

Policy and Guideline on Partnership



April 2006

Table of Contents

	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2.0 WORKING RELATIONSHIPS.....	4
3.0 NON-NEGOTIABLE VALUES	5
4.0 IMPLEMENTING AND MANAGING PARTNERSHIP	6
4.1 PARTNERSHIPS VISA VIS PROJECT	6
4.2 PARTNERSHIP AREAS OF WORK.....	6
4.3 TYPES AND CAPACITY OF PROSPECTIVE PARTNERS OF SCiU	7
4.4 SELECTION OF PARTNERS	7
4.5 THE ROLE OF SCiU IN PARTNERSHIP.....	7
4.6 SCiU'S GOAL OF PARTNERSHIP.....	7
4.7 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF PARTNERSHIP	7
4.8 WORKING PRINCIPLES	8
4.9 MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS	9
4.10 PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT OR MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.....	9
4.11 INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL DIALOGUE AND RELATIONSHIP	9
4.12 CAPACITY BUILDING IN PARTNERSHIP	9
4.13 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP	10
5.0 REVIEW OF THE PARTNERSHIP POLICY.....	10
6.0 REFERENCES	10

Acknowledgments

Save the Children in Uganda would like to thank everyone for their great contribution to the development of this partnership policy and guidelines. The Civil Society Organizations and government departments in Gulu, Pader, Lira, Apac, Kumi, Moroto, Kotido, Nakapiripirit, Iganga, Mbale, Kampala, Wakiso, Mpigi, Bundibudyo and Kasese; the staff of Save the Children in Uganda and Save the Children Norway and Denmark all played a key role in facilitating the assessments, development of the policy and guidelines, and the final input into the workshops.

Special thanks to Ms Senait Gebregziabher, the SCiU Associate Programme Director whose leadership and guidance ensured the realisation of this policy and guidelines. We will always be very grateful to her for this significant contribution to our programme.

We also acknowledge the learning from the good practices of various organizations, and publications.

We pledge our continued commitment to immediate and lasting improvements in children's lives.

The Vision:

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns\
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

This publication may be reproduced by any educational and non profit organization without fee or prior permission, with due acknowledgement to Save the Children in Uganda.

First published 2006

Save the children in Uganda

Plot 68/70 Kira Road

P.O.Box 12018

Kampala, Uganda.

Tel. 041 341714, 344796, 343486, 031 260063/4

Sciug@sciug.org

Save the Children in Uganda is a consolidated programme of Save the Children Norway (lead agency), Save the Children Denmark and Save the Children UK.

Save the Children in Uganda is a member of the International Save the Children Alliance.

1.0 Introduction

Save the Children in Uganda (SCiU) is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) that operates on the basis of a programme and a strategy that emphasises a rights-based approach to improve the situation of children and to promote greater acceptance of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It is a consolidated programme of Save the Children Norway, Save the Children UK and Save the Children Denmark.

For promoting the work on children's issues SCiU has formulated two main strategic programme objectives supported by two other objectives.

Main Strategic Programme Objectives:

- ? Fulfil children's rights to education.
- ? Fulfil children's rights to protection (Child Protection).

Supporting Strategic Programme Objectives:

- ? Fulfil children's rights to protection against the impact of HIV/AIDS.
- ? Fulfil children's rights to grow-up in households with adequate nutrition and livelihood

SCiU, as a member of Save the Children Alliance, has committed itself to the main corporate guiding principles of Child Rights Programming (CRP)¹ and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG),² which principles acknowledge *partnership* as an approach to development. Thus, the rights-based approach requires that SCiU works primarily with duty bearers³ and rights holders in Uganda.

In SCiU, the concept of partnership has a business connotation where both organisations contribute and get the most from their investments (value for money). In other words, the relationship is based on giving and taking as well as increasing the value of resources. There shall be no free ride, where one side only is the provider, and the other a recipient. Therefore, SCiU believes that working in partnership with local organisations brings mutual benefits to both organisations' capacity through complementing and learning from each other as well as ensuring the efficient and effective utilization of resources, including knowledge, from both sides.

For effective partnerships, a clear and a realistic policy, is very important. The SCiU Policy on Partnership provides broad directives on types of working relationships, non negotiable values, implementing partnerships, overall goals, working principles, implementing and managing partnerships and review of the policy. A separate Partnership Guideline shall detail the step by step procedure for operationalising this policy and ought to be used in conjunction.

2.0 Working Relationships

All working relationships are not necessarily partnership. Relationships like networking, contracting, collaborations and Save the Children Alliance are not partnerships.

SCiU shall have different types of working relationships with other organizations as long as there is a clear objective and added value for bringing change in children's lives.

