



THE VALUE OF ANALYSIS

2014 Review of the Regional Analysts Network

In 2014, the Regional Analyst Network operated in different models in three of Save the Children's Regional Offices: East Africa, West and Central Africa, and the Middle East and Eurasia. Building on the work in 2013 where a series of analytical products were piloted and analysts supported teams in operationalizing this analysis, in 2014 the Regional Analysts Network expanded the range of analytical work it engages in. **This has included working with strategic programming, contributing to contextualized advocacy, supporting evaluations and learning initiatives and in building partnerships with key think-tanks and academic institutions.**

Regional Analysts Network

The Regional Analysts Network has written more than 15 reports in 2014. These have included conflict analyses, scenarios, actor analyses and context analyses looking at regional priorities including the dynamics of the Ebola crisis, displacement in East Africa and the humanitarian considerations for programming between Iraq and Syria. Outputs have been shared with each level of Save the Children from field offices to staff in SC Member headquarters.

In addition to contextual analysis reports the Regional Analysts Network has worked with staff to assess geo-political information needs, given regular briefings, led on partnerships with academic institutions and think tanks and provided extensive support to staff in operationalizing analysis.

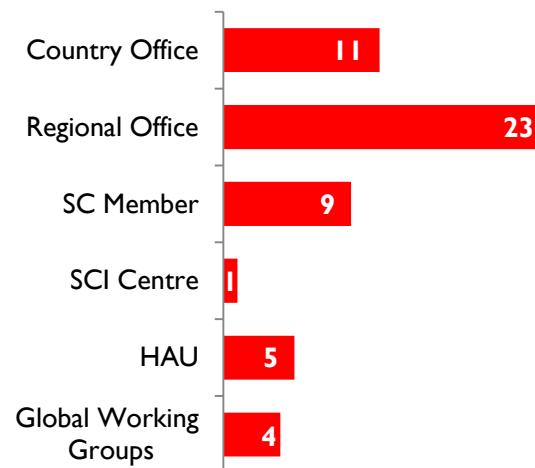
The Regional Analyst Network operates on a demand driven basis.

"In the West and Central Africa region we have a clear need for in-depth analysis of the historical, political and social roots of poverty in order to understand the levers of change. We need a deep understanding of the complex environment in which we work; we need to understand the trends and forces in order to be able to make informed strategic decisions regarding our programmatic as well as operational work."

Natasha Kofoworola Quist, Regional Director,
West and Central Africa

In 2014¹ support from the analysts was predominately requested from Country and Regional Offices – 63% of the total.

2014 support requested by:



Though demand is predominantly from country and regional offices, SC members and global working groups such as the Child Rights Governance and Humanitarian Working Group are also important consumers. **The outputs of the Regional Analysts Network have been used by a diverse range of stakeholders within the organization to support Save the Children in operationalizing its theory of change.**

¹ This report only includes work up to the 1st of November 2014. It will be updated to include projects that will be completed by the end of the year, for example on-going work on Mali and Burundi, in 2015 to complete the 2014 Review.



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Using Analysis

Strategic programming

One of the primary goals of the Regional Analysts Network has been to enhance the strategic thinking and planning of Save the Children's international programs. In this, the Regional Analysts Network has taken a full spectrum approach, working with country offices, response teams, global initiatives and regional programs.

"These analyses can really help SCI move towards working full spectrum and in a rights-based way: understanding the underlying causes and the long term implications of our choices is important not only in the development but also humanitarian arena." Kirsi Peltola, Advisor – DRR/CRG, SC Finland

With major emergencies in each of the regions where the Regional Analysts Network is operational, there has been an emphasis on providing support to response teams in South Sudan, the Ebola crisis and the Syria response.

"...country offices do not always have the resources to analyse incoming information; understand the potential threats, hazards and vulnerabilities and use this to formulate or adapt their preparedness planning." Thamindri De Silva – Regional Response Team Leader South Sudan (Emergency Response Personnel)

In each of these cases reports such as *Multi-layered conflict and crisis in South Sudan, Kurdistan with Borders – Humanitarian Considerations for cross-border programming between Iraq and Syria and the Crisis dynamics and scenarios for the Ebola response contributed significantly to programmatic strategies.* However, contextual analyses also support SC members in their strategic thinking.

"The Ebola report made it possible for SC Sweden to get a broader outlook on the crisis and put the current health-focussed response into perspective and hence supported us in our strategic thinking

around the complementing interventions that are needed in the short term as well as the long term." Mari Morth, Director, Section for Humanitarian Support, International Programs, SC Sweden

In addition to emergency responses Regional Analyst support has been used by Save the Children across the continuum of care. One example is support for the Regional and Multi-Country Program Unit in East Africa.

