SDC CIVIC AND HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION LEARNING JOURNEY SYNTHESIS REPORT

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

This report synthesizes reflections and learning emerging from a learning journey that brought together SDC's CHRN, DDLG, and Education networks to discuss approaches to civic and human rights education – and their contribution to empowerment, participation and social cohesion. A series of 3 webinars were co-facilitated with IDS between November 2019 and July 2020 to discuss concrete SDC country experiences and reflect on different strategic and operational entry points, uncovering assumptions about how civic and human rights education strengthens social cohesion and collective action towards stronger democratic processes, ultimately contributing to more peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

Participants in the series included SDC staff from Moldova, Ukraine, Lebanon, Syria, Myanmar, Mozambique, Jordan and Afghanistan country offices as well as the Human Rights, Education and DDLG Networks in Bern. The report first summarizes methodological and conceptual frameworks used to consider approaches taken in the projects presented as case studies. It highlights main features of the case studies and closes with recommendations that emerged from the exchanges.

2. HIGH-LEVEL THEORY OF CHANGE

The webinar series applied theory of change (ToC) as a framework to support critical reflection of how different interventions can lead to stronger civic engagement and more transparent and accountable and inclusive processes and services. A high-level ToC was developed to provide a framework to reflect upon how SDC projects and programmes contribute to social change. This TOC uses the concepts of the spheres of control, influence and interest to provide a common starting point for country case studies to discuss the causal linkages between activities and outcomes and articulate their assumptions about how change happens.

- The **sphere of control** represents the activities and outputs that a programme can control: In the case of civic education programmes this often corresponds with investments in designing and delivering a combination of formal, informal and non-formal education programmes with relevant country stakeholders.

- The **sphere of influence** focusses on the changes in behaviour that programmes hope to influence in a broad range of stakeholder groups. Influencing shifts in behaviours and attitudes of key stakeholders are key outcomes to build social cohesion and promote collective action but are beyond the direct control of programme staff and partners as there are other contextual factors that support or inhibit change.

- The **sphere of interest** corresponds with the broader societal or developmental impacts, in this case the vision of more peaceful, just and inclusive societies. SDC programmes aim to contribute to this high level goal but systemic changes that increase inclusion and equity are beyond individual programmes.
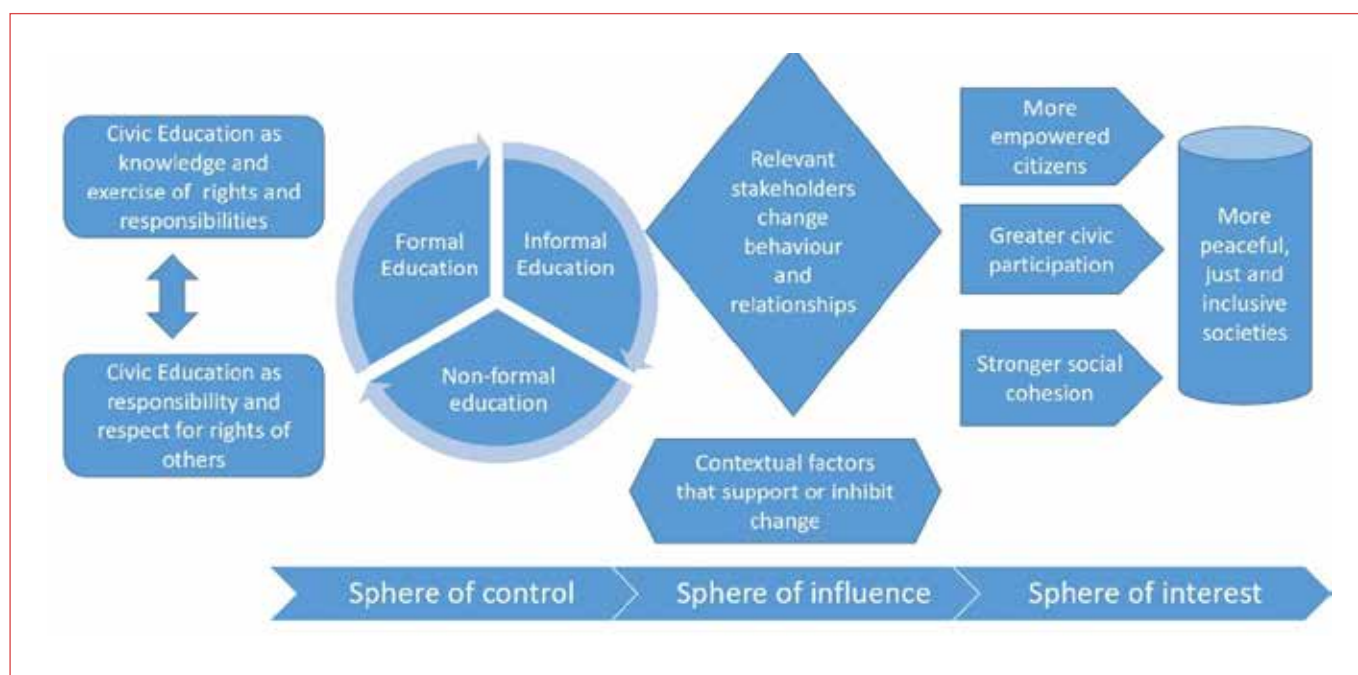

