

# Terms of Reference for

Study, Addressing Violence in and around Schools in Humanitarian Settings in Colombia

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July 2025

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# 1. PROJECT SUMMARY

<b>Type of study</b>	Study on the effects of the Safe Schools Common Approach and other factors on children's experience of violence in and around school. This is an outcome evaluation plus a qualitative study of children's perceptions.
<b>Name of the project</b>	Addressing Violence in and around Schools in Conflict-Affected Settings in Colombia
<b>Project Start and End dates</b>	September 2025 to February 2027
<b>Project duration</b>	18 months
<b>Project locations:</b>	Colombia
<b>Thematic areas</b>	Child Protection and Education themes and gender cross-cutting area.
<b>Donor</b>	Redd Barna and SCI Safe Back to School and Learning Pooled Fund are funding the study. The Safe Schools Common Approach programming in Colombia is funded by Redd Barna with funds from NORAD.
<b>Estimated beneficiaries</b>	Children, Parents/Caregivers, Teachers, Public Officials
<b>Overall objective of the project</b>	To estimate the effectiveness of the Safe Schools Common Approach programming on children's experience of violence in and around schools in conflict-affected areas of Colombia and to gain insights on children's experience of violence and means of addressing their rights to an education free from violence.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

This document provides Terms of Reference for Addressing Violence in and around Schools in Humanitarian Settings in Colombia.

Children — particularly girls — face significant risks of violence, including sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV) by teachers, peers, and other adults on school grounds as well as while traveling to and from school. Sexual exploitation is also a significant challenge — whereby teachers, school administrators, or others in positions of power force children—particularly girls—to engage in sexual acts in exchange for grades or other benefits. Bullying is also a frequent form of violence experienced by children in educational settings. Global estimates indicate that one in three children experiences some form of bullying at school. In societies where gang activity is prevalent, children may also face harassment or physical violence nearby schools or during transit. Schools have also increasingly become sites of attack by armed groups in societies impacted by conflict, exposing children, teachers and education personnel to violence, forced recruitment, physical injuries and even death.

Save the Children has developed the Safe Schools Common Approach to address violence in and around school as well as other hazards. This has been implemented in over 40 countries since 2018. The implementation to date has provided Save the Children with a base of programmatic experience. However strong studies are now needed to understand the degree to which this Common Approach is effective with regard to preventing and responding to school-related violence against children, and promoting children's safety, wellbeing and learning.

In Colombia the adaptation and implementation of the Safe Schools Common Approach is highly relevant to the context of high levels of poverty, pronounced inequality, armed conflict and migration. The approach is consistent with the government's policy for 'Total Peace' which sees education and peace as working in tandem.

This study of the effects of Safe Schools programming in Colombia on children's experience of violence is co-funded between Redd Barna and Save the Children International Safe Back to School and Learning Pooled Fund. The time-frame for the Colombia Country Office research activities is 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 to 27 February 2027. The international consultancy timeframe is from 3 September 2025 to 27 February 2027.

This is to be a mixed methods study using quasi-experimental design for the quantitative aspects plus qualitative methodologies to enable a deep dive on children's perceptions of violence in and around school and the role of different strategies for its mitigation.

Save the Children is seeking a consultant to work as Principal Investigator who will a) provide technical leadership and guide the SC Colombia Office to implement the enumerator training, implement data collection following local tendering for a data collection company and clean and translate the collected data; b) conduct the data analysis and write the study report.

This will build on work already conducted by Save the Children US: Evidence Synthesis was conducted and report finalized; study tools, protocols, and consent/assent forms developed; training materials developed; approval received from Ethical Review Committee (ERC) at SCUS.

The consultant will lead the implementation of the research to its conclusion and provide a final report.

### 3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Colombia has undergone significant transformations in recent years, especially with the government's policy for "Total Peace" which promotes a model of peaceful coexistence and protection of civilians. The government sees education as an important catalyst and transformative tool for peace. Another important political landmark was the signing of the Safe Schools Declaration and the development of a national action plan with involvement from Save the Children. These developments have all resulted in a conducive environment for development initiatives by NGOs especially for promoting school safety. Nevertheless Colombia continues to grapple with high levels of poverty, inequality, armed conflict and migration.

Save the Children in Colombia is an active member of several in-country UN coordination mechanisms. At the national level Save the Children co-leads the Education Cluster and the Education Working Group of GIFMM is a member of the Protection Cluster (including the GBV subgroup), the interagency border group (GIF - Grupo Interagencial de Frontera), as well as local coordination groups in the targeted departments. In addition, SC is a member of the Colombian Alliance for Children and the coalition against the involvement of children and youth in armed conflict in Colombia (COALICO). These different alliances of which SC is part give opportunities to Save the Children to promote coordination between different actors and to engage in the sharing of evidence, research results, lessons learned, and to build synergies to support programme objectives.