SCiU has six major classifications of working relationships and their respective working definitions are as follows

¹ CRP means using the principles of child rights to plan, implement, monitor programmes with the overall goal of improving the situation of children so that all boys and girls can fulfill their rights and lives in societies that acknowledge and respect children's rights.

² Where countries of the UN committed themselves to reduce poverty and advance social development by identifying specific goals.

³ Those individuals, organizations, institutions etc., obligated to fulfill children's rights.

? **Partnership**

This is a working relationship in which two or more like-minded⁴ organisations willingly work together for the fulfilment of children's rights and the relationship is based on shared values, principles, responsibilities, resources, decision making and a long-term commitment. In partnership, there is a culture of negotiation, influencing and being influenced.

? **Collaboration**

This is a working relationship in which organisations that may not share the same vision and mission, work together in specific areas they want to bring change in. The relationship is often focused only on the projects that bring change in children's life rather than on enhancing or benefiting the relationship between the individual organizations involved. There could be discussion, participation and mutual agreement depending on the issue for collaboration. The relationship could be short or long term.

? **Donor-Recipient**

This is a working relationship based on funding projects and reporting on them. The organisations may share a similar vision and mission. The donor provides money and the recipient organisation implements the project and reports. Very minimal dialogue or participation is necessary. In most cases, the donor makes all the key decisions in the relationship. Thus the relationship is seen as a means of achieving specific goals mostly imposed by the funders, but could be beneficial to the target groups. The relationship could be short or long term.

? **Contracting**

This is a working relationship that focuses on accomplishing a short-term assignment and is based only on funding. Mutuality and equality are not necessarily part of the relationship. The contractor predetermines the constituents of the package for the organisation under contract. Similar to this is sub-contracting, where an organisation contracted to act as an intermediary further contract out parts or all of the work to another organisation without adding significant value. There could be discussion and participation on how to do the job.

? **Networking**

This is where like-minded organisations come together and establish a membership organisation or coalition. The relationship mainly emphasises information and experience sharing as well as collaboration and advocacy.

? **The International Save the Children Alliance**

The International Save the Children Alliance is a worldwide not for profit organisation founded in 1977. It is a network which comprises 27 national Save the Children organizations working in more than 100 countries to ensure the well-being of children. The Alliance focuses on pooling resources, establishing common policies and carrying out joint projects. All working relationships of SCiU with other Save the Children member organisations are classified under this.

3.0 Non-negotiable Values

SCiU shall generally demonstrate a willingness and ability to share control, power and recognition. This shall include the ability to have open and effective communication, expressing expectations from the beginning of the partnership.

⁴ Like-minded refers to similar vision, values and purpose of existence.

SCiU shall cooperate with partners on the basis of agreed principles. However, there are certain values that SCiU shall not compromise in any kind of relationship, which values are stated below :

- ? **Non-Discrimination:** All children, especially poor and underprivileged children, should be given equal opportunities. SCiU will not accept any discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, social, physical or mental disabilities, gender, age or otherwise.
- ? **Religious And Political Partiality:** SCiU is a non-religious, non-political and non-partisan organisation and will not by any means accept its resources or programmes to be used for the promotion of political or religious activities .
- ? **Children's Rights Protection :** Children must be communicated and interacted with in a dignified and positive manner, and all their rights must be respected. SCiU will not accept any form of child neglect, abuse, exploitation, violence or improper conduct from its staff and members or that of organisations that it is working with. Staff and members are expected to oppose these violations of children's rights all times as well as take other appropriate measures for redress of the situation. *Save the Children Child Protection policy should be provided to all partners before signing agreement.*
- ? **Children's Participation:** Children must be given the opportunity to actively participate in matters affecting them. The level of participation can vary depending on the kind of issues and level of age and however SCiU will not accept for be willing to work with any organisation or individual who works against this principle.
- ? **Free From Fraud, Serious Negligence and Any Other Form of Corruption⁵:** SCiU strives to be free from any kind of corruption. All resources shall be allocated based on what is best for children and must be administered responsibly and cost effectively for the intended purposes only. All relationships and programme implementation must be free from corruption and fraud. SCiU will by no means tolerate misappropriation of resources and acceptance or offering of bribes.