Figure 1. Theory of Change for SDC Civic Education and Human Rights Programmes (Source: Authors own)

Each of the webinars also included a brief presentation on a conceptual model or framework that could have relevance for county offices to develop their Entry proposals and consider potential pathways within their Theories of Change.

3. COM-B MODEL

The COM-B model (Mayne, 2017)[1] provides a useful framework to deepen reflections on the combination of Capabilities, Opportunities and Motivations that drive behavior change. These three dimensions of behaviour change have significant potential to support the design of civic education and human rights programmes by encouraging staff and partners to reflect on:

- **Capabilities:** What knowledge and skills will the programme develop? How can different combinations of formal, informal or non-formal education deliver these capabilities?

- **Motivations:** What are the incentives for stakeholders to change their existing practice and behaviours? How can programme interventions shift attitudes and motivate coordination and collaborations that enhance social cohesion?

- **Opportunities:** In what ways does the local context enable or inhibit stakeholder groups from applying new skills and ideas? What can programmes do to support or create opportunities for civic engagement or mitigate against barriers to participation?

4. BUTTERFLY OF COMPETENCIES

The Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Cultures, refered to as the Butterfly of Competencies framework[2] was developed to provide education systems with a systematic approach to equip young people with the competences needed to take action to defend and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The framework highlights the 20 competences needed by individuals to participate effectively in democratic societies which are structured around 4 descriptors :

1) Values 2) Skills 3) Attitudes 4) Knowledge and Critical Understanding[3].

The Butterfly of Competencies is a comprehensive framework that complements and provides a much deeper perspective to the previously discussed COM-B Model: Knowledge and critical understanding and Skills reflect Capabilities, whilst Values and Attitudes reflect Motivation.

Opportunity from the COM-B model, understood as the external factors that enable individual to apply their knowledge and skills or establish new attitudes and values do not have a parallel in the Butterfly of Competencies framework. This external dimension of the practical interactions and opportunities to put new skills into practice or to demonstrate new attitudes is key to consolidating shifts in knowledge or attitudes.