In Buenaventura, the field office has maintained strong coordination with local entities, indigenous communities, and community councils of people of African descent. Through targeted initiatives, Save the Children has significantly strengthened institutional capabilities on key issues such as protection, nutrition, breastfeeding, hygiene, and family care. Save the Children hold the position of being the focal point organization for Child Protection in Valle del Cauca, showcasing our dedicated commitment to the protection of children in the region. As an expert in the field of Child Protection, Save the Children contribute our specialised knowledge and insights within the Humanitarian Interinstitutional Committee. Save the Children's involvement also includes the working group on prevention of recruitment, use, and exploitation of children, where the office offers essential technical support to advance vital protection measures.

#### ***Safe Schools programming in Colombia***

In Colombia, Save the Children's Safe Schools Common Approach is integrated in education projects at the national level, responding to the country's needs after signing the Safe Schools Declaration especially strengthening pedagogy and advocacy, supporting schools, teachers and students at the national and sub-national levels.

The Safe Schools approach enables addressing the needs of each type of actor in education (students, teachers, parents, school principals, authorities) to create protective environments. It seeks to cover all educational communities, that is, all students in schools so that they benefit from the programmes implemented in the school according to the specific needs that each one has. The safe schools approach involves risk identification, socioemotional learning, education for climate change and teacher training for school safety, among other interventions.

Among the risks identified are schools and teachers with greater vulnerabilities due to armed conflict and climate crises. In addition girls and adolescent women face risks such as: early marriage, gender-based violence, school bullying, domestic abuse, reproductive work in their homes such as caring for younger siblings and supporting household chores; boys and adolescent men face risks associated with armed recruitment and involvement in armed groups. All members of the school communities faced the risks of falling into explosive devices on the way to school. These risks lead to loss of basic learning and the lack of opportunities to continue education. Within schools specific challenges include school dropout, the loss of basic learning, poor quality pedagogical practices, bullying, harassment, and related risks to the mental health of teachers and students.

In view of these risks, the implementation of Safe Schools seeks to strengthen the capacities of educational institutions and local authorities to monitor or manage the risks associated with armed conflict crises and natural disasters; it should be noted that the school safety framework is expected to be integrated, based on the needs identified with all actors involved in the school.

There is a joint approach between actions from child protection and education, interventions to address risk factors for gender-based violence (GBV), referral routes for child protection cases, coexistence manuals and school coexistence committees; school risk management plans, psychosocial support and strengthening of basic learning skills, involving all actors in the school and community.

## 4. SCOPE OF STUDY

### 4.1 Purpose, Objectives and Scope

The study seeks to estimate the effectiveness of Safe Schools Programming in Colombia on Children's experiences of violence in and around school as well as to gain insights from children on their experiences of violence and mitigating measures.

#### ***Study Terms and Domains***

Within the context of this project, Save the Children is defining "school-related violence" as any type of violence (physical, sexual, psychological, etc.) that children experience either while at school, on or around school grounds, or while traveling to and from school. "Schools" are defined as either formal schools, or as non-formal education interventions in which children may be participating. Perpetrators of violence can include either adults or children. "Children" are anyone under the age of 18, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The purpose of using the phrase "school-related" is based on the fact that children may experience violence either in school, while in transit, or on or around school grounds. Children may also be targeted by armed groups or other perpetrators while in or around school for violence that may take place elsewhere—although if the original contact with children took place in or around a school setting, and this type of occurrence is also within this definition. In developing the above definition, Save the Children has also drawn from UNESCO, which developed the phrase "school-related gender-based violence (GBV)" to refer specifically to GBV occurring in and around schools.

As part of this study, Save the Children will look at all forms of violence against children in and around school settings, including physical, sexual, and psychological violence along with bullying, harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other forms of violence that children may experience. Save the Children will also look at attacks against schools or educational settings by armed groups and consider this as a form of violence, along with recruitment of

children by armed groups in and around school settings, or while traveling to and from school. Data will be gathered on all of these issues, as well as any other types of violence that emerge during the study.

With regard to psychological safety the study will help to build evidence on the degree to which children's wellbeing is promoted through educational activities. Physical safety will be measured based on children's exposure to physical violence along with any other hazard that may pose physical harm. Since the study seeks to build evidence on what works to promote children's safety and wellbeing across these key areas, findings will also seek to identify key strategies, policies, program interventions, and curricular approaches that are found to be effective—both based on survey findings and by gathering qualitative perspectives from children.

Through this research, Save the Children will also give specific focus to identifying effective approaches to promoting the safety and well-being of girls—particularly with regard to the prevention of violence and other forms of harm, and ensuring that appropriate forms of support are available for survivors. The study will also seek to determine how the effectiveness of certain approaches may vary based on girls' age, developmental stage, and other characteristics. This research will also seek to determine how the types of violence and harm experienced by girls may vary as compared to boys, and seek to identify how various approaches are effective to preventing the unique risks experienced by girls. The study will also focus on the effectiveness of strategies for preventing violence against boys, as well as ways in which gender impacts risk factors to various forms of violence. Since forms of violence often vary based on issues of gender, understanding these issues is particularly crucial in order to ensure that program approaches are adapted accordingly and are gender responsive. There is a limited evidence base on the differential risks experienced by boys and girls in and around school contexts in settings affected by armed conflict, as well as how programming can be differentially adapted to the needs of children based on issues of gender.

