



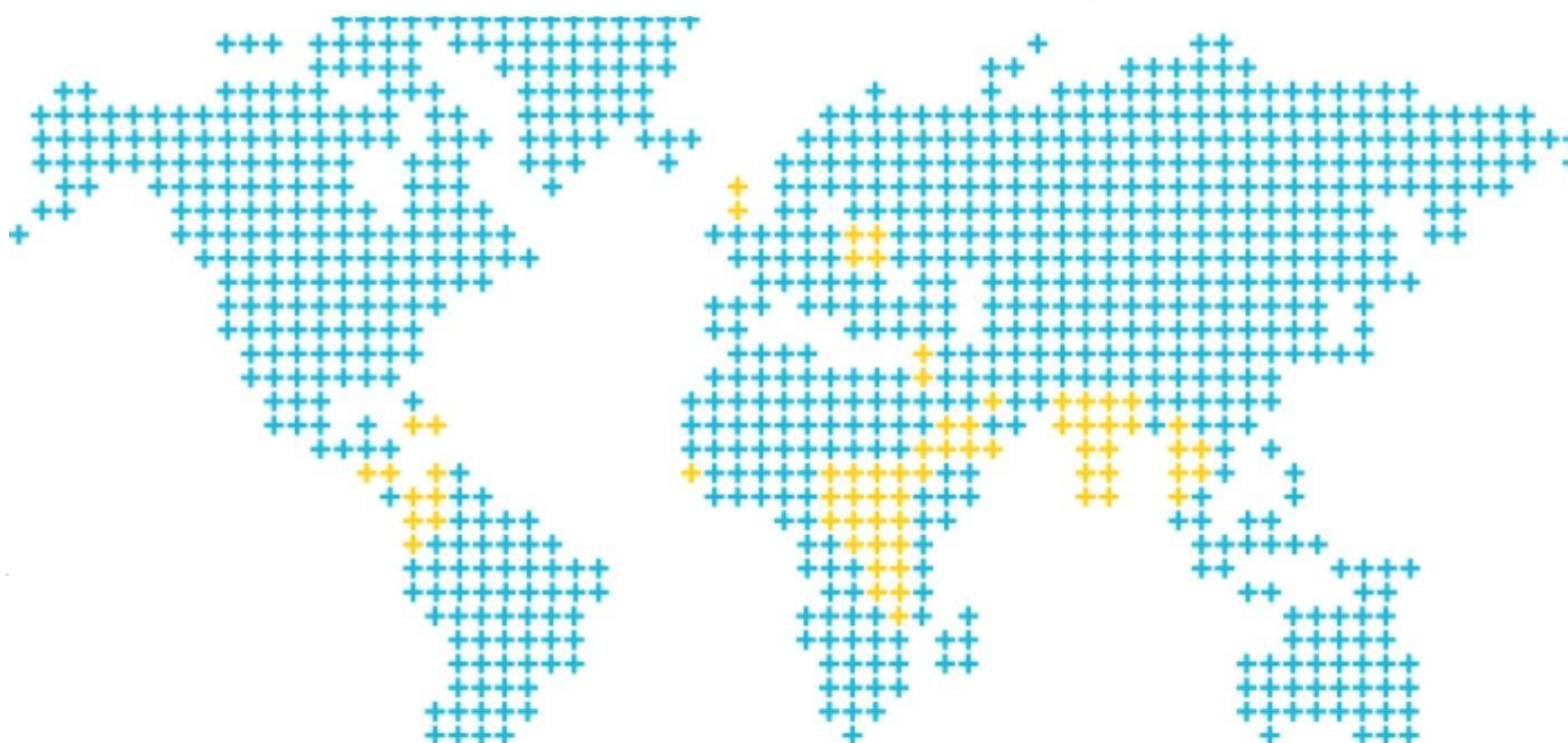
SCI AF Strategic Evaluation

INNOVATION REPORT



October 2021

Dr Liz Stones



Executive Summary

This report reflects on innovation within SCIAF over the last strategic period 2016-2020, identifies key innovations in projects and ways of working, and investigates those with relevance for the new strategic period. The report is one component of a wider evaluation of this strategic period and is complemented by the SCIAF Partnership Report and the SCIAF Strategic Aims Report.

Methodologically, it draws on a thorough review of internal and external documents and data; interviews conducted with SCIAF staff at all levels of the organisation, insights gathered from a partner survey coupled with partner interviews and follow-up, and participatory reflection sessions facilitated in-house by the SCIAF team.

Reviewing the past five years, it is clear that SCIAF has introduced and managed a broad range of both incremental and paradigm shift innovations; from new premises, departmental restructuring and the introduction of new IT systems to the complete shift from a physical presence in Glasgow to virtual online engagement with stakeholders and communities in Scotland and overseas, new partnership strategies and actions, new approaches to online education and engagement, and more. For overseas partnerships, the report highlights the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of outcomes of the partnership principles, the success of SCIAF's model in the context of restricted international travel, and the potential for amplifying positive outcomes through networks and multipliers. In particular, the cross-pollination of ideas between partners, and welcoming partner voices into SCIAF and networks, has proven effective and powerful. The commitment to partner professionalization has also resulted in cascading positive outcomes at wider civil society and government levels.

Looking to the future, the report concludes with several recommendations. Internally, SCIAF has implemented innovative practices organisation-wide and the last strategic cycle has included seismic shifts in working practices and departmental structures, internal systems, overseas partnerships, southern-based advocacy and priority countries, MEL and accountability practices and development education, to name just a few. It's essential to build in periods of reflection and iteration, prioritise high value tasks to reduce heavy workloads, and ensure participation in processes and ownership of outcomes as well as prioritising staff wellbeing. It is advisable to carefully assess opportunities for hybrid ways of working, consider embracing new work practices to enhance productivity and efficiency, support staff to prioritise and discontinue low-reward tasks (80:20 Pareto principle). The use of effective online tools could also enhance coordination and communication and build participation in the context of hybrid ways of working. It is also advisable to embrace opportunities to amplify partner voice, and take advantage of new opportunities in the digital environment for breaking down physical and geographical barriers. The success of the Agro-Ecology Promising Practices Toolkit also highlights the potential for intentionally cascading knowledge and sharing learning to strengthen civil society in target countries, particularly through developing and disseminating accessible learning tools and resources.

