Education (MoE) schools in the West Bank
- ADULTS:** 19,000 teachers, parents, and community members

DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

Palestine is collecting sex-disaggregated data for NORAD and all other programmes. This is typically collected as a requirement from donors. The team indicated that while there were no real challenges to collecting this data, the data could be analysed and utilised more effectively, to better inform changes or adaptations to programmes. In Palestine, the team also collects data disaggregated by disability and age. There is currently no engagement around LGBTQI+/SOGIE, and the team does not believe this is possible due to “cultural and social” barriers around discussing gender through a non-binary lens.

GEM TOOL

The GEM tool is used at the beginning of programming as an exercise that the Gender Specialist carries out predominantly. The Palestine office, due to budget costs, lost their Gender Specialist and a new one was never hired. The Gender Focal Point currently engages with the tool. This takes place at the early stages of inception and design. It is not revisited throughout implementation. The Palestine team largely sees the tool as a “gender checklist,” but it is perceived to be very limited “*beyond ensuring we ask important gender questions early on.*” They find an alternative Gender Checklist they use at the CO level to be more contextualised and “*much more helpful.*”

GENDER CAPACITY

The Gender Focal Point position was cut due to budgetary restrictions and a staff member has informally stepped into this role. Capacity training for staff on gender (including new hires or otherwise) is very minimal. The CO receives an automated online gender orientation that is mandatory before hiring that is very “*simple and entry level.*” Follow-up training in the areas of gender that are more advanced are not required and only undertaken if the HQ “*develops or shares something new*” – even then, this is not required. There are currently no innovative external partnerships for training staff, either. Challenges in the areas of gender present themselves in the form of an “unwillingness” to move beyond binary conversations, as well as limitations “*at the general social and cultural levels*” to conversations on gender in general.

“The GEM tool is not contextualised enough, and often we struggle with contextualising it. We think that this is why not too many people from our staff engage with it. We find that it is too broad and disconnected. This is also why it does not make too much sense to engage with it after the initial stages of design. It is not too helpful along these lines.”



SOMALIA



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Girls and boys, especially the most marginalised, learn and develop in a safe, protective, and inclusive environment.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: **21,540** (F 50%) children across four regions in Central South Somalia (Galgadud, Benadir) and Puntland (Karkar, Nugal); **10,860** girls, **10,680** boys, and indirectly reach **9,550** children (4,820 girls, 4,730 boys)

SCHOOLS: Unspecified

ADULTS: Unspecified (The adults who will benefit from the programme include parents, teachers, members of Community Education Committees and Community Welfare Committees)



DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

Somalia is collecting sex disaggregated data for Norad. This is collected as a requirement from donors, and also for *“all activities and all indicators in the log frame.”* It is collected in output and outcome level indicators. The team did not identify any key challenges in collecting this data, but instead perceived the challenge to lie in how this data is used. Staff suggested it was not always *“utilised adequately.”* Somalia also collects data by disability through the use of the Washington Group tool, although this is very limited. There is no engagement around LGBTQI+/SOGIE issues.

GEM TOOL

The GEM tool is used at the beginning of programming by *“everyone at the office when they need it. The team is aware of the tool and engages with it where necessary.”* The GEM tool is used in the inception and programme design phases only. The tool is perceived as still having *“gaps in the areas of contextualisation and its applicability to the Somalian context.”* It is also challenging to interpret the results of this tool according to staff, leading some to perceive the tool as impractical. The team noted that they use sex disaggregated data to make any adaptations based on gender considerations.

GENDER CAPACITY

The Gender Specialist and Gender Coordinator are full-time staff and support the whole CO. Capacity training on gender for staff is minimal. The CO receives an automated online gender orientation that is mandatory before hiring, and the Gender Specialist does not deliver training to staff (for the Norad programme). There are no external partnerships for training staff, and all staff take training directly through *“opportunities shared from HQ.”* Conversations on gender are guided by gender disaggregated data and quantitative and binary approaches to gender.

“Whenever we are collecting data, we have information from both boys and girls. We aim to have gender balance on all levels. We focus more on females because you know many vulnerabilities pertain to them exclusively.”



