

## STEPS TO PROTECT COMMON APPROACH

### Q and A

#### 1. What is Steps to Protect (S2P) about?

A Common Approach is our best understanding of how to solve a particular problem for children.

The S2P Common Approach addresses the fact that three quarters of the world's children experience violence and many of them require individualised services and support to recover. This is where Steps to Protect comes in, providing guidance for Save the Children and partner staff implementing case management

This Common Approach on Case Management enables Save the Children to endorse a defined step-by-step process to working with individual children and their families with complex needs and/or serious protection issues. S2P helps the case worker ensure that support is provided in a systematic, appropriate and timely manner.

S2P addresses the needs of boys and girls experiencing any forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. It supports the realisation of **Save the Children's BE PROTECTED breakthrough that violence against children is no longer tolerated**, by working with children, families and communities to reduce harm for all children.

#### 2. What is the difference between our current case management work and S2P?

There may actually be very little difference, depending on how Country Offices are currently working with case management. But adopting the S2P common approach will mean working with an approach that has been endorsed by the organisation as our best understanding of how to solve a problem. The toolkit for S2P provides guidance on implementing the approach in both humanitarian and development contexts. Quality benchmarks are being developed that will enable Country Offices to determine the alignment between their current case management work and S2P.

#### 3. Is there any difference between S2P and the Inter-agency guidelines and training manual for case management and child protection (2014)?

S2P builds on existing international standards, guidelines and tools<sup>1</sup> and brings evidence and best practice together to create our best understanding of case management. At the same time S2P promotes further clarity on a number of key areas relevant to case management:

- The roles and responsibilities of different actors involved in the case management process: including families, community-based child protection groups, volunteers or para-social workers, trained and qualified case workers, case management supervisors and multi-sectoral service providers.
- The important role of families and communities in the support given to individual children as part of a case plan.
- The specific steps in the case management process
- Cross-border case management for children on the move, ensuring that all children are reached regardless of their immigration status.

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<sup>1</sup> This includes the Core concepts and principles of effective case management: approaches for the social service workforce developed by the Global Social Service Workforce Alliance, the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, the Field Handbook and Toolkit on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, the Alternative Care in Emergencies toolkit and the interagency guidelines for case management and child protection.

- Case management for child survivors of gender based violence and unaccompanied and separated children.
- How to use a phased case management approach in a rapid onset emergency.

#### 4. Is S2P applicable in both development and humanitarian contexts?

Absolutely! Whilst we may need to take into account the different contexts in which Save the Children is (to be) involved, the core case management principles, concepts and process are similar, and contribute to strengthening the formal and informal child protection systems.

Yet, the roles in which Save the Children supports the existing case management system might differ. In a development context, Save the Children might invest in capacity building and advocacy for a strengthened case management system. The focus in humanitarian contexts might be on supplementing or substituting the existing social service workforce with capacity and technical support to address the needs of vulnerable groups of children affected by an emergency.

#### 5. Is a Country Office expected to implement S2P from A to Z?

No! Country Offices who intend to roll out S2P are expected to conduct a **quality assessment of the existing case management system**. This will allow a country office to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the different components in the existing system, including those components that Save the Children is or is not going to strengthen (depending on available grants). The S2P toolkit includes a quality assessment tool to guide this process. The outcome of this assessment will help the Country Office to make an informed decision about how to make quality improvements to one or more components of the case management system - whether on their own, with government stakeholders and/or as part of a consortium with other agencies.

#### 6. What does a Country Office need to comply with, in order to provide evidence of implementing S2P?

Country Offices will be technically supported to identify and / or contextualise quality benchmarks (a generic list is included in the toolkit) that will guide alignment and fidelity with the core elements of S2P.

#### 7. How do we start with S2P if this is the first time we are doing Case Management?

The toolkit offers complete guidance about how S2P can be introduced as a means of increasing focussed support to individual children who face complex and serious protection concerns.

Section 2 introduces case management and S2P as a Common Approach. Section 3 guides Country Offices in assessing the nature and scale of child protection needs and the capacity of the social service workforce, as well as capacity to undertake case management within existing child protection programming. This will help Country Offices decide if case management is appropriate, and if so, which role(s) Save the Children could play in developing or strengthening one or more components of the case management system.

In development contexts, case management is often introduced as part of our work to establish or strengthen the child protection system generally. As the social service workforce is at the core of a child protection system, case management offers case workers a vital tool to work with children and families who face complex or serious child protection issues.

In humanitarian settings, while strengthening the – often weakened – national and/or local child protection system, Save the Children might substitute or supplement the existing social service workforce.

**8. What if we are already working with a case management system that is endorsed and adopted by the government? Are we expected to promote S2P instead?**

In contexts where we are already working with the government and supporting their system of case management, Country Offices are strongly encouraged to continue to do so. S2P supports staff to provide technical support to governments to strengthen their social service workforce with quality, scale and sustainability.

In contexts where our support to an established system might have been ongoing for some time, S2P could still be relevant. The quality assessment tool included in the S2P toolkit can help in assessing strengths and weaknesses of the existing case management system and identify areas that may require improvement, in line with quality benchmarks.

**9. How does the case management approach promoted by S2P align with existing Social Work in the countries where S2P will be introduced?**

The S2P Common Approach is based on what is considered to be best practice of case management. Therefore, alignment with social work curricula, which covers case management for child protection is expected. Where social work curricula align with the government's approach to case management, it is recommended that Country Offices work with and strengthen both the curricula and components of the case management system, based on the results of the quality assessment.