Both of these frameworks provide Civic Education and Human Rights programmes with tools to reflect upon the different dimensions of behaviour change to
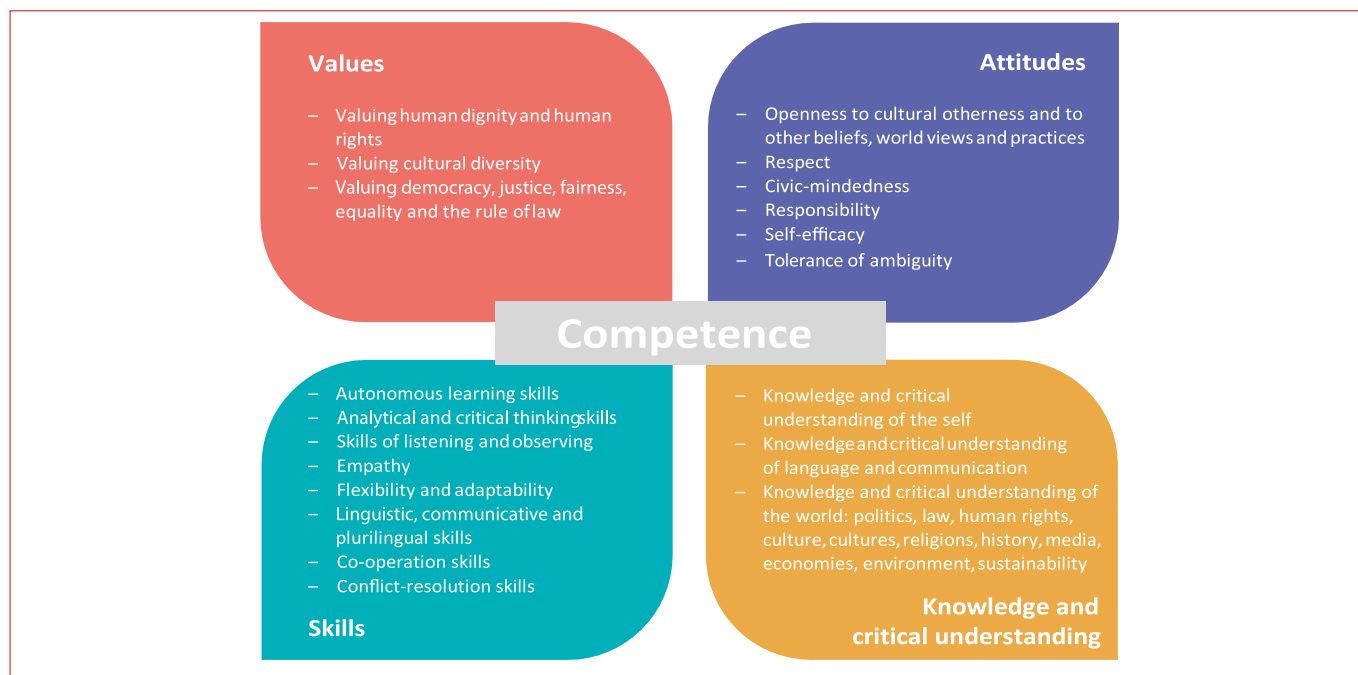

Values
– Valuing human dignity and human rights
– Valuing cultural diversity
– Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

Attitudes
– Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices
– Respect
– Civic-mindedness
– Responsibility
– Self-efficacy
– Tolerance of ambiguity

Competence

– Autonomous learning skills
– Analytical and critical thinking skills
– Skills of listening and observing
– Empathy
– Flexibility and adaptability
– Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
– Co-operation skills
– Conflict-resolution skills

Skills

– Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
– Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication
– Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability

Knowledge and critical understanding

Figure 2. The 20 Competences of the Butterfly of Competences (Source: Council of Europe)

design strategies promote stronger civic awareness and responsibility that form the foundation of more inclusive and democratic societies. Interactions between the different pieces of the framework will be different in each individual example but both of these models provide frameworks to help to understand the different elements that support behavior change towards stronger civic awareness and responsibility.

5. CONFLICT SENSITIVE EDUCATION

The work of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) provides a series of resources[4] on Conflict Sensitive Education (CSE) that can be tailored and applied to different contexts of country programmes that want to address social cohesion. Conflict sensitive education spans across different domains and sectors including humanitarian, development and peacebuilding sectors. CSE is a cross-sectoral, holistic and complex issue and can be integrated into actions at every level, from the classroom to school to community to policy dialogue with local and national governments. Conflict sensitive education (CSE) can be framed around three key drivers:

- **Access or non-access to education** can be a source of social tension from the community-level up to a society-level, as discussed in a recent study by UNICEF[5];

- **The universal right to education** is not being fully realized if there is unequal access to quality education;

- **Education can itself be divisive** with certain groups privileged or prioritised above others.

Three steps are recommended to include Conflict Sensitive Education (CSE) in programming. Firstly, understand the broader context and challenges to social cohesion. Secondly, analyse how the context interrelates with the SDC programme being planned. Finally, act to minimise negative impacts and ensure that interventions do not reinforce tensions as well as maximising positive impacts of educations policies and programmes for social cohesion. Education programmes cannot solve the long-rooted tensions in many fragile and conflict affected contexts, but it can be one of the pieces of the puzzle that will contribute to it.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Art. 13 of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights recognizes *"the right of everyone to education"* and that *"education shall be directed to the **full development of the human personality** and the sense of its **dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights** and fundamental freedoms".*

Education is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing other human rights. As an empowerment right, education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities[6]. Key features of the right to education are: Availability, accessibility (non-discrimination, physical and economic accessibility (affordable to all), acceptability (form, substance,