As part of this process, this project will pay special attention to the experiences of adolescent girls—including the multiple ways in which they face increased risk of exposure to multiple forms of violence, as well as challenges with school attendance and completion. For example, in many contexts, adolescent girls are more likely to experience sexual violence or other forms of gender-based violence (GBV); early, child and forced marriage; sexual exploitation and abuse; trafficking; and other risks that are based on factors such as age and gender. Adolescent girls also face an increased risk of early and unwanted pregnancy—as well as health complications stemming from reproductive health issues. All of these rights violations place barriers for adolescent girls with regard to school attendance and completion. Families with limited financial resources often prioritize schooling for sons over daughters—leading adolescent girls to drop-out of school or experience disrupted attendance as they may be required to work to help support their families. In settings affected by armed conflict, adolescent girls also face the risk of recruitment or other forms of violence by armed actors. Armed groups also often target schools or non-formal education settings as sites of recruitment or acts of violence, subjecting adolescent girls to a greater likelihood of harm.

In light of these issues, this study will identify the unique risks experienced by adolescent girls and will seek to determine how programming can be adapted to respond. There is a limited evidence base regarding how education and child protection interventions can jointly be implemented in order to prevent and respond to violence against adolescent girls as well as to promote their attendance at school. This research will seek to build evidence in order to inform programming initially in Colombia. In addition there are efforts to mobilise resources

for research in two other countries to support broader findings for a broader child protection and education technical communities working in different contexts globally.

As a part of this study, Save the Children will measure psychosocial wellbeing, and will seek to gather information through the study on effective strategies and approaches that are being used as a part of program implementation to promote the wellbeing of children. Quantitative and qualitative tools will be used to examine children's wellbeing, and qualitative approaches will be used to gain children's perspectives on the effectiveness of school policies, curricula and other program initiatives with regard to promoting learning and wellbeing. Qualitative approaches will also explore children's perspectives on factors within and around schools that support their safety, wellbeing and learning. As part of the survey tools, information will be gathered on children's attendance as well as reasons for any days missed from school.

These measures will provide information on children's degree of participation in school, which is crucial for learning. Since the focus of this research is primarily around addressing violence in and around schools, the study will not look in-depth at academic learning outcomes, but may collect data on basic metrics such as literacy and numeracy to compare these outcomes with other domains of the study, especially where these are already available within the school assessment systems.

## 4.2 Intended Audience and Use of the Study

The primary intended audiences of the study are Colombian government authorities and international donors.

Stakeholder	Further information
Project donor	Redd Barna and NORAD. The funders will expect to see evidence of the effectiveness of their investment in Safe Schools Programming and may seek to share this with multilateral donors and in international fora. The Safe Back to School and Learning Pooled Fund are keen to provide strategic funding including with a view to further funds being secured in the medium term. If this study shows promising evidence it may enhance opportunities to secure further funding for the Safe Schools Common Approach and to build evidence in other countries.
Primary implementing organisation	Save the Children in Colombia have longer term funding for Safe Schools programming – ideally to 2029 and beyond. The recommendations and study response from the Colombia team will inform adaptations to the programming and related advocacy from 2027 to 2029.
Implementing partners	The schools and learning spaces involved in the Safe Schools programme will be able to adjust their interventions based on project recommendations. The stakeholder validation of results will increase engagement in adaptations based on findings.
Government stakeholders	Sub-national authorities involved with the Safe Schools programme are in a strong position to make adjustments to their support to schools based on the project findings



	and will be invited to validate the findings so as to increase their engagement. At the national level the government may be in a position to replicate aspects of the Safe Schools Common Approach as part of the Total Peace policy. Save the Children will leverage its leadership of the Education Cluster in Colombia and its membership of the Child Protection Cluster to promote interest in the study, to share its findings and to influence NGOs and government bodies to implement some of the more promising strategies to address school-related violence. Similarly at local levels Save the Children Colombia will use its membership of fora and coalitions to share findings and influence other actors to adopt promising strategies for addressing violence against children.
Community groups	Community groups involved in Safe Schools Programming will be invited to take part in validation of findings so as to adapt their engagement with Safe Schools Programming.
Beneficiaries	Children and adults involved in the program/project/s and the study will be invited to validate findings, to adapt their engagement with the Common Approach and potentially to advocate for adjustments or resourcing based on the findings and their experience.
International development/humanitarian research community	The Study Steering Committee members will make submissions to international conferences based on this research including the Comparative International Education Society conference, CIES. The Principal Investigator (Consultant) may be included in such submissions but there is not funding within this consultancy for the consultants conference fees or travel or accommodation.