To future-proof the organisation, it is important to maintain a long-term, horizon scanning perspective to identify and respond to emerging risks going forward, particularly around data security which is likely to become increasingly relevant. SCIAF needs robust IT systems to streamline processes and reduce the time burden on staff, and should prioritise agility and realistic planning to enable SCIAF to respond appropriately to the rapidly transforming landscape.

Acknowledgements

Heartfelt thanks to the SCIAF staff, board and overseas partners for their dedicated support and timely engagement throughout this strategic evaluation process, and for living their commitment to a just and peaceful world. Special thanks to Mark Adams and the Working Group – Rhiannon Campbell, Anne Karlin and Michelle Nixon – for their support, preparation of documents and data, and efficient and proactive coordination throughout this strategic review process. Thanks also to the Reference Group for providing meaningful and thought-provoking strategic oversight and direction.

This evaluation would not have been possible without the support of interviewees from CS, PED and IHDD who gave their time and insights. Last but by no means least, thanks to SCIAF's dedicated and committed overseas partners for their enthusiastic and active participation in this process.

The opinions expressed in this report are the author's own.

Acronyms

CCPM	Climate Challenge Programme Malawi
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
CI	Caritas Internationalis
CIDSE	Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité
CIMS	Caritas Internationalis Management Standards
COMED	Communications Outreach Media and Education Department
COP	Conference of the Parties
CS	Central Services
CST	Catholic Social Teaching
DFID	Department for International Development
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FCHM	Feedback and Complaints Handling Mechanisms
HEF	Humanitarian Emergency Fund
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
IF	Institutional Funding
IHD	Integral Human Development
IHDD	Integral Human Development Department
IT	Information Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
LFM	LogFrame Matrix
M4P	Markets for the Poor
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MSC	Most Significant Change
MSP	Member of Scottish Parliament
MTR	Mid Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PED	Public Engagement Department
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PIMS	Programme Information and Management System
PO	Programme Officer
PM	Programme Manager
SCCS	Stop Climate Chaos Scotland
SCES	Scottish Catholic Education Service
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMT	Senior Management Team
UKAM	UK Aid Match
VfM	Value for Money

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Acknowledgements.....	2
Acronyms	3
Table of Contents.....	4
1. Aims and Methods	5
2. SCIAF’s Innovation Policy	6
3. What is Innovation?	7
3.1 Innovation from within	8
3.1.1 Integral Human Development	8
3.1.2 Partnership Principles	9
3.1.3 Relocation of SCIAF offices	9
3.1.4 Internal restructuring.....	10
3.1.5 Software and Internal Systems	12
3.1.6 MEL and Project rating system	14
3.1.7 Staff professional development.....	14
3.1.8 Southern-Based Advocacy	14
3.1.9 Promising Practices	15
3.2 Responsive Innovation.....	16
3.2.1 Responses to climate change.....	16
3.2.2 Responses to crises and legal changes in the sector	16
3.2.3 Home-based working model.....	17
3.2.4 Public engagement in the digital domain	18
3.2.5 Partnerships during Covid-19.....	19
4. Conclusions and horizon-scanning.....	20
5. Recommendations	22
6. Annexes.....	24
6.1 External sources.....	24
6.2 SCIAF Partner Survey Respondents and Interviewees.....	24
6.3 SCIAF staff interviews.....	24
6.4 Documents Reviewed	25

1. Aims and Methods

This report aims to identify and summarise key innovations in SCIAF projects and ways of working, particularly those with relevance for the new strategic period. The report is one component of a wider evaluation of this strategic period and is complemented by the SCIAF Partnership Report and the SCIAF Strategic Aims Report.

Methodologically, the analysis draws document review and data analysis, interviews conducted with SCIAF staff at all levels of the organisation, insights gathered from a partner survey coupled with partner interviews and follow-up, and participatory reflection sessions facilitated in-house by the SCIAF team.

A thorough review of relevant documents, reports, strategies, procedures and data was undertaken at the start of the evaluation period, with additional resources reviewed on a rolling basis throughout the assessment. These data were augmented, triangulated, interrogated and validated throughout this evaluation through the interviews and survey in combination with the team reflection sessions.

Semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) were facilitated with selected members of SCIAF staff and partner organisations. As it was not possible to interview all relevant stakeholders given the parameters of this assignment, these were augmented by data from interviews conducted during the Strategic Aims Mid Term Review in 2018 with supporters, donors and networks.

Participatory reflection sessions were facilitated to ensure that the SCIAF teams were empowered to engage in the strategic evaluation process and to reflect on how their team performed against the strategy and share their experiences, achievements, challenges and insights. These sessions aimed to give opportunities to discuss and reflect on innovations across the last strategic cycle both within departments as across the organisation; share achievements and identify lessons for the future. This augments the consolidated data provided by the Working Group and the individual contributions of interviewed staff members; amplified the voices of the SCIAF team and providing new, shared insights.

An independent partner survey was also used to capture key elements of partner relationships, and SCIAF partners (excluding exit countries) were invited to share their experiences and insights by email, with the opportunity to follow up with a one-to-one interview on request. The survey guide was designed to evaluate the quality and outcomes of our partnerships with overseas partners, and also to reflect on innovations over the strategic cycle. Key topics included capacity building and support with strategy, procedures, professionalization; mutuality, empowerment and decolonisation; outcomes and achievements; innovation, agility and adaptability, and 26 responses were received and analysed.