Mayne, J. (2017) Theory of Change Analysis: Building robust theories of change. Sociology
Council of Europe (2018) Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture
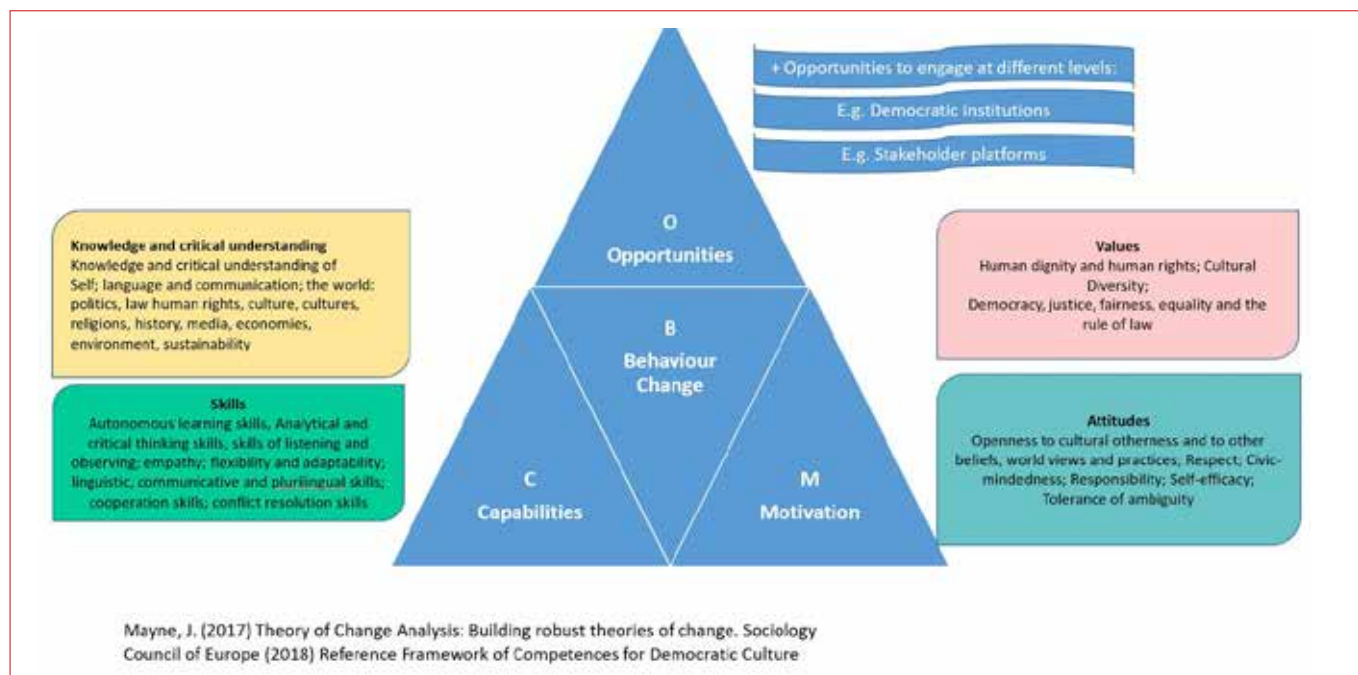
Figure 3. COM-B and Butterfly of Competencies Frameworks (Source: Authors own drawing on Council of Europe)

methods have to be relevant and culturally appropriate and of good quality) and **adaptability** (to the needs of changing societies and communities)[7].

7. COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

Each webinar in the series reflected upon a specific project case to support knowledge exchange between country teams and peer to peer support to address challenging issues. Each case study shared a theory of change for their project, which were often in early stages of development or implementation and posed a series of learning questions to promote reflection and sharing of experiences with other participants.

1. Moldova Case Study: Fostering Active Civic Engagement (FACE)

The project's theory of change promotes a combination of formal and non-formal education as two complementary and reinforcing pathways to impact. In the formal space, the Council of Europe supports the Ministry of Education to implement a new curriculum and strengthen teachers' *capabilities* to deliver the new curriculum in schools. The non-formal component is implemented by UNFPA to work with youth resource centres to create *opportunities* for youth to put civic engagement skills learnt at school into practice and participate in local decision-making processes. SDC Moldova is also actively involved with work to develop policy framework on youth engagement and civic participation. The project is in the early stages of implementation. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Youth (MoECY) is a strong champion and its work to roll out a new curriculum creates a strong opportunity and driver to focus on civic education. However not all local authorities are equally receptive to this approach and vision and their participation needs to be incentivised. Access to training is assumed to create an incentive for teachers to participate but many lack *motivation*.