### 4.3 Key Study Questions

1. What is the impact and effectiveness of Safe Schools programming on the prevention of violence against children in and around school?
2. What is the impact and effectiveness of Safe Schools programming on response interventions provided to children who experience violence in and around school?
3. How do the types of violence and other risks experienced by children vary according to factors such as age, gender, disability, and the particular local contexts?
4. How does the impact and effectiveness of Safe Schools programming vary according to the types of risks or forms of violence facing children, as well as factors such as children's age, gender, disability, and the nature of particular humanitarian contexts?
5. What are the unique risks and forms of violence experienced by girls (including adolescent girls) in and around school settings in a context affected by conflict and vulnerable to environmental shocks, and what is the emerging evidence regarding promising practice to mitigate risks experienced by girls and to promote their safety, wellbeing and school participation?
6. What program and policy recommendations emerge from this research?



7. What gaps in the evidence base remain, and what areas of further research would be useful?

## 5. STUDY METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Study Design

A quasi-experimental, mixed methods design will be used. Data collection will take place in two phases to be able to track changes over time. All tools will also be field-tested prior to the start of the in-country ethics approval in order to ensure they are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate to the context.

### 5.2 Sampling

Participant Selection:

A quasi-experimental design will be used to select participants from among the two arms: 1) children involved in Save the Children's Safe Schools programming; and 2) children *not* involved in Safe Schools programming. The research team will randomly select schools and children for participation in the research for the intervention and control groups prior to the start of data collection, with a final study sample developed in order to reach the target sample (described below) and in order to ensure there is sufficient power to detect difference between study arms.

A smaller number of participants will be purposely sampled for participating in qualitative methods according to age, gender, disability, and other characteristics. In addition to parents' *consent*, children's *assent* will be gathered prior to their involvement in the study, and only those who express a desire to be involved in this research will be enrolled. Participants who choose not to take part in the study will experience no changes to their current program involvement, and will receive the same quality of services as those who choose to take part in the research. This process will be thoroughly explained to children as described as part of the informant assent process that will take place prior to the start of data collection (See section on Ethical Issues below).

As previously described, the study sample will be derived to examine differences in outcomes between Safe Schools participants and non-participants. In situations where there are no prior estimates of the measures to be compared, studies are typically powered to detect a minimum effect size ( $d^*$ ), expressed in terms of standard deviation units ( $\sigma$ ) of the measure being compared. For example, if a study is designed to detect a minimum effect size ( $d^*$ ) of  $0.50(\sigma)$ , with 80% power, the required sample size per group would be 64.

Based on this approach, the target sample size was selected to detect a minimum effect size ( $d^*$ ) of  $0.20(\sigma)$  for each primary measure. In line with these calculations, it is estimated that the sample size for this research will include 788 participants, including 394 per group (i.e. 394 Safe Schools participants and 394 Non-Safe Schools participants), who will be evenly distributed across sites selected for data collection. The projected sample size for Colombia is depicted in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Projected Sample Size by, Intervention Group (Project vs. Comparison)**

Project	Comparison	Total
394	394	788

For the quantitative survey, data will be collected from the full sample described above. For qualitative activities, a sub-set of the full sample will be purposively selected for participation. The number of focus groups and key informant interviews will be decided by thematic saturation if resources allow.

### 5.3 Data Sources and Data Collection Methods / Tools

#### **Quantitative Methods**

Quantitative survey methods will be used with children across a variety of key domains, including: psychosocial well-being; social networks; perceptions of safety; service access and utilization; gender attitudes; life skills; and exposure to violence. In developing survey instruments, Save the Children drew from existing scales and tools that have been used in other global settings to measure similar issues.

Depending on the age of participating children, separate survey tools will be developed for younger children and adolescents, with attention given to ensuring that they are age and developmentally appropriate, as well as adapted to cultural and contextual factors in each research context. Survey questions will be administered using electronic means - cell phones or tablets - which have been widely used in studies of this nature with children in diverse contexts, and have been shown to minimize data error and increase disclosure of sensitive issues among participants. Multivariate regressions and other recognized statistical methods will be used to analyse quantitative data through the use of STATA 17 or an equivalent statistical software package.

#### **Qualitative Methods**

Qualitative methods will be used with children participating in Safe Schools programming. A variety of approaches will be used, including semi-structured interviews and a participatory mapping activity. With children involved in programming, qualitative approaches will explore a variety of issues, including perceptions of program effectiveness; the nature and quality of existing social networks; service access and utilization; gender norms; risks and threats experienced by children in target communities; and other measures of relevance to the study. All qualitative activities will be audio-recorded (if deemed appropriate in study locations based on security and contextual factors as well as participant consent or assent), and written transcripts will be created to enable data analysis. Interviewers will also take written notes to facilitate the development of transcripts, and these can be used in the event that audio-recording of qualitative activities is not feasible or acceptable in certain contexts or the if the recordings fail for technical reasons. All transcripts from qualitative research activities will be coded and analyzed using recognized methods for qualitative analysis. Transcripts will be analysed using Dedoose, or an equivalent software package.