2. SCIAF's Innovation Policy

The dictionary definition of innovation is: *(Noun) The action or process of innovating. A new method, idea, product, etc.* The official SCIAF definition of innovation is, **“any solution that has the potential to address an important issue more effectively than existing approaches”**. This definition adds directionality and purpose to dictionary definitions; for SCIAF, innovation is intentionally and strategically employed to enhance the effectiveness of significant tasks or outcomes. The SCIAF Innovation Policy draws on the BOND Briefing ‘An Introduction to Social Innovation for NGOs’ and was also informed by ‘2016 Innovation Audit and Benchmarking Report: UK-based INGOs, focusing on SCIAF’. In 2016, a BOND survey measured perceptions of innovation capacity and innovation levels within SCIAF, and recommended improvements in the use of innovation to achieve SCIAF’s objectives by creating a robust innovation process. In response to these recommendations, SCIAF developed a policy statement to provide a framework for action and reflection, acknowledging the need to embrace both radical and incremental innovation to enhance processes and practices, and enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

In the Innovation Policy, SCIAF commits to maintaining a conducive environment to encourage and support curiosity, creativity, flexibility and enthusiasm and to empower staff to feel confident to raise new ideas and highlight challenges and opportunities; and to share and use learning through decision-oriented MEL. The Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF) model was used to structure the process of improvements or changes. The ultimate intention was to identify, institutionalise and scale-up successful innovations, while also allowing for process- and context-specific innovations to emerge. This commitment to adaptation, innovation, and embracing evolving best practices is underpinned by the organisational goal; to contribute to the realisation of a just world, and to continue to do better and remain relevant to shifting needs and contexts.

The Innovation Policy called for the establishment of an Innovation Committee with a broad remit to raise awareness and celebrate innovation and administer the innovation fund. The Committee was responsible for presenting innovation outcomes to the SMT quarterly and ensuring their inclusion in quarterly reporting and annual ‘celebration’ statements and evaluations. The innovation fund was implemented but not widely utilised, in part due to the pre-existing, widespread, and actively implemented commitment to innovation and learning across departments, which rendered the Fund somewhat superfluous, coupled with limited awareness of its existence across the organisation. The origins of the Fund, emerging from the recommendations of the BOND survey analysis, are also somewhat questionable as they relied on the self-reported data of the SCIAF staff, who have a tendency to downplay their adaptability and innovations, as well as making assumptions about the levels of innovations across the rest of the sector. In reality, the SCIAF team innovate constantly, with or without a targeted strategy and fund, and thus the fund was (appropriately) discontinued while the innovations continued to multiply and transform SCIAF ways of working. In practice, innovation is distributed and implemented organisation-wide, through both intentional and organic processes.

3. What is Innovation?

There is a shared recognition and appreciation that innovation includes both paradigm shifts and iterative change. According to interviewees, this is directly attributable to awareness-raising and knowledge-sharing around the SCIAF Innovation Policy in 2016 and 2017. As one member of staff explained, *“it’s not just a bolt from above, it’s actually hard work and step change”*. When viewed from this holistic perspective, staff recognise these processes of innovation in most elements of their work described by one as, *“quiet innovation, doing things better – and doing that routinely”*. Another staff member noted, *“we constantly re-evaluate and improve so nothing has stayed stale”*.

Despite this recognition and acknowledgement, once internal innovations are normalised and institutionalised they become invisible. When invited to reflect, most staff described changes relating to the global pandemic which has catalysed fundamental and paradigm-level shifts in every aspect of SCIAF’s work. While these are relevant, it’s important to recognise the underpinning cognitive dissonance. Discussing the theory; staff understand that innovation is a spectrum or curve. Discussing the practice; staff instinctively describe major transformations. The most effective innovations have been the least visible; as soon as the innovation is adopted by the majority, it is no longer innovative but becomes the new normal. This has undermined SCIAF’s recognition and celebration of its innovations; which have in reality been significant.

When reflecting on innovation in SCIAF, there is a clear dichotomy between staff who feel that, *“SCIAF struggles with innovation”* and others who believe that, *“we innovate constantly”*. There is also some (perfectly reasonable) trepidation around the language of innovation and resistance to changing practices which are working well already: If it’s not broken, don’t fix it. Accordingly, attitudes to innovation are highly variable across the SCIAF team, with high levels of commitment and passion emerging from some staff and active antipathy to the term and concept from others. This seems to stem in part from different definitions of the concept, and from the organisational history of embracing traditional values conflicting with the perceived threats associated with *“shifting with the wind”*. From an objective, external perspective, the latter – constant innovation – is a better fit for the evidence. As a pertinent example, both staff and partners agree that SCIAF responded exceptionally well to the restrictions and opportunities of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns, introducing and normalising innovative ways of working in response to these changing external conditions with speed, agility and determination.

As a simple guide for the purposes of this report, SCIAF innovations are categorised as **reflective** or **responsive**. The majority of innovations in this report are classified as reflective innovations; indicative of effective internal monitoring, learning and adaptive management processes. Responsive innovations are also described in relation to broader external trends such as climate change, legal and policy sector changes, digital opportunities and the Covid-19 pandemic and associated public health measures.

Reflective: Innovation from within	Innovation processes and actions catalysed from within – in response to reflection and internal learning to address identified weaknesses and maximise opportunities.
Responsive: Innovation as adaptation	Innovations which emerged as adaptive responses to external threats and challenges facing the organisation and the development and humanitarian sectors.

3.1 Innovation from within

Over the past strategic period 2016-2020, SCIAF has implemented a wide range of innovative and dynamic internal processes and actions, in response to internally recognised challenges and opportunities, and as a result of effective and adaptive monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) processes.