**10. Do we promote S2P when working in case management as part of interagency coordination, where case management forms and processes are often harmonised?**

The expectation is that Country Offices working with inter-agency coordination processes and groups, continue to do so. There is no expectation that S2P is promoted as such. However, the quality assessment tool included in the S2P toolkit may help in assessing strengths and weaknesses of the existing case management system and in identifying areas that require strengthening.

**11. How are we expected to promote S2P in areas where there are no qualified social workers?**

Qualified social workers are not a *hard requirement* for Steps to Protect. However, where they exist, we should have specific expectations of their role and level of responsibility. In many realities however, particularly in humanitarian contexts, there are no qualified social workers to draw on. Where appropriate, we should support the set up and/or capacity building of para-social workers and community volunteers involved in case management. The S2P toolkit clearly explains the role and responsibilities and related competences of social workers and para social workers / volunteers.

**12. We work in areas of dispersed and limited social services. Could we implement S2P under these conditions?**

An important component of S2P is the development/strengthening of referral pathways, enabling children to have access to available and appropriate multi-sectoral services and supports. These should be safe, gender sensitive, inclusive and child friendly.

We recognise that in some instances, formal services may not exist, and where they do, they may not always be appropriate, safe and sensitive to the needs of children and families. That is why it is important to also consider family and community supports that could be provided to a child and their family, by a neighbour, an extended family member, a community or religious leader or members of community based groups.

It is important that, through S2P, we avoid focussing solely on formal services. Arrangements involving family and community supports, as with formal services, do however need to be both supported and monitored on an on-going basis for both safety and compliance with the best interests of the child.

**13. If we are not going to implement the Common Approach directly, can we do it through a partner or partners?**

Absolutely! Country Office staff and programmes are encouraged to implement S2P through partners as a way to build capacity and sustainability. It is important to involve relevant partner staff in in-country trainings on S2P (see question 16). Save the Children staff should provide on-going technical support to partners throughout the implementation of S2P.

**14. How much time do we need to fully implement S2P?**

A Country Office is expected to tailor the implementation of and fidelity to S2P according to Save the Children's defined role(s) in case management in a given context. The approach in itself is not time-bound. However, Save the Children's work in implementing the approach will be, and is dependent on the timeframe of projects and grants.

**15. Will we as a Country Office receive TA support for the roll out of S2P?**

TA support is expected to come from Global or Regional technical advisors involved with Country Office and/or Regional programmes as part of existing or upcoming grants. All global and Regional TAs involved in the roll out of S2P will be trained on the content of the toolkit (see [Common Approach Learning Programme](#)). Their role will be to support Country Office Child Protection teams with the implementation of the Common Approach, using the S2P toolkit, guidance and tools.

**16. How will Country Office staff receive training and when?**

Country Office staff involved in the roll out of S2P will be trained on the Common Approach and the related toolkit through relevant trainings (see [Common Approach Learning Programme](#)).

**17. How will we communicate and collaborate on S2P internally? Is there a community of practice on Workplace?**

Once S2P is ready to be rolled out, a Community of Practice (CoP) will be established, where Country Office staff involved in implementing S2P, as well as global and Regional TAs providing support, can post updates and requests for support. The CoP should enable intra-organisational learning and dialogue.

**18. What is the link of this S2P with other Common Approaches?**

S2P follows a similar approach to that of other Common Approaches, in that it seeks to provide guidance on our best understanding of how to address a particular problem; in this case, the complex protection needs of individual children and their families. The Steps to Protect Common Approach

followed the same endorsement process. We are also developing a similar Learning Programme to that of the other Common Approaches.

Currently, the Child Protection Global Theme, has developed or is in the process of developing a number of Common Approaches; Parenting without Violence (PwV, already endorsed), Safe Schools (in development 2018), Community based Child Protection and MHPSS (in development 2018-2019) all of which complement each other. For example, Parenting without Violence aims to prevent violence against children in their homes - in cases where children continue to experience violence, case workers may need to step in, using a case management approach. The Community Based Child Protection Common Approach (upcoming) will contain relevant considerations when working with community groups, structures and approaches, again to better protect children.

#### 19. Does S2P have a research and evidence agenda? (How will the data be collected? And used?)

Although there is some, largely external, evidence of case management producing positive outcomes for children and their families, there is a sector-wide acknowledgement that more needs to be done to measure these outcomes. The S2P toolkit offers guidance on how to measure the effectiveness of case management in different contexts. The Learning Agenda for this Common Approach will focus on using a mixed-methods approach to determine the contribution of case management to positive outcomes for children and families. This will not only support learning and continuous improvement in our own programs, but also position Save the Children as a thought leader in this area.

#### 20. What are the key advocacy components of S2P?

Save the Children child protection teams could advocate with governments, communities and service providers:

- To recognise the harm caused by violence in childhood and to make support and services available to the most vulnerable children
- For a strong well-planned and well supported social service workforce.
- For increased, quality services such as health, education, psychosocial and legal services to meet the basic needs of children and their families.

#### 21. Is there likely to be additional funding for Country Offices interested in working with Steps to Protect?

Unfortunately, there is no specific funding set aside for the implementation of any of the Common Approaches within Save the Children. The expectation is that Steps to Protect is integrated, as appropriate, into current and/or future Child Protection programmes and related grants.

**For further information and answers to queries, please contact the co-leads of the Child Protection Systems Task Group under the Child Protection Global Theme;**

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