SOUTH SUDAN



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

Boys and Girls in South Sudan including the most deprived, learn and develop in a safe and inclusive environment and children are protected against violence and their rights implemented.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 36,000 children including out-of-school girls and boys, teenage mothers, and CWD

SCHOOLS: 40

ADULTS: 3,800 parents/caregivers, 720 teachers, and 40 head teachers

OTHERS: Community leaders, officials from the Ministries of Education, Science and Technology, Defence, Education, Gender, and Child Welfare.



DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

The Norad team uses sex disaggregation for all its data. It can be challenging to find female enumerators and engage female participants in data collection during some agricultural work seasons. The team also disaggregates by age, disability, and geographic region. Given the civil conflict in the country, ethnicity is too sensitive a topic to discuss or use in data collection. Current socio-cultural context and traditional values do not allow for conversations around LGBTQI+ issues or advocacy.

GEM TOOL

In South Sudan, the proposal writing teams, including Technical Advisors and the Gender Focal Point, use the GEM tool to review project proposals to ensure they meet the SCI minimum benchmark of Gender Sensitive. The Gender Focal Point is the last to review the proposal before submission. If the proposal is not Gender Sensitive, the team adjusts relevant activities to meet the minimum score. The team finds that GEM is a great resource to help formulate proposals which are gender sensitive. The tool assists the team in understanding where and how they can adapt the program to integrate gender. For the South Sudan team, operationalising proposals into concrete, gender sensitive action plans and activities can be challenging, especially because gender sensitive activities often require additional time and resources which are not always available. More innovative, sustainable gender sensitive and transformative programme activities are therefore not pursued, aside from the basic actions such as disaggregation of data by sex.

GENDER CAPACITY

The CO has a Gender Focal Point at 100% LOE for the whole CO, part of which unspecified time is spent on the Norad programme. The South Sudan team feels their capacity regarding gender overall is strong, although training on how to take programmes from being Gender Sensitive to being Gender Transformative is needed, especially considering the different socio-cultural norms and structural parameters which make it difficult to achieve some of the gender balance aims in programming. Given the socio-cultural norms around gender, SC staff are training community based-organisations (CBOs) on gender-related topics, as opposed to receiving any such training from specialised organisations. At present, the Gender Focal Point's time is divided between too many projects for her to effectively give time to any one project. The integration of gender specialists into each programme would help and is part of an existing Gender Action Plan. Further, a Training of Trainers approach would allow gender trainings to "cascade" into community and provide benefits for a greater number of CBOs.

“What we expect of ourselves in terms of gender norms and GEM criteria is not what is expected by the community.”



UGANDA



OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To support deprived children to have the opportunity to attend quality and inclusive basic education, including complementary basic education and demonstrate relevant learning outcomes.

TARGET GROUPS

CHILDREN: 56,400 children given equitable access to quality and inclusive education in a safe, secure, and enabling environment

SCHOOLS: 80

ADULTS: 22,400 parents, 560 teachers, administrators, and head teachers (no disaggregation in proposal)

OTHERS: Education authorities, child protection structures, community leaders, district disaster management committees



DISAGGREGATION BY SEX AND OTHER PARAMETERS

CO staff shared that they consistently disaggregate by sex. They have seen a shift in the CO in this regard, saying *“it is part and parcel of our tools and programmes. It has become part of the staff way of doing work.”* The CO increasingly disaggregates by disability, but staff suggested that this was more consistently done in the education pillar than in other pillars. Disaggregation by ethnicity is generally not done due to the specific context and the risks of conflict that it could raise. In Uganda, the CO does not explicitly consider LGBTQI+ issues within its programmes due to the social context and legal framework in Uganda, and the risks that this would entail for all, including the risk of exposure for LGBTQI+ individuals. However, they were clear that they do not exclude or discriminate.

GEM TOOL

Uganda’s Norad programme team used the GEM tool mostly at the proposal phase, but not during implementation. Staff shared that the GEM tool was useful if time was put into it. It can help identify “hidden practices” related to gender and provides an opportunity for reflection. One challenge identified is that the tool does not help during implementation, as the project changes and evolves. Some felt a tool to help assess and guide the team on gender-related aspects during implementation might be useful.