The most significant is the development and integration of the Integral Human Development (IHD) Framework across the organisation, which deserves both widespread acknowledgement and broader dissemination across the sector. Other internal innovations include massive transformations of the physical and digital spaces occupied by SCIAF, extensive and bold internal restructuring, transformations in MEL (e.g. from implementing standardized project rating systems to the inclusion of qualitative outcome indicators), actions taken on commitments to the personal and professional development of SCIAF staff, widespread changes to software and tech, and innovative knowledge-sharing tools including the Southern-based Advocacy Manual and Agro-ecology Promising Practices toolkit.

3.1.1 Integral Human Development

SCIAF has a rich tradition of development work grounded in Catholic Social Teaching (CST). At the heart of CST is an understanding of the human person and its intrinsic human nature, and the recognition that only by being true to our basic human nature and ordering our lives accordingly can we truly thrive, flourish and become our truest and best possible selves. Over the past strategic period, SCIAF has built on this foundation by developing the ground-breaking and highly innovative IHD framework.

Formalising and strategically applying these values as both a guiding principle and an operational framework (the IHD Wheel developed in the UKAM project, for example) is a significant and unique achievement. This also represents a powerful example of innovation at the heart of the organisation. The IHD Framework informs SCIAF's strategic plan, operational plan and strategic aims, providing the guiding principles for all projects, programmes, partnerships and advocacy work. While it is grounded in CST, the IHD Framework has potentially ground-breaking applications even in the secular world. Recognising, valuing and seeking to support all aspects of the individual experience puts communities' experiences at the heart of the development paradigm.

3.1.2 Partnership Principles

The SCIAF Partnership Principles are another relevant example of innovative approaches and practices at the heart of SCIAF. Localisation is inherent in the Partnership Principles, embracing principles of mutual accountability, transparency, subsidiarity, and empowerment: an adoption of the Caritas Partnership Principles.

This partnership model has proved particularly relevant and powerful in the context of the pandemic. Without reliance on direct implementation, SCIAF has successfully continued to support the implementation of projects across target countries. Remarkably, SCIAF was among the first to take immediate action to respond to the emerging crisis and support overseas partners to respond. SCIAF increased levels of support to empower partners to continue to provide the intended stream of benefits to project participants, maintain their organisational effectiveness and integrity, and protect staff and communities from transmitting the virus. This is discussed in more detail in the associated Partnership Report, but is nevertheless a salient example of SCIAF's agility and the effectiveness of the organisational model in adapting to emerging challenges and opportunities.

3.1.3 Relocation of SCIAF offices

After two decades of working from offices in Park Circus, SCIAF has moved to new premises in West Nile Street in central Glasgow. The move was catalysed by the recognition that the Park Circus offices required frequent, extensive and expensive maintenance and repairs, and was underpinned by SCIAF's commitment to **Strategic Aim 2: Environmental Sustainability**. The move demonstrated firm commitment to good stewardship and putting these beliefs into practice; shifting the entire organisation to a more energy-efficient, modern building with improved public transportation links; and reducing operational costs to maximise effectiveness in supporting people in need.

While the new offices have not been used as intended due to lockdowns and restrictions, the new layout (one floor, open plan, spacious, welcoming kitchen) are reported to have enhanced both formal and informal communications and teamwork; creating a new collaborative office environment and will provide a robust foundation to move towards a flexible, hybrid working environment as the pandemic eases. The office move was raised during interviews as an example of highly effective organisational change; both in planning and implementation. It was highlighted as a key achievement by the PED and CS teams during the Participatory Reflection Session. The IHDD team did not highlight the office move as a major challenge or change for their department during their internal reflection session, which is a testament to how well it was managed and the extent to which disruption was mitigated; ***“it felt like home very quickly”***. This was a huge investment of time and human resources but as one CS staff member noted, ***“it didn't feel difficult, it just felt exciting”***.

This investment has already paid dividends in creating a more cohesive, welcoming environment that facilitates more effective cross-departmental working and the emergence of innovative ideas shared across the organisation. The new space is more conducive to new ideas; as one staff member summarised,

“The new layout changed how we work as an organisation, it had an impact on our culture. We can see everybody, there is more interaction because of the open plan layout. This also helped with the shift to working from home, the transformed office culture was exported to working from home.”

This shift to effective remote working is discussed in detail in the “Home-based Working Model” section. The foundations of the successful move were in part attributed to ***“shared purpose, clear timelines and clear allocation of responsibilities”***.

3.1.4 Internal restructuring

The past 5 years have seen significant restructuring of two of the three SCIAF departments, coupled with high staff turnover in advocacy staff and senior management of PED, transforming roles and responsibilities across IHDD and PED and addressing identified weaknesses and opportunities organisation-wide as well as future-proofing the internal dynamics of SCIAF.

COMED has been transformed into PED and expanded significantly. Outreach, marketing and fundraising roles and strategies have been restructured, the size of the team increased to 23 staff members. Meanwhile, the churn in management has seen four departmental heads in five years. Inevitably, progress within the department over this 5-year period has been variable, as each transitional phase has impacted on momentum and leadership changes have reoriented departmental priorities. Under the new Head of Department, the atmosphere is reported to have been transformed and innovation is valued and actioned more than ever before. Staff in other departments also expressed pride with how well the PED team have handled these changes, e.g. one commented, ***“shout out for the PED team, they took proactive steps to address identified issues and coped really well with massive changes.”***

Within PED, the marketing and communication strategy puts innovation at its heart; the first core value is *“creative and innovative, inclusive of fresh ideas and new perspectives”*. Staff interviews corroborate the implementation of this commitment in practice.

“In the past, great innovative ideas came up but confidence wasn’t there that we could get support or receive grants for this sort of thing. I don’t have the capacity to search for those grants, but now there is someone whose job it is! Brilliant ideas are much more likely to come to fruition.”