2. Ukraine Case Study: Decentralisation for Improved Democratic Education (DECIDE)

The DECIDE programme takes place within a broader process of national reform that 'amalgamates' smaller communities into larger territorial administrative orders. The newly created territories are able to access additional financial resources and autonomy, however this also brings together villages with different religions and ethnicities that lack a shared identity creating potential challenges for social cohesion. DECIDE's theory of change interweaves both governance and education objectives by envisioning building *capabilities* of national, regional and local authorities to effectively implement sectoral decentralisation with a focus on education governance and providing *opportunities* for school girls, boys and parents to benefit from inclusive democratic

school governance and active civic engagement in amalgamated communities. The project is being implemented in four demographically and ethnically diverse regions in Ukraine in which civic citizenship education is being introduced to all parts of the community. DECIDE prioritizes creating *opportunities* for children to practice citizenship in their daily life through projects created by seed grants that seek to improve the community, jointly implemented with schools and local government. Responding to gender imbalances in schools and education, the project puts strong emphasis on fathers' participation in school governance. DECIDE also supports capacity building of teachers and school principals – especially in rural areas. At the regional level, DECIDE is developing strategies for education management, working closely with local government associations. DECIDE hopes to assist these associations to become experts and agents in disseminating results of the project to others. At the national level, DECIDE is working to support government in coordinated decentralisation reform.

3. Lebanon Case Study: Conflict Sensitive Education

The proposed Conflict Sensitive Education programme in Lebanon has three main objectives:

1. Enhance inclusive education access, including alternative or formal quality compulsory education;
2. Enhance the quality of education and increase the range of skills developed and rates of completion;
3. Increase resilience and social cohesion.

These objectives are mutually reinforcing and cannot be addressed in isolation. Lebanon's Ministry of Education has created a dual shift system which segregates Lebanese and Syrian children into morning and afternoon school shifts which has had a substantial socio-political impact and exacerbated existing tensions. Lebanon's public schools are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education with funding from central government, while the second shift for Syrians is fully funded by the international community. This funding supports school access for Syrian children but also creates separate governance systems that limit the potential to involve local communities in school management. The challenge of improving quality and building social cohesion in this context is complex and multi-layered and requires a nexus logic to identify elements that can build trust in strong institutions that can facilitate inclusion and participation towards equal rights and opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The peer-to-peer exchange and collective reflections across the three webinars generated a wealth of practical experience and recommendations for other programmes seeking to integrate civic and human rights education.

BE CLEAR HOW COUNTRY CONTEXT AND HISTORY, THE ROOTS OF CONFLICT AND RELATED SENSITIVITIES CREATE BARRIERS TO TRUST THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED TO REBUILD CONFIDENCE BETWEEN STAKEHOLDER GROUPS:

- **Trust is key to enabling civic engagement.**
  Building relationships between citizens and authorities is necessary to incentivize active civic participation and empower rights-holders and their communities.
  *In **Moldova**, mayors engage in positive competition amongst each other around citizen engagement and local authorities are incentivized to participate in order to attract youth to stay in rural areas.*

- **Listen to the range of perspectives of stakeholders involved in strengthening education delivery and civic engagement.**
  *In **Afghanistan**, establishing mechanisms to give a voice to actors involved in education delivery has have been critical to achieving the integration of peace education and gender into the national teachers training curriculum. Engagement at the community level and with religious leaders has also been key to promoting inclusiveness, gender and peace.*

- **Identify shared experiences among different identities to align incentives for joint civic engagement above identity differences.**
  *In **Ukraine** where different ethnic and religious groups are all experiencing the same rural exodus, a common need to address this causes of this exodus and demand for higher quality services in*

these areas can create motivation for joint civic engagement across identity groups.