4.0 Implementing and Managing Partnership

4.1 Partnerships visa vie Project

A partnership relationship is different from a project that is implemented. In projects, the parties limit their concerns to the implementation of the project activities and realisation of its specific deliverables without considerations for the intra and inter organizational issues. In partnerships, however, the focus goes beyond the quality of project implementation to include the institutional status of the partners and the quality of the relationship between them. Therefore, SCiU partnerships shall give due considerations to the project (s), the parties and their relationships. In SCiU's partnership shall be based on dialogue, negotiation and a clear division of important roles amongst partners. It shall include the mutual strengthening of the capacity of the partners so that the outcome of the relationship is more than implementation of a project. Further more, emphasis shall be given to the development of partnerships to a high quality working relationship.

4.2 Areas of Work in Partnership

Partnerships shall be based on different working areas like advocacy, capacity building or innovative projects. SCiU believes that developing the concept of post-funding and other non-funding-based partnerships particularly in relation to policy dialogue and advocacy is crucial. The relationship shall be long term and may or may not include money.

⁵ Please refer to Save the Children Fraud, Serious Negligence and Whistle Blowing policies for further information on definitions of these concepts and guidance on expected actions when fraud and corruption is suspected.

4.3 Types and Capacity of Prospective Partners of SCiU

SCiU shall work in partnership with various organizations including the following:

- ? Government agencies and departments particularly ministries and departments of education, health, social welfare and gender plus bodies which are child authorities .
- ? National and local civil society organisations like NGOs, CBOs, FBOs as well as children and youth groups or associations
- ? The private sector institutions like universities, colleges and the media.
- ? Children and Youth Groups

In principle SCiU shall partner with a cocktail of organisations ranging from those weakly to strongly performing, small to large, new to experienced and service providers to advocacy oriented ones, as long as there is potential and internal capacity building for development.

SCiU shall be willing to invest in supporting small and inexperienced partners with large potential to promote children's rights. However, there shall be clear strategies, plans and milestones for the progress to be achieved by when.

4.4 Selection of Partners

The selection of partners shall be based on basic assessments in the following areas: Values, commitment, reputation, experience, development approaches, capacity/competence issues, leadership/governance style, interest and/or the potential to change and develop, and systems for planning, implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation including accounting/auditing. It may be useful to “start small” and take the needed time to strengthen the partnership using necessary time.

Where no relevant child-oriented organisations exist, SCiU may support the establishment and development of such organisations. This shall be done by backing the development of a new child oriented organisation and by working towards having children's rights put on the agenda of other established organisations.

4.5 The Role of SCiU in Partnership

SCiU may perform different roles in partnerships depending on the type of relationship, [the phase of the partnership](#) and the level of the partner's organisational development. Notwithstanding, SCiU shall aim to play the facilitator role rather than manager or controller of the relationship at the different phases of partnership. Sometimes it might be justifiable to contribute 100% or large amount of the partner's budget for a limited period of time, depending on the partner's potential and a rather strict plan for why, how long and how the dependency is envisaged to decrease. The main reason for avoiding dependency is to strengthen sustainability.

4.6 SCiU's Goal of Partnership

To create stronger and responsive institutions as well as to have wider coverage through efficient and effective outreaches in order to accomplish long lasting positive impact for children.

Partnership is like a long journey and reaching the destination is seen as the victory.

4.7 Specific Objectives of Partnership

These shall vary with partner organisation depending on dynamics like the type of organization as well as its experience and competence.

The specific objectives shall be jointly defined from the start of the partnership and should be measurable, attainable and time-bound.

4.8 Working Principles

The following principles shall generally guide SCiU's partnership relationships:

? **Child Focus Based on the Principles of Child Rights Programming**

Promoting child rights and the values embedded in the UNCRC as well as bringing long lasting changes in children's lives shall be the basis for cooperation. It is SCiU's responsibility to ensure that poor and underprivileged children have the opportunity to realise their potential and rights. Concern for what is best for children shall have the highest priority in all the programmes.

? **Mutual Respect and Recognition**

There shall be mutual respect and recognition of the distinctive competence of the parties as well as mutual respect and recognition for each other's opinion, appreciating differing cultural perspectives, norms, values and principles.

? **Legitimacy and Purpose for Which Resources Are Allocated**

Partnership resources shall be solely allocated for bringing positive lasting change in children's lives. Therefore in programming and developing relationships each partner shall take into account the situation, views and concerns of poor people in general, and children in particular.

? **Transparency and Accountability**

Both parties shall be transparent and accountable to each other, children, the community they serve, the citizens and to the wider global community, for showing how their work improves the quality of life of children and their families. Transparency shall be developed in organisations in order to allow children and other stakeholders to hold them to account. Success depends upon each of the partners fulfilling their responsibilities and commitments timely and respectful of agreed deadlines.

? **Flexibility and Local Adjustment**

Differences between partners as well as variations in local circumstances, cultural, social, political and economic contexts require differentiated approaches to partnership relations. Therefore, both partners shall understand and respect differences as well as demonstrate flexibility but without renouncing any of the basic values and principles for cooperation.