### 5.4 Ethical Considerations

The research protocol has been approved by the Save the Children US Ethical Committee and will be submitted for Ethical review within Colombia.

Research methods and tools used in this study will be developed in keeping with the "Do No Harm" imperative, and will be guided by recognized international standards for data collection on issues of violence and other sensitive subjects with children. Prior to implementation, the study protocol for this research along with corresponding tools will be reviewed by the Ethical

Review Committee (ERC) at Save the Children as well as relevant in-country institutional review boards (IRB) or ethics bodies.

In the case of children who are under the age of 18, the *consent* of their parents or guardians will also be gathered, in addition to the children's *assent*. Guidance will also be prepared in advance of the study data collection for how to handle cases in which soliciting consent from parents or guardians for children's participation in the study may expose the children to harm or may not be possible in the case of girls who are separated, unaccompanied, or otherwise without legal guardians. These procedures will be reviewed by the ERC and IRBs; procedures will be shared with the data collection team prior to the start of the study. As part of the informed consent/assent process, it will be emphasized to all participants that their involvement in the study is voluntary, and will not impact their involvement in, or access to, services or other benefits. Participants will also be informed that they have the right to discontinue involvement in the study at any point—even in the midst of particular qualitative or quantitative data collection activities.

The confidentiality of participants will also be upheld as a standard practice throughout the study. Names and identifying information of participants will not be associated with data, and details of the study will not be shared or discussed with those outside of the research team. Data collection activities will also take place in a safe and secure location to ensure confidentiality. The only exception to the principle of confidentiality is in the case that information revealed during data collection triggers mandatory reporting or other referral protocols that may be in place for the research, which will be developed prior to the start of the study, and based on close consultation with child protection experts and other relevant actors in the countries of data collection. These protocols will also be reviewed by the study's Principal Investigator (Consultant) and approval by the ERC at Save the Children as well as relevant IRBs. Participants will be informed of any mandatory reporting protocols that may result in a breach of confidentiality prior to the start of data collection, which will take place as part of the informed consent/assent process. In each context of data collection, research teams will ensure that existing referral and reporting protocols are in place to respond to cases of violence against children or other urgent protection concerns that emerge—either as a direct result of the research, or through self-report to members of the project team. These systems will be based on existing structures for responding to child protection issues, and information on these structures will be shared with all staff involved in the project.

### **Data Storage**

All electronic and hard-copy materials associated with this research will be stored in a manner to promote security and confidentiality, based on existing guidance for studies of this nature. Participants' names and other identifying information will not be associated with study data, with unique ID numbers created for each participant to preserve confidentiality at the start of the study. Designated members of the Save the Children research team will keep a master list of names and corresponding ID numbers, which will be stored in a locked, password protected location with only appropriate individuals having access. Evaluations will be done periodically throughout study to ensure that no harm is being done to participants. Any adverse occurrences will be reported immediately to the Principal Investigator (PI).

### **Training and Support for Research Teams**

Prior to the start of data collection, all members of the research team in Colombia – staff and local consultants - team will receive comprehensive training on research methods, ethical issues, data collection techniques, as well as the reporting and referral protocols that have been developed in line with the study. All members of the research team will also be trained on how to handle cases of participant distress that may emerge during data collection, and be able to respond and refer in an appropriate manner in keeping with recognized standards of care. The members of the research team in Colombia will conduct onsite visits during the study to

provide support and capacity-building, in addition to regular remote support and technical assistance provided throughout the duration of the project.

## 5.5 Known limitations

### Research design limitations

Since the research funding was not directly linked to the programme funding it is not possible to follow a classic baseline to endline design in the evaluation. The first data collection point will be at the start of the school year in 2026 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> data collection point will be towards the end of the school year (prior to end of year assessments and other end of year activities). Exposure to at least six months of Safe Schools programming will be analysed as an independent variable while other independent variables will be analysed, such as age, gender and features of the locality of the school.

Furthermore a full randomised controlled trial design is not possible since random assignment of schools for the Safe Schools intervention was not done at the start of the Safe Schools programme since research priorities were not accommodated in this way.

There will be discussion between the Principal Investigator (Consultant) and the project team about any possible means for establishing a baseline – for example if Safe Schools programming would be new in some schools from February 2026, if some activities would be started for the first time in some schools at that time, if most/all teachers previously trained in Safe Schools topics have left a school and new training would be required, if categories of children had not yet been exposed to Safe Schools programming for example cohorts new to the school. If possible schools with a status close to a baseline would be selected first and listed prior to the random sampling of schools, if there are a sufficient number of schools with this status.

### Sensitive nature of the subject matter

The sensitive nature of the subject matter may impede the accuracy of the data. This is to be mitigated by enumerator training and protocols for reassuring participant to talk freely in confidence within the ethical framework of the research.

## 6. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The longer implementation plan is given in the section 8. Below are key deliverables and target dates. The deliverables for which the Principal Investigator (Consultant) is directly accountable are given in bold. (The roles of a range of Save the Children colleagues are shown in the implementation plan in Section 8.)