GENDER CAPACITY

The CO has a full-time gender specialist, partially funded by Norad, supporting the entire CO. This position was filled in May 2022, and recruitment took some time. The CO is trying to establish Gender Focal Points to different locations to create a Community of Practice on gender. Staff shared that *“because he is only one [person], it is challenging, especially for capacity building.”* Long-time staff also shared that they have seen significant progress in gender capacity in the CO over time. *“I have also seen that it just became part of our work.”*

“Field teams need to go beyond the numbers to understand in depth what gender transformation entails. This requires technical training and support. Many of these areas are remote and recruitment is a challenge. Coaching and mentorship is critical, as is ongoing support for staff in the field.”

CREDITS

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[marker/](#)

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ANNEX 3: Stakeholder List

No.	Person interviewed	Total	F	M	Position	Country	Date	Method
PHASE 2: Head Office and Others								
1	Maren Bjune	1	1		Senior Adviser Child Participation, SCN	Norway	21 Nov 2022	KII
2	Hanne Lotte Moen	1	1		Special Adviser Gender Equality and SRHR, SCN	Norway	24 Nov	KII
3	Channe Addisu Gebre	1		1	Senior Adviser MEAL (and gender focal point), SCN	Norway	30 Nov	KII
4	Angela Grajales Svendsen	1	1		Responsible for Norad cooperation (former gender focal point and award manager), SCN	Norway	30 Nov	KII
5	Brynjar Nilsen	1		1	Child Rights Director, SCN	Norway	1 Dec	KII
6	Nita Gojani	1	1		Senior Adviser Child Rights Governance, SCN	Norway	1 Dec	KII
7	Ragnhild Nordvik	1	1		Education Director, SCN	Norway	6 Dec	KII
8	Nora Ingdal	1	1		International Programme Director, SCN	Norway	8 Dec	KII
9	Tuva Bugge	1	1		Snr. Adviser, Dep. for Human Developm., Section for Human Rights, Norad	Norway	15 Dec	KII
10	Ann Margaret Stewart Pedersen	1	1		Director of Programme Quality and Impact, SCN	Norway	15 Dec	KII
11	Henok Zeratsion	1		1	Senior Advisor, Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning, SCN	Norway	16 Dec	Email
12	Dreeni Geer Deanna Duplessis	2	2		Global Director of Child Rights, Equality & Social Justice, Prog., Quality & Impact, SCI Global Lead - Gender Equality, SCI	Canada	17 Jan 2023	KII
13	Hanne Lotte Moen	1	1		Special Adviser Gender Equality and SRHR, SCN	Norway	24 Jan	Follow-up KII
14	Jenni Wisung	1	1		Senior Gender Equality Advisor, International Department, Save the Children, Sweden	Sweden	23 Jan	KII
PHASE 2: SCN and Country Offices								
1	Liva Maric	1	1		Award Manager SCN	Mozambique	29 Nov	KII
2	Aster Solomon Granum	1	1		Award Manager SCN	Malawi	29 Nov	KII
3	Ana Dulce Guizado Argentina Sansone	2	2		Provincial Prog. Director & Norad Manager Gender Equality & Gender Based Violence Specialist	Mozambique	30 Nov	FGD
4	Peluth Natumanya Kenneth Kombe	2	1	1	Deputy OPS Director Norad Programme Manager	Uganda	1 Dec	FGD
5	Federico Orioli	1		1	Awards Manager SCN (Sahel Region)	Norway	2 Dec	KII
6	Veronica Gatpan Sharon Mukanyi Aluma Thomas	3	2	1	Gender & Child Rights Governance Coordinator (Juba CO) NORAD Programme Manager (Bol programme office) MEAL Focal point (Bol programme office)	South Sudan	5 Dec	FGD
7	Than Tun Saw Thiha Aung Win Pa Pa Than	3	1	2	Head of Programme, Education Child Protection Advisor Child Right Governance Technical Lead	Myanmar	5 Dec	FGD
8	Gustavo Rangel	1	0	1	Awards Manager SCN, Latin America region	Colombia & Guatemala	5 Dec	KII
9	Jessica Gregson	1	1	0	Education Technical Advisor	Lebanon	5 Dec	KII
10	Samar Abdelrahman	1	1	0	Gender Equality, GBV and Social Inclusion Specialist	Somalia	5 Dec	KII
11	Hiba Sabbah	1	1	0	MEAL Specialist	Lebanon	6 Dec	KII
12	Viviana Pineda	4	3	1	Project Manager Norad	Colombia	6 Dec	FGD