- **Use conflict analysis to engage with historical tensions.**
  Building social cohesion and transforming conflict non-violently requires a high level of sensitivity and acknowledgement of historical antecedents and injustices that have not formally been addressed by society and or government(s).
  *Understanding the specific context of the **Lebanese** education system and the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis as well as historical tensions between Lebanon and Syria are crucial considerations in programme design. In Jordan, tensions are increasing between Jordanians and Syrians and the importance of understanding these sensitivities and their root causes to promote conflict sensitive programming that contributes to social cohesion cannot be overlooked.*

- **Determine what motivates key stakeholders to collaborate on civic engagement initiatives.**
  Creating a space for dialogue and interaction for the different actors takes time and patience, especially in post conflict contexts where societies tend to be polarized and are often characterized by deep-rooted mistrust and a culture of fear.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO CONCRETELY PRACTICE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:

- **Balance work to support an enabling environment at the national level with a pragmatic focus on shifting attitudes, awareness and skills at the local level.**
  *In **Afghanistan**, SDC programmes support the government to implement a progressive national education strategy through sustained policy dialogue in combination with local-level efforts to build teachers' capacity and strengthen school governance. In Moldova, the FACE programme works with both the Ministry of Education and local youth centres.*

- **Identify local opportunities for civic engagement in challenging national contexts.**
  In the context of limitations on civic space and action, local community led initiatives may provide options to connect groups to collaborate on a development project.
  *In **Lebanon**, the rehabilitation of a public garden*

became a site to bring stakeholders together to foster community ownership, women's participation, and job opportunities.

- **Embed civic education lessons within opportunities to practice exercising rights.**
  Combine efforts to build new knowledge and skills with opportunities to put these into practice.
  *In **Ukraine**, students implement concrete civic engagement projects and shadow politicians, turning schools into a resource base for activism and space to engage a wide variety of community stakeholders.*

- **Start young.**
  Building awareness of democratic values and empower people to know their human rights from an early age helps young people to understand their rights and responsibilities to be respectful and tolerant towards others in society.

INTEGRATE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND CONFLICT SENSITIVE METHODOLOGIES INTO SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND CURRICULA:

- **Build capacity in education systems to apply conflict sensitive methodologies.**
  *In **Afghanistan**, education programmes aim to strengthen the school curriculum, working with teachers to build capacity to use conflict sensitive methodologies in the classroom, strengthening school governance capacity and engaging the community in the process of education delivery to ensure no conflict arises.*

- **Incentivise the participation of local authorities and teachers.**
  Even when the national government is a champion, not all local authorities may be equally receptive to this approach and vision. Additionally, access to training is assumed to create an incentive for teachers to participate but many teachers lack motivation.

- **Recognize the pivotal role schools play in bringing different stakeholders together.**
  *In **Eastern Congo**, participatory school planning brought different groups to participate in civic engagement due to parents' incentive to see their children receive a quality education and succeed. In the Afghan context, school shuras (parent-teacher associations) are important for social cohesion at the school level and play a role in supporting school performance by monitoring teacher-student interactions and student attendance and participation. They also provide a forum to discuss school issues emerging from the huge cultural and linguistic diversity in **Afghanistan**, with any issues that extrapolate the school level being elevated to community councils.*

- **Link participatory community platforms to local education systems and authorities.**
  Parent-teachers associations are a worldwide phenomenon. From a human rights perspective both parents and teachers are duty bearers towards children. Constructive involvement of parents can support them to take an active role in their children's education and positively influence their values, attitudes and interactions with other parents and teachers. Expanding the role of these associations and platforms by building linkages with local authorities extends this duty of care for children and youth into existing social and political structures.

- **Continue to deepen exchanges between Education and Governance themes and domains within SDC.**
  The international human rights framework lays out clear norms and standards and provides clarity and orientation on priorities and objectives, both in the area of good governance[8] and education, (for example General comment no. 13)[9]. In SDC, there is fluidity between governance programmes and education programmes. Civic and human rights education, school governance strengthening, and social cohesion objectives are interconnected and require systems-level approaches to change. 'Education governance' is not only a strategic domain in SDC's Education Strategy it also reflects governance as a transversal topic and an inherent part of any educational political dialogue and programming.

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Endnotes

1   Mayne, J. (2017) Theory of Change Analysis: Building robust theories of change. Sociology

2   Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (coe.int)

3   A model of the competences required for democratic culture and intercultural dialogue 16809940c3 (coe.int)

4   https://inee.org/collections/conflict-sensitive-education

5   https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-22176-8_14

6   See general comment 13, of the COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS : https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/CESCR_General_Comment_13_en.pdf

7   Idem., p.3

8   Good governance principles are integral to human rights OHCHR | International standards for good governance

9   https://www.right-to-education.org/sites/right-to-education.org/files/resource-attachments/CESCR_General_Comment_13_en.pdf

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