### Deliverables and tentative target dates

Deliverable / Milestones	Key target dates
Consultant contracted	3 Sep 2025
Ethics submission in Colombia – expected approval date	25 Nov 2025
<b>Final data collection tools (in English) following in-country testing:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Survey instruments</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Qualitative data collection tools</b></li> </ul>	<b>18 Sep 2025</b>
Final data collection tools (in Spanish): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Survey instrument</li> <li>Qualitative data collection tools</li> </ul>	16 Sep 2025
<b>Sample of schools selected and sampling strategy for students <i>within</i> schools documented</b>	<b>27 Nov 2025</b>
<b>Baseline data analysed and a Ppt of main results produced</b>	<b>16 Apr 2026</b>
<b>Final version with comments on first draft of baseline dataset and Ppt addressed</b>	<b>30 Apr 2026</b>
Sound first <b>Draft Study Report</b> All reports are to use the Save the Children <a href="#">Final Study Report template</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Executive summary</li> <li>▪ Background description of the Program and context relevant to the Study</li> <li>▪ Scope and focus of the study</li> <li>▪ Overview of the study methodology and data collection methods, including a Study matrix</li> <li>▪ Findings aligned to each of the key Study questions</li> <li>▪ Specific caveats or methodological limitations of the evaluation</li> <li>▪ Conclusions outlining implications of the findings or learnings</li> <li>▪ Recommendations</li> </ul>	<b>6 Jan 2027</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annexes (Project logframe, study ToR, Inception Report, Study schedule, List of people involved)</li> </ul> <p>A consolidated set of feedback from key stakeholders will be provided by Save The Children within weeks of the submission of the draft report.</p>	
<b>Final Study Report*</b> incorporating feedback from consultation on the Draft 1 Study Report	<b>21 Jan 2027</b>
<p>Knowledge products materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PowerPoint presentation of Study findings</li> <li>Evaluation Brief**</li> </ul>	<b>26 Feb 2027</b>

\*All reports are to use the Save the Children [Final Study Report template](#). Please also refer to Save the Children technical writing guide.

(\*\* The Evaluation Brief is a 2-4 pages summary of the full report and will be created using the Save the Children [template](#). This will be done by Save the Children internal colleagues and is not part of the Consultant's assignment.)

All documents are to be produced in MS Word format and provided electronically by email to the SC Evaluation Project Manager. Copies of all PowerPoint presentations used to facilitate briefings for the project should also be provided to Save the Children in editable digital format.

## 7. REPORTING AND GOVERNANCE

A light Study Steering Group will be established with the key colleagues commissioning the study from the main themes – Child Protection and Education – from MEAL and across the CO and the funders – Save the Children Norway and SCI Safe Back to School and Learning Fund – plus a representative from SCUS with awareness of the background to the study and the original protocol submitted to ethical approval. The Steering Committee will hold a short monthly check-in meeting (approx. 30 minutes) to conduct a light review of progress, will review all the key reports and be consulted on significant changes if issues arise in the implementation of the study.

The proposed composition of the Study Steering Committee is as follows:

**Study Steering Committee:** **SC Colombia:** MEAL Manager, Jeremias Pabon Lopez; **SC Norway:** Senior Advisor Evidence and Learning, Elisabet Eikas; **SCUS:** Lead Advisor Evidence & Learning, Ally Krupar. **SCI global team:** Senior Advisor for Safe Schools, Emily Durkin; Head of Child Protection, Rebecca Smith; Head of MEAL, Mohsin Surani; Education Fund Manager. Laura Prince; Research and Evidence Advisor, Mya Gordon.

Prior to each monthly check in the Principal Investigator (Consultant) and will provide short set of 5 to 10 bullet points (half to one page) summarising progress in the last month.

The research manager with overall responsibility for contact with the Consultant and the Study Steering Committee will be the Research and Evidence Advisor. She will convene the short meetings of the Study Steering Committee, monitor the bullets received from the Consultant and the Colombia MEAL Manager in Colombia, troubleshoot and keep records of final decisions on addressing challenges which may arise.

## 8. STUDY MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership to the study will be provided by the Principal Investigator (Consultant) who will work with other technical advisors from the country and the global Child Protection and Education Teams. Data collection will be done by local enumerators who will be hired by Save Children Colombia based on criteria developed by the Principal Investigator (Consultant) in consultation with staff from the country program. Save the Children staff from the country program will provide supervision to the data collection team, in addition to training and technical support that will be provided by the study Principal Investigator (Consultant). Existing MEAL staff and technical advisors within the country team will also support the study implementation. All tools and methods for the study will be finally reviewed and finalised by the Principal Investigator (Consultant), in close consultation with Save the Children Colombia. Once raw data from this research has been translated into English, it will be transmitted to the Principal Investigator (Consultant) for analysis and the writing up of findings.