	Amy Smith Andrés Cardozo Ayse Kocak				Protection Manager Protection Manager General Project Manager			
13	Fartun Ali Yaasiin Hersi	2	0	2	Norad Programme Director Norad MEAL Manager	Somalia	6 Dec	FGD
14	Burcu Munyas Rachel Dixon Kenneth Wala	3	2	1	Prog. Quality and Impact director Project Manager, Programme Development and Quality (specialising in gender & inclusion) Norad Programme Team Leader	Malawi	7 Dec	FGD
15	Bishnu Bamma Rabindra Gautam Kamlesh Niraula	3	1	2	Norad Programme Manager CRG and CP Advisor Gender and Social Inclusion Adviser	Nepal	7 Dec	FGD
16	Dan Basaija Kevin Mubuke	2	1	1	Norad Prog. Manager, Gulu field office Head of CP and CRG operations	Uganda	7 Dec	FGD
17	Firas Ghosheh Lubna Iskandar Gloria Donate	3	2	1	West Bank Programme Manager CRG and Partnership Advisor Programme Development, Quality and Advocacy Director	Palestine	8 Dec	FGD
18	Donnex Bengo Tumbikani Kaonga Thandizolathu Kadzamira	3	1	2	CRG Programme Manager Child Protection Prog. Manager Senior Technical Advisor Child Protection and CRG	Malawi	9 Dec	FGD
19	Evelyn Ortiz María Teresa Mendoza Raquel Chaicoj Idalma Choquin	4	4	0	Project Director Norad Gender Official MEAL Official Norad Education and Protection Coordinator	Guatemala	9 Dec	FGD
20	Myrna Hammade Mireille MaatoukAoife Keniry	3	3	0	Education Coordinator in Beirut, and Mt. Lebanon Norad Project Manager (Incoming) Programme Development Coordinator	Lebanon	12 Dec	FGD
21	Idrissa Idi Honore Kabamba Mohamed Toure	3	0	3	Gender Advisor Education Advisor CRG Advisor	Niger	13 Dec	FGD
22	Margaret Masamba	1	1	0	Senior Education and Child Development	Malawi	13 Dec	Email
23	Win Pa Pa Than	1	1	0	Child Right Governance Technical Lead	Myanmar	14 Dec	Email
24	Belinda Tran	1	1		Award Manager SCN	Uganda	3 Jan 2023	Email

SUMMARY

KIIs	FGDs	Emails
# Interviews 20	# FGDs 14	# Emails 4
# Persons 21	# Persons 40	# Responses 4
F 17 (81%), M 4 (19%)	F 23 (58%), M 17 (42%)	F 3 (75%), M 1 (25%)
Total Responses 65		
F 43 (66%), M 22 (34%)		

ANNEX 4: Interview Guidelines

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Section 1: Sex disaggregation in programming

1. Understand how the Country Offices (COs) use **sex disaggregation in programming** and the associated challenges.
2. Explore COs interest and readiness in responding to **LGBTQI+ and SOGIE** activities and monitoring.

Section 2: GEM scores and gender analyses

3. Understand when and how the COs use the **GEM tool** as well as its strengths and weaknesses.

Section 3: CO capacity and training for gender equality

4. Understand whether the CO has adequate **capacity** to effectively integrate gender equality into programmes (and understand what kind of capacity/structures they have in place).
5. Understand what kind of **gender training** CO staff have received, and what are the outstanding training and capacity building needs within the CO.

Section 4: Child Participation

6. Understand what approaches the COs are using to **strengthen child participation** within gender programming including recent examples.

Section 5: Other

7. Understand the **effects of COVID-19** on the CO's gender programming and the CO's responses to these challenges.
8. Explore any **recommendations** for future gender programming.

INTERVIEW GUIDE: SCN Management and Key Stakeholders

NO.	QUESTION	RESPONSE
Key Question for Objective 2		
Sex disaggregation in programming		
1	In your experience, to what extent are Country Offices (COs) consistently collecting sex-disaggregated data within the Norad framework?	
2	What are the main challenges related to the collection of sex-disaggregated data in the Norad framework?	
3	Within the Norad programme, are COs consistently disaggregating on other parameters such as age, disability, and ethnicity?	<input type="checkbox"/> age <input type="checkbox"/> disability <input type="checkbox"/> ethnicity
	Please discuss for each where relevant	
4	To what extent do you think COs are considering SOGIE (SC) in their programming? What do you see as the main challenges in the integration of SOGIE (SC) into programming & monitoring?	
5	Within the Norad programme, how are the sex-disaggregated data being used, and by whom? For example, do you have examples of sex-disaggregated data collected that has been used to adjust or change programming?	How?
		Who?
		Change Example?