PED has expanded and shifted focus, introducing an ambitious target raising £50 million over 5 years. The Trustees have agreed a substantial Fundraising Investment Fund for new, innovative ideas and new internal roles to deliver this goal. Major shifts in fundraising, marketing and communications have accompanied the increasingly structured and strategic focus on fundraising, and there has been a significant investment in the institutional funding (IF) team.

These changes have impacted roles, relationships and responsibilities across the organisation. These have included both positive and negative impacts. During the transitional period, some staff observed a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities and distribution of related tasks between staff as they adjusted to the changes. One staff member commented that this confusion remains, noting, ***“every day someone comes to me and asks me who is responsible for this, or why hasn’t someone done that”***. The changes were supported by a consultation process which involved some, but critically not all, departmental staff. As a result, some team members felt that there was limited transparency around, or engagement in, the underpinning decision-making processes. Ultimately the new teams are working well and energy in the department is positive. Significantly, this learning informed the subsequent restructuring of IHDD; demonstrating adaptive and responsive management in action across these significant transformations.

Within IHDD, an external consultant supported the process of transforming staffing and structures, providing independent advice and building shared decisions through a consultative and participatory process. While in some cases clarity of responsibilities is still being negotiated, the restructuring process and outcomes have increased the autonomy of programme officers while capitalising on key skills and strengths of the management team. Programme Officers value the increased responsibility, empowerment and technical support, while Programme Managers increasingly play a

strategic role overseeing country strategies and maximising their technical expertise; from MEL to representing SCIAF to networks and sister agencies.

Intentional linkages have also been built and strengthened between IHDD and PED, enhancing mutual understanding and effective coordination. These include the establishment of the Senior Campaigns Officer role, and the increasing coordination and communications between the IHDD team and the Marketing and Communications Manager. While staff acknowledge that there remains room for improvement, the informational flows between departments have improved significantly over the strategic period facilitating effective and innovative engagement.

“Effective relationships with our Comms colleagues were hugely important to delivering success on key campaigns, especially the Climate Bill. When the SCIAF media officer played a specific role to support the SCCS coalition, this led to increased opportunity for SCIAF to shape external media content, more opportunities for SCIAF to contribute to media, and amplification of our collective asks and campaign. Similarly, SCIAF is at its most effective when campaigns and policy work is joined up on one, neat piece of work that enables a joint insider/outsider approach to influencing.”

One challenge noted by evaluation participants concerns the sequencing and timing of activities, which are implemented on different timescales and planning schedules across departments. For example, staff highlighted the need for agile responses to swiftly address emerging advocacy opportunities. At times, these may conflict with longer planning cycles of other teams, introducing challenges of scheduling and prioritisation. The departmental changes have gone a long way to address the issue of silos first identified in 2015, targeted in the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and further tackled in the Internal Communications Plan rolled out in Q4 2018 through daily internal/external news briefings for all staff and a monthly staff newsletter, later replaced by daily news update in Teams, as well as weekly managers’ meetings introduced during the Covid 19 lockdowns. The new, open-plan offices and intentional interconnections across the restructured departments have undoubtedly facilitated improved departmental collaboration, with excellent outcomes emerging already. During the interviews and reflection session, staff acknowledged that there is still progress to be made in enhancing communications and timely collaborative actions. Looking to the future, more intentional synergies are likely to enhance the effectiveness of organisational actions.

3.1.5 Software and Internal Systems

During the period of this strategic plan, SCIAF has introduced several new systems and software to enhance collaboration, consolidate data and documents, improve programme management, and streamline performance monitoring. In part, this responded to the issues identified in the initial Strategic Audit and the MTR, which identified ongoing limitations associated with teams working in silos and the disconnect between aspects of the organisation.

IHDD's Programme Information and Management System (PIMS) in particular is considered to be a vast improvement on the previous static database, described by staff as *"more agile"*, *"easier to navigate"* and *"interactive"*.

"The database was just a storage repository, it was static. Once you uploaded content, no one saw it or used it. PIMS feels more rewarding, it's task-based and keeps you on track. We now work collaboratively on documents, it's much more efficient."

Another member of staff explained,

"The new database (PIMS) is where you work with the data and not just store it. It enables us to analyse it, everyone comes together. It's the biggest innovation in IHDD. We do a complex job and this is a massive innovation for us. It's brought in so much cross-learning; bringing information from one project or country to everyone, bringing the learning into other projects and countries."

The shift to PIMS was grounded in extensive planning and consultation supporting a comprehensive change management process, supported by training and capacity building and augmented by ongoing backstopping, monthly trainings, monthly drop-in sessions, a fortnightly email newsletter and opportunities for one-to-one training and support on demand from two different staff members. Plans were disrupted by lockdown six weeks before the PIMS live launch date, so this support was provided online. For some staff members, guidance provided to staff was limited, and one interviewee commented, *"we just all found our own way"*. The pandemic forced a rapid implementation of the new systems, compressing the finalisation of the ongoing planning process supporting the transition, and staff responded admirably to this emergency situation. Furthermore, it occurred in the immediate aftermath of an internal IT crash, as one staff member noted;

"We were all recovering from the crash when we suddenly had to move to home working, without warning! It was a very challenging time."

More broadly, staff noted that the intense workload has implications for systems development, as staff have limited capacity to research and identify improved systems. As an example, the database where GiftAid declarations were stored (Scanstore) was terminated in 2020 and the IT solution has not yet been replaced. While this has no security implications, it impacts on current cash flow and is likely to cause future challenges as the stored GiftAid must be processed within four years, and the work is backing up.

Despite these limitations, within the new systems information is increasingly viewed as a shared resource, enhancing ownership as well effectiveness and efficiency across the teams.

“All this new software takes a bit of getting used to, but it’s working well. We’re getting used to not using our inbox as to do list – now there are lots of sources. I’m being tagged in a document or noted in a chat, it’s a challenge to figure out how to prioritise this with the workload. But consider how low tech we were before! We barely had phone signal in parts of the old building. We’re light years ahead now, it’s a massive shift in a really short timeframe.”