**Study Tentative Timeline, with key deliverables in bold.**

What	Who is responsible	By when	Who else is involved
Study tender submissions due for Principal Investigator, consultant.	SC Norway, Senior Advisor, MEAL, Crhistina Wagner Faegri	19 August 2025	
Tender review and selection of study team <a href="#">[if external]</a>	Study Steering Committee	20-21 August 2025	
<b>Contracting of consultant</b>	Research and Evidence Advisor with Contracts Team	<b>Sep 2025</b>	Education Fund Manager Heads of CP & Education for Escalation
Documentation review, desk research	N.A. Completed and in place.	N.A.	N.A.
<b>In country testing and finalisation of data collection tools</b>	<b>Consultant Principal Investigator and SCI Colombia MEAL Manager</b>	<b>8 – 18 Sep 2025</b>	Study Steering Committee
<b>Submit to ethics committee in Colombia</b>	<b>SCI Colombia MEAL Manager</b>	<b>25 Sep 2025</b>	Principal Investigator Consultant
<b>Expect ethics approval in Colombia</b>	<b>SCI Colombia MEAL Manager</b>	<b>25 Nov 2025</b>	Principal Investigator Consultant



Logistical arrangements for baseline data collection	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	1 Nov 2025 to end Feb 2026	CO Operations and thematic colleagues
Tender for & contract company in Colombia for baseline data collection	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	21 July to 15 Sep 2025	CO Operations
Provide a list of target schools/learning spaces for Safe Schools supported by Redd Barna, and the status of Safe Schools implementation in each (including any close to baseline.)	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	1 Oct 2025	
Run sample and establish the final list of schools & other learning spaces to be included in the study – project and comparisons sites	Principal Investigator Consultant and SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	27 Nov 2025	
Train enumerators from contracted company	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	9-13 Jan 2026	Potential remote input from Principal Investigator (Consultant)
Data collection – for baseline/1 <sup>st</sup> point in time	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager has oversight of local data collection company.	2-27 Feb 2026	Principal Investigator Consultant kept informed of any issues and previews data
Data management and cleaning from 1 <sup>st</sup> data collection	Data collection and c: SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	2 Feb to 12 Mar 2026	
Data analysis from 1 <sup>st</sup> data collection	Principal Investigator Consultant	16 Mar to 9 Apr 2026	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager
Ppt of baseline data results in English	Principal Investigator Consultant	10-16 Apr 2026	
Review of Ppt of baseline data results in English	Study Steering Committee	17-23 Apr 2026	
<b>Finalise of baseline data results in English</b>	<b>Principal Investigator (Consultant)</b>	<b>24-30 Apr 2026</b>	
<b>Final Review &amp; sign-off of baseline data results</b>	<b>Study Steering Committee</b>	<b>1-6 May 2026</b>	
Train for endline/2 <sup>nd</sup> data collection	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	1-11 Sep 26 2026	

Data collection endline/2 <sup>nd</sup> data collection	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	14 Sep to 29 Oct 2026	
Data management and cleaning endline/2 <sup>nd</sup> data collection	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	2-20 Nov 2026	
Clarifications on data	Principal Investigator (Consultant)	20 Nov 2026 to 6 Jan 2027	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager
Analyse data and write up report – <b>strong first draft in English</b>	Principal Investigator (Consultant)	20 Nov 2026 to 6 Jan 2027	
Review 1 <sup>st</sup> draft report	Study Steering Committee	7-14 Jan 2027	
Translate study findings into an Ppt in Spanish	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	7-10 Jan 2027	
Validation of study findings & recommendations with stakeholders in Colombia	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	11-14 Jan	
<b>Make changes to address reviewer comments &amp; comments from stakeholders in Colombia</b>	<b>Principal Investigator (Consultant)</b>	<b>15-21 Jan 2027</b>	
<b>Final review and sign-off of final report in English</b>	Study Steering Committee	<b>22-28 Jan 2027</b>	Principal Investigator (Consultant) available for any final clarifications
<b>Briefer document(s) on research findings</b>	Research and Evidence Advisor	29 Jan – 4 Feb 2027	
<b>Translation of full report and briefer documents into Spanish</b>	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	5–11 Feb 2027	
Graphic design of English Products	Research and Evidence Advisor via contracted designer	12-18 Feb 2027	
Graphic design of projects in Spanish	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	Briefer documents on research findings	Research and Evidence Advisor
Dissemination workshop in Colombia	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager	22-26 Feb 2027	
Global Dissemination Webinar	Research and Evidence Advisor and Principal Investigator (Consultant)	Date within 22 and 26 Feb	Study Steering Committee Knowledge Management /

			Insights Colleagues
<b>Conference abstract submissions</b>	Research and Evidence Advisor, consultant may wish to collaborate on submissions and attend conferences though this would not be paid for or included in the contract	From December 2026 as per opportunities	
Project team meeting to develop Study Response Plan	SCI Colombia MEAL Manager		Study steering committee
<b>Study final report (together with response plan) and briefers posted on the Resource Centre</b>	<b>Research and Evidence Advisor</b>	<b>19 February 2027</b>	<b>Resource Centre Colleagues</b>

## 9. STUDY TEAM AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Interested consultants will be required to submit an Expression of Interest in line with the provided template, which should demonstrate adherence to the following requirements.