6	In your experience, within the Norad framework, are COs using the GEM consistently at the proposal stage?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please explain.		
Gender analysis and the use of GEM			
7	What is your own experience with the GEM?		
CO capacity on gender equality and training needs			
8	How would you assess the gender equality capacity, as a whole, within the Norad programme?		
	Please explain your score.		
9	What are the factors that make some COs more successful in integrating gender equality into their programming than others, within the Norad framework?		
10	What kind of support do you feel is still needed for COs, to enhance the effectiveness of their gender equality work?		
	Who do you think should be providing such support?		
11	In your view, what progress, if any, has been made in the integration of gender equality into the Norad programme since the last gender review in 2017? <i>[Or for staff who have joined more recently, we can ask about perceptions since they have joined the team.]</i>		
Other			
12	In what ways, if any, has COVID-19 affected gender equality programming within the Norad framework?		
13	What recommendations would you have for strengthening SCN's gender work moving forward, for the new Norad framework?		
14	Any other final comments, or questions?		

INTERVIEW GUIDE: Country Office Staff

NO.	QUESTION	RESPONSE	
Key Questions for Objective 2 (according to the ToR)			
Sex disaggregation in programming			
1	At the country level, are you consistently collecting sex-disaggregated data across the Norad programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If not, please explain.		
2	What are the main challenges related to the collection of sex-disaggregated data?		
3	Is the CO consistently disaggregating on other intersectional parameters such as:	<input type="checkbox"/> age	
	Please discuss each where relevant.	<input type="checkbox"/> disability	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnicity
4	Does your CO integrate SOGIE/the rights of LGBTQI+ children in the Norad programme? <i>[SOGIE = Sexual Orientation, Gender</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

	<i>Identity & Gender Expression]</i>		
	If not, to what extent do you think your CO is ready to do this in future programming?		
5	How are the sex-disaggregated data being used, and by whom? E.g., do you have examples of sex-disaggregated data collected that has been used to adjust or change programming?	How?	
		Who?	
		Change Example?	
Gender analysis and the use of GEM			
6	What is your understanding of the GEM objective?		
7	Are you consistently using the GEM at the proposal stage?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please explain.		
8	When are you scoring the GEM? At the start, middle, end of the design phase, or after the proposal has been submitted?	<input type="checkbox"/> start <input type="checkbox"/> middle <input type="checkbox"/> end of the design phase, or <input type="checkbox"/> after proposal submission?	
9	What is your experience with the GEM?	Successes	
		Challenges	
10	Do programme staff, including Technical Advisers, know about the program's GEM score?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please explain		
11	Has the GEM scoring process ever resulted in changing programmes?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please provide an example.		
12	Did you do a gender analysis at the start of the Norad programme (E.g., This could be gender questions integrated into other studies or needs assessments)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If yes, do you have examples of documents showing this?		
13	Have you done a gender analysis and/or other related studies at a later stage of the Norad programme?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If a gender analysis/studies have been undertaken, please explain how the results have been used to inform programming.		
CO capacity on gender equality and training needs			
14	Do you have a gender equality policy or gender equality action plan or structures for ensuring gender equality in the CO? Explain.	<input type="checkbox"/> equality policy <input type="checkbox"/> gender equality action plan or <input type="checkbox"/> structures for ensuring gender equality in the CO	
	Please explain (familiarity, comfort, use)		
15	How do you (in your role and capacity) contribute to strengthen gender aspects in the Norad programmes?		
	Where is this gender capacity located in your country office?		
16	Do you have a gender adviser/focal point?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

