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## Introduction

**T**his document is a guide for SCNN when selecting and entertaining partnership, as well as serve the purpose of providing insight for others (current and potentially new partners). The various provisions in this document is intended to contain some ideas for the principles that SCNN should adhere to in developing partnerships with other institutions, groups or organizations. The principles should apply irrespective of whether the partnership includes a community-based group/organization, a local NGO, Government at central or local level, or any other institution. This document attempts by no means to be exhaustive. It is intended to serve as a basis for developing partnerships in Nepal and stimulate discussions with the aim to develop good and effective partnerships for children, as well as improve these principles as lessons are learned.

## Background

In Save the Children Norway's 2002-2005, partnership and capacity building in local organizations are strongly promoted since it believes that "sustained impact can only be achieved when national and local government and local people take responsibility for their own future".

The impact of partnerships must be assessed both in terms of effect on children directly and at the same time be measured in terms capacity building with the local partners.

SCNN aims at a comprehensive partnership, i.e. to provide professional support as well as financial.

The local guidelines that is hereby reflected and developed in cooperation with current and potentially new partners in Nepal, and which are guided by SCNN's global policies in the field of partnerships, will have to be adjusted as the work progresses. However, for SCNN it is important to avail some current principles and guidelines in order to promote current and new partnerships in the immediate future.

*Partnerships are relationships. Developing a partnership is best seen as a process of relationship-building in which the nature of the relationship may well change over time. At the outset, the rhetoric may reflect the shared hopes for establishing a partnership relationship. However, the reality, at the beginning of the relationship may be one of mild suspicion about the partner's motives tinged with anxiety about whether the partner will match up to their commitments. Since one of the major requirements of a partnership is trust and since trust is earned, there is the possibility that in any partnership relationship the bonds which tie the institutions together may strengthen or weaken depending on the experience which each has. Many of the problems which arise about partnerships are understandable but preventable provided there is a commitment by the potential partners to discuss and negotiate a mutually understood agreement concerning the partnership. However, even with the most thoroughly and systematically negotiated agreement, the relationship between the partners can run up against unanticipated problems. It is important to recognize that this can happen and to build in opportunities for frank and open discussion which may lead to the re-negotiation of some aspects of the agreement.*

*Bruce Britton, SCF-UK (1994)*

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### What does partnership mean?

SCNN recognizes that it cannot achieve its objectives without the interest and participation of other interested groups pursuing the issue of increased quality of life for the Nepalese children. This means at the outset recognition of partnership as a necessary means to child development. The above also means striving to embody a spirit of equality, transparency, openness, mutual

respect and trust, negotiation, mutual accountability and party-political neutrality into all partnership relationships.

- Partnership is an approach to work which is an expression of the partner institutions' desire to work according to a set of values.
- A partnership should be an equitable, collaborative working relationship voluntarily entered into by two or more institutions (partners) which is characterized by mutual trust, respect, participation, commitment, learning, reciprocity, transparency and negotiated decision-making
- All partnerships should, therefore, be established through negotiation of the respective roles and contributions of each of the partners. This negotiated agreement should always be written down and should form part of the "contract" between the partners.
- Partnerships should be viewed as dynamic relationship which can change over time. The early stage of a partnership may be more an expression of commitment to work according to agreed values. As the relationship develops, these values *must* be reflected in the way the institutions work together. The partner institutions to avoid the development of dependency should regularly review partnership relationship.

### What activities will partnerships focus?

SCNN will invite partnership-focusing efforts in the following 6 main areas.

- General Understanding of and support for children's rights.
- General understanding of, and active opposition to, the causes of poverty,
- Increasing access for children, especially girls, to basic education,
- Reducing number of children who are sexually exploited,
- Reducing the number of children who are economically exploited,
- Psycho-social rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflict, and/or disaster.