### Understanding of Requirements and Experience

The prospective consultant must have demonstrated skills, expertise and experience in:

- Designing and conducting outcome evaluations using quasi-experimental design.
- Conducting research studies in the field of child protection and education.
- Leading socio-economic research, evaluations or consultancy work in low or middle income countries that are sensitive to the local context and culture, particularly with respect to inequalities on the basis of gender, economic status and ethnicity.
- Conducting ethical and inclusive studies involving children and child participatory techniques including in sensitive and complex subject matters.
- Conducting ethical and inclusive studies involving groups most affected by inequality and discrimination with sensitive handling of complex subject matter.
- Accommodating views of government, non-government, community groups, children and academic stakeholders in adapting implementation of research.
- Experience conducting study in conflict affected contexts.
- Strong written and verbal skills in English in communicating technical and/ or complex questions to non-specialist audiences (especially report writing and presentation skills)
- Working knowledge of Spanish is desirable.
- A track record of open, collaborative working with clients.

### Financial Proposal

Save the Children seeks value for money in its work. This does not necessarily mean "lowest cost", but quality of the service and reasonableness of the proposed costs. Proposals shall

include personnel allocation (role / number of days / daily rates / taxes), as well as any other applicable costs.

## 10. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT

The following payments will be made to the consultant using and agreed mode of payment

- Upon revision of tools and final sample [20%]
- Upon submission of final data and Ppt on the baseline/1<sup>st</sup> data point: [35%]
- Upon approval of final study report: [45%]

## 11. HOW TO APPLY

If interested in applying for this study, please refer to the [Consultant EOI Form](#).



## Annex: SCI Evaluation Scoring

Save the Children scores all evaluations for quality against the following criteria.

Category	Evaluation Quality Criteria (used for internal scoring after completion)
Purpose, Design and Methods	1. Does the evaluation report clearly identify the evaluation's purpose (including its key objectives, questions and criteria) as set out in the evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToR)?
	2. Are the data collection and analysis methods a clearly justified approach to addressing the evaluation's purpose and questions? (Do they provide valid, reliable and ethical data?)
	3. Is the methodology suitably tailored to the context and population groups to which the evaluation questions relate (e.g. re gender, disability, socio-economic status, geographic location, cultural context, ethnicity)?
	4. Is the size and composition of the sample in proportion to the conclusions sought by the evaluation?
	5. Does the evaluation build on what is already known, for example existing tried and tested frameworks and tools, existing data/evidence, and previous lessons learned?
	6. Are the methods used to collect and analyse data and any limitations of the quality of the data and collection methodology explained and justified?
	7. Has any personal and professional influence or potential bias among those collecting or analysing data been recorded and addressed or mitigated ethically?
Analysis and Findings	8. If evaluating impact, is a point of comparison used to show that change has happened (eg. a baseline, a counterfactual, comparison with a similar group)?
	9. Is the explanation of how (e.g. theory of change, logframe, activities) the intervention contributes to change explored?
	10. Is the data well triangulated, such as by using different data collection methods, types of data and stakeholder perspectives?
	11. Are alternative factors (eg. the contribution of other actors) considered to explain the observed result alongside an intervention's contribution?
	12. Are unintended and unexpected changes (positive or negative) identified and explained?
	13. Are the perspectives of children & communities included in the evidence, including the most deprived and marginalised? Note: For evaluations focused on young children, caregiver perspectives are adequate instead.
	14. Are the findings disaggregated according to sex, disability and other relevant social differences?
	15. Is there a clear logical link between the data that was collected and analysed, and the conclusions and recommendations presented?
	16. Are conflicting findings and divergent perspectives presented and explained in the analysis and conclusions?
	17. Are the findings and conclusions of the assessment shared with and validated by a range of key stakeholders (eg. communities, partners, Save the Children staff)?
Communication and Use	18. Is the analysis and interpretation of the data well communicated through accessible language and helpful visuals (diagrams, graphs, tables as needed)?
	19. Are references, annexes and links included that provide additional relevant data, analysis or references (including key documents and which individuals/stakeholders were involved)?



**20.** Is there a clear plan for how to use the results, including recommendations that are 'SMART' (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound) and directed toward the appropriate 'end users', a dissemination plan, and specific actions for implementing these recommendations?

[please note, the evaluation quality criteria above are for all the external consultants to be aware of. However, you can find more details and guidance via the SCI Evaluation Quality Scoring Tool (in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [Arabic](#)).

ToR prepared by:	Mya Gordon, Research and Evidence Advisor
ToR approved by:	Christina Wagner Fægri, Senior Adviser, Evidence and Learning, SCN
Date of sign off:	01.08.2025