	If so, what is the level of LOE, and is that for Norad programmes only or the whole CO?	LOE:	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Norad	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole CO
	Where do they “sit” and what influence do they have?		
17	Have staff undergone gender training?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If so, when, who, when, and how many?	When?	
		Who conducted this?	
		How many sessions?	
18	Does your CO have the necessary gender competence/expertise?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If not, what kind of support do you need?		
19	Are you partnering with any gender organisations (E.g., women’s or girl’s rights organisations, masculinity networks, LGBTQI+ organisations, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please name the organisation/s.		
20	Have these organisations helped train the CO or other partner organisations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please name the organisation/s.		
21	Do you have any training or other needs related to gender equality issues that SCN, other members, or COs could help you with?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please explain.		
Child Participation			
22	Has your CO undertaken any participatory exercises or reflections directly with children to understand their views on gender equality within Norad programming in your country?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Please explain your successes and challenges.		
Other			
23	In what ways, if any, has COVID-19 affected gender equality programming within the Norad framework?		
24	What recommendations do you have for strengthening SCN’s gender equality work for the new Norad framework? Any suggestions for how to improve SCN staff’s ability to strengthen the gender work in Norad?	1. 2. 3.	
25	Final thoughts, comments, or questions?		

ANNEX 5: Further Findings on Disability Disaggregation

This review focused on gender equality within the current Norad framework agreement. However, as per the ToR, CO staff were also asked in interviews whether they disaggregated data by disability. This Annex presents some findings from the discussions with staff in response to this line of enquiry.

In these discussions, CO staff were clear that there had been both **successes and challenges in their efforts to disaggregate by disability**. In terms of successes, across most COs, staff and stakeholders felt there had been improvements in recent years in terms of capacity at the CO level to disaggregate by disability. In **Malawi**, for example, staff members shared that it was not easy at the beginning of the Norad framework to find data on disability, or to disaggregate disability data systematically at baseline, as they needed to rely on standard data from the government which they found of questionable reliability. During the Norad programme, however, the team received training on the WGQ and began using the questions (mainly in schools). The team noted that they collaborated with other organisations such as UNICEF towards a standardised use of the tool. The **Malawi** team also reported that the initial assessment is followed up with clinical assessments, which support the provision of assistive devices for children. Team members argued that this work should be built upon for the next phase of Norad.

While there have been important achievements and notable progress has been made, team members across most COs also highlighted a range of challenges in consistently disaggregating (and using) disability data. In **Lebanon**, for example, staff shared that at present, much of the data collection regarding disability is not as routine as sex-disaggregated data collection, but is often rather based on donor requests, or the specific nature and target of a programme or project. One stakeholder in **Lebanon** shared, *“We could certainly be doing more on disability. We collect this data, but it is not as second nature as collecting data on age or gender for instance.”* Similarly, in **Somalia**, a staff member commented, *“We fall very short on the issue of disability and fall short in collecting data there unfortunately. This is not prioritised on a country level and conversations on its prioritisation are inconsistent. We only do this when the donor requires it.”* In **Palestine**, a staff member noted, *“I assure you that at the country office level, as well as internationally, we could all be doing more on disability – especially when it comes to collecting data disaggregated along these lines.”*

In **Mozambique**, interestingly, team members agreed that it was *“good for us to track disability,”* but felt that there was a discrepancy between the levels of disability they could see in communities, as opposed to what the WGQ revealed. The team suggested that lower numbers of CWD were identified in communities when using the tool, compared with what they observed in communities. One staff member shared, *“Disability is tougher for us to disaggregate compared to sex because of this problem of lower numbers with the Washington Group tool.”* While an in-depth exploration of this perception is beyond the scope of this review, SCN noted in its midterm progress report²⁴ that the **Mozambique** CO had problems with the translation of the WGQ into the local language, which adversely affected the quality of the disability data collected at midterm, and that **Mozambique** was the only one of the five COs unable to collect reliable baseline disability data that still experienced a challenge doing so at midterm.

Stakeholders in some other COs stressed that while the collection of disability data was important, this data was not always used in productive ways. For example, in **Uganda**, team members reported using the WGQ to assess disability most effectively within education programming, noting that while it was not totally consistent, they managed to do this to a significant extent. However, some team members argued that while the tool helped them to identify disability, *“the challenge is when it comes to intervention because then a technical person is required to really go deeper.”*

²⁴ SCN. 16 Dec 2022. Midterm progress report on quality of disability data and disability inclusion in countries included in Norad Framework Agreement 2019-2023



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