Table 1: Overview of technological innovation introduced during this strategic period 2016-2020

Software	Description
PIMS	Programme Information and Management System for the logical and efficient centralised management and approval of programmes and organization and storage of key programme information, enabling SCIAF to plan, monitor and execute projects more successfully. <i>“Great, a massive source of information”</i>
Microsoft OneDrive	Online, cloud-based file hosting and synchronization service.
Microsoft Teams	Communication platform providing workspace chat and video-conferencing, file storage, and application integration. <i>“Shared work should be on OneDrive but Teams better for working on shared documents.”</i>
Microsoft Sharepoint	Document management and storage system. <i>“Really helpful, makes life much easier”</i>
Hootsuite	Social media platform used by staff across a range of teams, helping to increase volume and quality
DASH	Centralised photo/video content database or repository, overcoming silos enabling people across the organisation to access content independently.
Virtual Hunt system	System to redirect supporter calls to enable staff to answer and accept donations (card transactions) remotely via mobile phone. <i>“The rate of change is so fast that it’s functional, but doesn’t track everything. We can accept donations and always pick up the phone, but we don’t know how many calls we got, if that’s up or down on last year. We monitor online and paper, but we don’t log or track calls anymore.”</i>
Automation of Case Studies and Trip Reports for travelling staff	IHDD purchased a number of tablets and smartphones for travelling staff and built some of the standard forms (case studies, trip reports, partner RAG reports) into Kobo forms. These allowed project staff to collect case studies (text, photos, audio, and consent signatures) into one document that was automatically saved together. These could then be emailed and uploaded to the programme database.
Digital solutions for project monitoring and reporting, participant tracking	A number of initiatives were taken to use digital solutions for project reporting and participant tracking including a custom-built, excel based system for Central America and an off-the-shelf solution for DPA in Cambodia (goonjan). The IHD pilot used a South African company to support digital data collection in the UKAM Great Lakes project.

3.1.6 MEL and Project rating system

Over the past strategic period, SCIAF has also implemented extensive internal innovations in the MEL processes and project rating systems. PIMS was discussed previously, which allows the team to close grade every project comparatively. The IHD Framework is also relevant here, enabling a comprehensive assessment of outcomes across all aspects of human development and moving beyond simplistic and reductionist measures.

At the end of 2016, the project rating/ evaluation scoring system was implemented, based on the DFID scoring system for overseas development projects. This innovative system includes a component of peer review; wherein project partners are supported to review each other's work. POs grade the projects according to agreed criteria, and PMs verify, validate and close the projects with the final grade. The grade is calculated based on the overall percentage achievement of intended outcomes against the targets in the LFM. The Project Cycle Management (PCM) manual was also developed to ensure high levels of quality control across the project cycle, and the Standard Indicator developed to empower participant voice in the assessment of projects, and systematically assess the relevance and effectiveness of the interventions.

SCIAF also took action on the identified weaknesses in the high-level metrics and success criteria (see Strategic Aims Report). In response, the organisation now includes qualitative indicators to monitor outcomes and achievements at the strategic level, including the Most Significant Change (MSC) approach piloted during the Strategic MTR in 2016.

3.1.7 Staff professional development

Another internal commitment to innovation and creativity that should be acknowledged and celebrated is SCIAF's genuine and creative approach to personal and professional development of staff. This commitment is underpinned by generous budgets and allowances, and interpreted in a flexible way to maximise opportunities for individuals and outcomes for the organisation. During the interviews, staff described a wide range of professional development activities undertaken. These include substantial management training in 2019, storytelling and content gathering at BOND, Chartered Institute of Public Relations trainings, technical training in innovative software such as Premier Pro, InDesign, Adobe Creative Cloud and others which have facilitated collaborative work on video content, as well as shadowing professionals in other organisations to cross-pollinate learning.

3.1.8 Southern-Based Advocacy

SCIAF's influence in leading national advocacy actions and achieving significant outcomes is considerable. Building supportive partnerships, enhancing the value of networks and creating both vertical and horizontal knowledge - and skill-sharing platforms is an essential foundation for success. SCIAF plays a strong role in the CIDSE network, and working to build partners' advocacy skills and capacities is a powerful and innovative long-term strategy that is likely to contribute to sustainable and transformative outcomes. SCIAF's first Partner Advocacy Handbook (Manual for Global Advocacy Practitioners) was published in 2018, and is a valuable resource for partner-led advocacy actions. It has been well received by the Caritas network, as well as SCIAF partners and staff, and is profoundly innovative and potentially transformative.

In the handbook, SCIAF reflects on several roles it may play in support of partners, including *as accompanier* standing in solidarity, *as a catalyst or capacity-builder*, *as a connector* providing resources for partners to link into national, regional or international processes where their voice can have an impact, and *as facilitator* in response to specific requests for support or action from partners, for example in emergency situations.

The Handbook has been developed and improved through a series of participatory consultation workshops. It aims to support partners to empower communities to articulate their issues and provides step-by-step guidance to build advocacy strategies around these issues. First presented and trialled with partners Caritas Lugazi (Uganda) and Caritas Kabwe (Zambia) in 2017, the initial results were positive and feedback from the partners was encouraging. The manual has since been adapted and refined through participatory processes to integrate partner insights and recommendations. In September 2019 the manual was piloted again with three partners: Climate Challenge Programme Malawi (CCPM) (Malawi), Caritas Lugazi (Uganda) and Caritas Kabwe (Zambia). Positive outcomes are emerging already. In 2019, CCPM developed an advocacy strategy using the manual and has begun work on the advocacy project. Caritas Lugazi and Kabwe are both finalising lobbying and campaigning activities and messages, before drafting their final strategies.