? **Maintaining Balance of Power and Equity**

All partnership shall aim for a state of substantial balance of power to the extent possible though equal partnership is not readily attainable when partners have significant unequivocal differences in capacity, including resources envelopes. Notwithstanding, recognising the differences and consciously fostering a close mutual relationship shall be the base for partnership. This shall include promotion of equitable distribution of power and authority as well as joint decision making based on influencing, persuading, educating, collaborating and negotiating.

? **Mutual Learning and Benefit**

Working in partnership helps organisations to bring together resources, unique competencies and expertise in order to achieve results which none can accomplish alone. Thus, the relationship shall focus on how to make the best out of each other's competence through complementing and learning from each other. The organisational dimension of the relationship shall bring important opportunities and benefits for mutual organisational learning, strengthening and capacity building.

? **Long-term Perspective**

Partners must be given sufficient time to appraise the possibilities and preconditions before signing a partnership agreement. Likewise time shall be allowed for organisational development and capacity building during the partnership. Building trust takes time and most impacts of the relationship are recognised after a long time. Thus, partnership should be seen as a long journey, based on a long-term perspective and broken in short periods, bound by a signed agreement.

4.9 Managing Partnerships

For effective partnerships, having policies and guidelines as well as identifying and selecting the right partners is not enough. Forming and managing the partnership is also very important.

The partnership process shall follow a cycle, which is explained in the implementation guideline. The partnership cycle categorises the partnership relationships in different phases based on set criteria. This partnership cycle shall provide the premise for managing the partnership.

Both organisations' staff shall meet their obligations for effective management of the partnership in a timely and qualitative manner.

4.10 Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding

Save the Children and the organization it decides to partner with shall formalise their agreed relationship by signing a Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding. This is a written document which specifies *inter alia* purpose and scope of partnerships, duration of partnership, mutual commitments, responsibilities and obligations, detail of implementation, disclosures, as well as monitoring and evaluation. It also covers relationship issues like personal relationship, communication and culture of negotiation. The partnership agreement is very important for effective partnership.

4.11 Inter-organizational Dialogue and Relationship

Ensuring that the partnership relationship is based on genuine inter-organisational relationship and not just between individuals or departments is very important for sustainability. Thus, SCiU shall broaden the inter-organisational dialogue to include more than two representatives of either party.

Frequent and face to face communication for planning, implementation, monitoring and assessing partnership results along with visits and discussions on different issues shall be used to create a positive personal working relationship which is very important for effective partnership.

SCiU and partners staff ought to have the competence and skills particularly negotiation, mediation, facilitation, coaching and the ability to work in a team, for performing their respective roles in partnership. SCiU shall ensure the necessary internal capacity building and development for the attainment of the optimal levels of competence.

4.12 Capacity Building in Partnership

In partnership, the key thrust of capacity building is to support and develop local organisations to the same level and principles as the International Non-Governmental Organisations in order to increase their bargaining power, effectiveness and efficiency in programming. Notwithstanding, the capacity building efforts should be mutually beneficial and should be owned by the local organizations rather than seen as an imposition or interference by SCiU.

SCiU shall aim at the following:

- ? Adding greater value to its partnerships, in the form of technical support to partners. Prioritising and streamlining should allow the programme to achieve improved quality of results for children.
- ? Development of a well resourced rolling programme and strategy to enhance partners' capacity in planning, impact monitoring, and evaluation as a core minimum contribution.
- ? Establishment of donors' coordination and fora for discussing and developing the relationships among partners.
- ? Benefiting from the partnership arrangements by ensuring SCiU staffs learn the local knowledge and practice.

4.13 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Partnership

SCiU and partner shall develop a plan to monitor and evaluate implementation of the partnership during each given cycle.

In order to keep the balance of power and control in partnership, a feedback mechanism and complaint procedures for partners shall be institutionalised in SCiU and partner organisations as a process dealing with unresolved issues as well as conflicts.

5.0 Review of the Partnership Policy

There will be different challenges while implementing this policy. All the partnership practices shall be monitored and documented for learning purposes. There shall be a mid-strategy period review of the policy on the basis of which the policy will be revised if found necessary.

6.0 References

The following documents may be referred for supplementary information:

1. The Save the Children Child Rights Programming Handbook
2. Save the Children Norway policy on strengthening local capacity (including cooperation with partners) 2006-2009.
3. Save the Children Denmark programme and project management manual– section on Partnership and Process.
4. Fraud, Serious Negligence and Whistle Blowing Policy