"The contextual analysis was especially useful...as it clearly outlined the trends in the region and had specific recommendations on programming, thematic areas of focus and collaboration with regional institutions." Ruth Koshal, Senior Program Manager, East Africa Regional Office

The regional contextual analysis has been critical in advancing the Child Protection and Child Rights Governance work and opening up new avenues for regional programming.

Contextualized advocacy

Advocacy is a central component in the organization's strategy to achieve the global breakthroughs. **Analysis has played an important role in contextualizing our humanitarian policy and advocacy by providing detailed reports on some of the most pressing priorities.**

"As a humanitarian advocacy advisor I relied on the information in setting the tone for our proactive advocacy priorities at both country and regional levels." Anne Mitaru, Regional Humanitarian Advocacy Adviser, SCUK

This includes informing advocacy in the on-going response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa where Leah Finnegan, Humanitarian Advocacy and Policy Manager in the Ebola response team, has found Regional Analyst reports to be "very useful". In addition, analysis has been used in assessing the risk of public messaging in complex crisis such as The



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Implications of Revising SCI's Public Messaging on Syria report.

Analysis also helps to make advocacy efforts more strategic. East Africa's World Humanitarian Summit engagement strategy was founded in analysis of the changing demographics in Africa and the impact which recurrent emergencies in the region have on the ability of children and youth to achieve their potential. As a result SCI used the forum to advance messages about much needed reforms in the humanitarian system but also to highlight the significant challenges that face East Africa with regard to capitalizing on their impending demographic dividend.

Analysis in the East Africa Region on the levels of protracted displacement and the forecasted continuation of a significant caseload is **the foundation of new initiatives looking at integrating a rights based perspective to Save the Children's programming with displaced communities.** This has been integrated into the regional program as well as being supported by country offices. For example in Uganda,

"...the analysis is presently being utilized to provide technical guidance to the CRG team ... in our engagement with the National Council for Children on the State of Uganda Children Report for 2014... [where the] question is not about the need to do something, but rather how to do it effectively and in a manner that recognizes rights and entitlements" Emily Kaakyo Rubooga, CRG Advisor, Uganda Country Office

Supporting Evaluation and Learning

Save the Children has repeatedly articulated learning as an organizational priority. In line with the organization's ambition to build a robust MEAL system and become a knowledge hub the Regional Analyst Network has worked closely with MEAL and PDQ colleagues. Grounding program evaluations in the context in which the program is implemented is crucial to understanding the real impact of Save the Children's work. In complex contexts such as South

Sudan, conflict sensitivity assessments have been undertaken by the Regional Analyst to assess the efficacy of programs looking at governance and peace-building in the context of the rapidly changing political situation. **By focusing at the local level on the drivers of conflict and community vulnerability as well as national trends affecting the population these assessments provide a clear picture of whether programs are building towards positive peace and what opportunities there are to address emerging challenges.** These projects have been so successful that Caitlin Brady, Interim Director for Programme Development and Quality in South Sudan has already requested support for "conflict sensitivity analysis of programming and operational practice" in 2015.

In addition to supporting field teams in grounding evaluations in the operational context, the analysis produced by the Regional Analysts Network has also supported other learning initiatives such as the creation of the *Enhancing Learning, Innovation and Impact Measurement Undertakings* initiative at the EARO.

Partnerships

Partnership is a critical part of Save the Children's organizational approach and is central to its theory of change. In 2014 the Regional Analysts Network has cultivated close relationships with several institutions including the Institute for Security Studies, the University of Nairobi and the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group in Nairobi (FSNWG). In East Africa the EARO was able to fulfil a leadership role in the FSNWG through the Regional Analyst chairing the Response Analysis subgroup which convened organisations to discuss how to operationalize early warning information.

The Regional Analysts Network's partnerships with research and analytical institutions and networking with other analytical functions in the regions make sure that Save the Children incorporates and capitalises on the vast

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knowledge produced in a tailored and strategic way.

Investing in analysis – an ongoing need

An indication of how useful the Regional Analysts Network has been to staff at all levels can be seen in **the consistently increasing demand for support** and the recognition from the overall organization as to the importance of analysis. This has been clearly reflected in discussions on SCI's post 2016 strategy where **an analysis is considered critical to the organization's approach**.

It has been made clear that in 2015 there is a continuing need for the Regional Analysts Network to:

1. Contribute to strategic programming and contingency plans
2. Support evidence based and contextualized advocacy
3. Underpin investments in MEAL to ensure learning is tailored to our operational context and complement this by building partnerships with think tanks and academic institutions to make Save the Children a thought leader

"Quality analysis is the foundation on which we can pursue our ambition to increase the impact of programming and advocacy, leverage our experience between country offices and become a knowledge hub. Without the analysis function in the regional office we will miss a critical component and impede our ability to achieve these goals."

David Wright, Regional Director, East Africa
Regional Office