Supporting partner advocacy is a time- and resource-consuming initiative, and an investment in long-term outcomes across a wide range of countries and intervention areas. This initiative is likely to contribute to a diversity of outcomes, which are inherently complex and challenging to monitor and measure; the next steps may be the integration of effective partner advocacy outcome monitoring to ensure that achievements are highlighted and celebrated effectively, and knowledge is disseminated throughout SCIAF's wider networks to facilitate learning and diffusion of benefits.

3.1.9 Promising Practices

Over the past strategic period, SCIAF has transformed the valuable Promising Practices series of publications. From their initial conceptualisation as printed summary reports of lessons learned and best practices at the end of a grant, they have now been transformed into utilisation-focused outputs produced in innovative and accessible formats, including a film produced in Malawi.

From Nicaragua, the Agro-Ecology Toolkit provides clearly formatted materials, visual aids and a trainer's manual on agro-ecology. Initially published in Spanish and English, it was presented to a Cambodian partner during planning meetings in Phnom Penh and subsequently adopted for use with their communities. The partner commissioned a translation into Khmer and now use the toolkit as a visual resource for non-literate communities in relevant projects. This partner-led adaptation of innovative and open-source SCIAF resources is a powerful example of the spill over effects of SCIAF innovations and a further validation of the effectiveness and sustainability of the SCIAF partnership model. This points to the importance of designing materials in accessible format to enhance their transferability and cascade benefits across horizontal networks, and the value of 'programmatic tools' to enhance SCIAF's impact.

3.2 Responsive Innovation

The 2016-2020 strategic period has been marked by wide-ranging and unanticipated shifts across the UK, the development sector and the world; including the Covid-19 pandemic but also the unprecedented safeguarding scandals across the aid sector and legal changes affecting SCIAF, including GDPR. SCIAF has responded and adapted to these external challenges facing the organisation and the sector, and as a consequence a number of successful innovations have been developed, implemented, refined and iterated across the organisation.

These include the shift to online and hybrid ways of working, rapidly scaling up ongoing process for virtual communication, collaboration and engagement, reduced physical presence in schools and parishes caused by lockdowns and restrictions across Scotland, transformed relationships with partners and remote field visits, and an increase in remote public engagement and networking activities.

3.2.1 Responses to climate change

SCIAF has invested significant effort, and achieved significant progress, in actions taken on climate justice, both in Scotland and overseas. In Scotland these include influencing the Climate Bill and supporting organisations to prepare for the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP) 2026. SCIAF has completed external-facing advocacy as well as internal work such as technical amendments and lobbying Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs). SCIAF has been at the forefront of Scottish organisations in preparing communities, NGOs and government stakeholders for COP 2026. SCIAF has also been active members of Climate Justice Networks throughout the strategic cycle; including as Board members of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS) and the policy group of the Alliance. SCIAF has expressed the voice of faith communities, as well as leading on events and actions throughout the strategic cycle.

3.2.2 Responses to crises and legal changes in the sector

SCIAF responded swiftly and decisively to the Oxfam/Save the Children scandals which dominated the media in 2018, attracting high levels of public and political interest. In addition to issuing public statements, SCIAF undertook considerable media work and intensified the ongoing processes of reviewing and improving risk management, child protection and financial management policies and processes across the organisation, and more significantly across all partner organisations. Prior to this SCIAF had conducted a thorough review of systems and handling of cases and developed an action plan for improvement, and provided capacity building to all overseas partners to develop their own policies and train their staff. In response to the scandal and widespread public demand for enhanced safeguarding practices and policies, SCIAF intensified these ongoing processes.

Supporting SCIAF's diverse partners across different country and cultural contexts to enhance and strengthen their risk management, safeguarding, financial management and GDPR compliance strategies and processes has been a complex and challenging yet fruitful endeavour. Partners express gratitude for these processes of professionalization, as well as acknowledging unintended consequences in terms of their national reputation, status and influence as a result (see Partnership Report for more detail).

Internally, during the 2016-2020 strategic cycle SCIAF has adapted policies and processes to ensure compliance with data protection GDPR laws, with significant policy changes across the organisation in 2017 and 2018 and issuance of statements to supporters and volunteers ensure a tracked and auditable consent track.

3.2.3 Home-based working model

The Covid-19 pandemic has heralded a paradigm shift in ways of working, catalysing responsive innovations and adaptations across the organisation. SCIAF has risen to the challenge and embraced new opportunities for virtual communication, collaboration and engagement with efficiency and determination.

While SCIAF's physical presence in Scotland and globally has reduced, virtual engagements have expanded significantly and actually resulted in increased scope and breadth of engagement; reducing geographic and logistical barriers particularly for engagements in Scotland and elsewhere in the developed world. Staff members consistently reported that SCIAF's engagement in the digital domain has been swift and effective; ***"people were agile, and very effective as a team working towards our shared goals against unexpected challenges."*** As one staff member noted,

"Covid was a paradigm shift! And we innovated incredibly well and quickly. One day we were in the office, then we were at home and the transition was smooth. Contact and communications were maintained so efficiently and effectively, the team adapted so well."

It is important to acknowledge that across departments, the pandemic has increased staff workloads. For IHDD, staff have supported partners with Covid extensions and grants for every project, simultaneously supporting partners to understand and implement preventative policies and practices and to support badly affected vulnerable communities, in many cases while dealing with personally challenging circumstances. One team member explained,

"The focus was - how do we help the partners? If it's bad here, it will be awful in contexts without strong public healthcare and social support. We had this added motivation - our work was even more important."