### Criteria for selecting partners

The most important criteria for developing a partnership relationship are compatibility of shared vision and values, mutual goals and mutual learning and recognition. Being assured that that there is adequate similarity of vision, values and goals, SCNN will look on the four main criteria shown in the matrix below: effectiveness, accountability, sustainability and governance. Each of these criteria is divided into "sub-criteria". The

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matrix will provide a structure for the process of considering partnership relations. For each of the criteria the assessor would state either high or medium or low. Another basic criterion for consideration/continuation of partnership is that the potential partner/existing partner should have at least one or two other regular donors for its sustainability and also for sharing fixed and other recurring costs. Also the basis for any consideration is of course that there exists a sincere interest by both parties to enter this partnership, with its different commitments etc. The matrix will be expanded by narrative information as well.

<b>Criteria/area</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Rate (state high, medium or low)</b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Impact on children	
	Impact on family	
	Impact on community	
	Cost efficiency	
<b>Accountability</b>	To SCNN	
	To target group(s)	
<b>Sustainability</b>	Learning organization	
	Being supported by other donors ( state donor names)	
	Contributes to local institutional development/capacity building	
	Sustaining project impact	
<b>Governance</b>	Democratic	
	Level of developed management systems	
	Relevance of the organizational set-up	

### Procedure when selecting partners

Again it should be said that this is not an exhaustive list of steps and procedures. It is primarily a list that aims to enhance discussions for further improvements, but at the same time attempt to provide transparency. What happens in SCNN when contacts are made...etc.

1. Initial contact meetings
2. Submission of project proposals
3. Initial assessment by SCNN
4. Visits and negotiations
5. Final meetings to discuss proposals
6. Consult, re-negotiations and agreement
7. Compliance of HMG rules by partner by producing registration of partner Organization with the concerned CDO; affiliation with SWC, PAN registration and obtaining Tax Exemption Certificate from International Revenue Department

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8. Approval of Summary Budget & Approval for Oslo' record
9. Signing of agreement
10. Implementation
11. Evaluate jointly
12. Renew/complete/terminate partnership

### The partnership agreement

The agreement is intended to be a written statement between SCNN and a partner in order to clarify the purpose, goals, mutual expectations and commitments, define expected results vis-à-vis indicators, state basic operating arrangements, and agree means of assessing and evaluating progress. It should be finalized through a process of discussions between the two parties and mutually agreed to. A draft agreement has been developed. (See appendix).

### Partnership Management

SCNN has introduced cluster approach of partnership from 06 mainly to bring down the manageable size of its partners. This will provide the opportunity to further strengthen partners where sharing and learning among the cluster partners will increase more, reduce the overhead cost of programming, develop joint programming to attracting more donor fund and this will be the guiding principle to this approach. Based on the successful implementation first phase, such cluster approach will be extended further to those partners who are in near proximity in terms of geography and work.

Besides, SCNN will also hold interaction (once a year) with partners at the regional level to share the best practices of the partnership work for sharing and learning, providing relevant information related to partners, and at the same time issues regarding partnership will be discussed. Any outcome as a recommendation from the partners from such forum will be put to the SMT and decision will be taken as appropriate.

### Capacity Building of Partners:

SCNN believes that by working together, the partners will develop their capacity therefore will focus more on work for children however SCNN shall allow partners to allocate certain % (not more than 2% of the total budget) of the annual budget to allocate their HRD in general. SCNN itself will support to enhance partner's capacity on issues that partnership work is focused on.

### Termination of partnership:

SCNN may terminate a partnership in the following situation:

1. If the partner failed to meet the objective and comply the administrative and financial procedure as stipulated in the agreement.
2. If the partner completes the project work as per agreement and project is phase out.

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3. if both parties agree to dis-continue of the existing partnership.
4. If Government take any disciplinary action against our partner or void the registration.

However, in the case of phase out, SCNN will give at least 3 months notice in advance so that the work that partner is doing would be managed smoothly to avoid any direct negative impact to the children and community that the partner is accountable.