A concern, or loss of value, associated with the shift to online working is the ***"little bits in between, the informal check-ins after the meeting"***. Staff have developed some strategies to informally address this (e.g. bilateral phone calls to check-in after meetings) but the loss is felt. Shifting from face-to-face to online workshops and meetings introduces both challenges and opportunities, and staff noted that during video calls some voices remain silent. One explained, ***"there are people who have a lot to contribute in person; but online their voices are not heard."*** For other staff members based overseas, the shift to online meetings has been an equaliser. For staff with young families or mobility challenges, or even pets, the flexibility of home working has also been liberating and balanced, to some extent, the increased workload over the past months.

While staff acknowledge that a hybrid approach combining home-based and office-based working would be the most effective approach to take forward, the virtual environment has scaled up the pace of innovation across the organisation, with a range of positive outcomes and new horizons. This will need to be balanced carefully and intentionally going forward with a shift to a hybrid approach, to ensure power dynamics are balanced with offline and online participants.

A suggestion from the team was to consider the value of 'online culture workshops', and a general consensus during the reflection sessions that, ***"we need to learn more about effective facilitation and online engagement"***. While collaborative digital whiteboards were mentioned by staff in some departments, during the departmental discussions others were unaware of their existence. One staff member reflected,

“We’re so experienced at facilitation in person, but the model and skills don’t transfer so easily. Once we’re online, we forget to apply even the basics. We don’t use energisers, we don’t always support everyone to engage effectively, and sometimes we forget the value of group work...”

Staff members across the organisation have highly variable experience, skills and confidence in online presentation and facilitation. With an increasing shift to home-based working and opportunities to engage more widely with partners, supporters and networks online; building effective online communication and facilitation skills is a crucial investment for the next strategic cycle.

3.2.4 Public engagement in the digital domain

For PED, the Covid-19 pandemic was also a sea change in adaption and innovation, with 2020 described as *“hugely productive”*. In some ways, staff highlight the new opportunities associated with remote working which breaks down the challenge of distance;

“Everyone working from home is good for networking – we can go everywhere, to everything. There’s no environmental impact, the costs are low, and our partners can attend anything, anywhere as well.”

A further benefit of this increasing digital engagement is opening up opportunities to engage in virtual and online development education globally. For example, a staff member mentioned SCIAF’s popularity in the Philippines. There is scope to expand this further and investigate other innovative opportunities to engage with public audiences, in Scottish schools and parishes and beyond. An example mentioned during the interviews was using theatrical performance to transform stories into something living and tangible, for performance in schools and online.

In response to the global pandemic, SCIAF has shifted increasingly into online education platforms and fundraising strategies; for example when parish talks were no longer possible, a pre-recorded presentation from the bishop was released online for parish audiences. During one talk in January 2021, 150 teachers joined a Zoom event launching resources in schools; far higher participant numbers than ever achieved during a face-to-face session. Feedback received indicated that 90% of respondents found the resources ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ useful. SCIAF has focused strategically on building relationships with the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) prior to, and throughout the pandemic period.

SCIAF’s online resources also proved popular as communities were locked down and classrooms met via distance learning. The Kahoot Quiz was played over 50 times, with nearly 800 players, and 2782 downloads of classroom resources were recorded during Lent 2021. SCIAF also presented two pre-recorded National Assemblies, which were watched in classrooms and at home on YouTube/Facebook Live, recording 1,305 views with an estimated reach over 15,000 (many views were in classrooms, multiplying the scale and reach). A streamed Stations of the Cross presentation on Facebook Live every Friday during Lent also recorded a total of 2,258 views.

Thus, the innovative engagement with online platforms and tools captured the interest of SCIAF supporters and communities, resulting in increased audience numbers. Individual supporters in Scotland demonstrated their commitment to SCIAF by increasing their levels of support since the outbreak began; shifting to individual giving when parish activities ceased. As an example, individual givers have donated their holiday budgets to SCIAF when the lockdowns forced them to cancel holiday plans, and the Lent Appeal was also extremely successful raising 1.337million in 2021.

3.2.5 Partnerships during Covid-19

During the lockdown, the inherent strength and sustainability of the partnership model was validated and opportunities were seized in an effective and timely manner. Unlike many in the sector, SCIAF were not reliant on overseas travel to continue their work. Projects and programmes implemented by committed, capacitated partners continued to function effectively despite national lockdowns and ongoing travel restrictions thanks to the swift and effective support provided by the SCIAF team to manage and mitigate disruptions, in particular the no cost extensions.

As a staff member noted during the reflection sessions, *“it was a vast amount of work, and the successful outcomes were a testament to our model of authentic partnership.”* SCIAF implemented a rapid and generous policy to support partners and ensure they were able to continue to support their communities in the Covid-19 context. As staff noted,

“The Director acted swiftly and the Board took action to ensure we could use the reserves for Covid – which is the biggest global emergency in hundreds of years! This decision was taken so quickly, within a week we were responding to partner needs and supporting them through the crisis.”

This is a significant, powerful example of innovative and agile response. Adaptation was essential to success across the organisation, with the adoption of remote visits and monitoring and new ways of engaging national capacities to document and report on outcomes from the field. For example, online workshops have also been facilitated in Ethiopia and DRC, with more planned for Malawi later in 2021.

A core positive outcome of the pandemic identified by staff is, *“enabling partner voices to be heard in these public spaces as equal participants in the dialogue”*. Staff described increased partner visibility and equality as a result of the shift to online ways of working. Examples include supporting partner Q&As and inviting partners to staff briefings; distributing partner voices much more widely across SCIAF. Moreover, partners were supported to participate in meetings with ministers in the UK, *“so their voice was heard directly without us as intermediary”*.

For some staff, particularly in the CS team, these partner voices are particularly welcomed and should be sustained going forwards;

“I don’t think we would have thought to do this (without Covid), to set up a link and have the partners speaking directly in staff briefings. This is a really positive. I don’t travel as part of my job, so I really welcome these partner voices – this reminds me why we’re doing what we’re doing, and where we fit into the bigger picture. It’s removed a barrier I didn’t even realise was there. Partner voices are no longer mediated through the OMs, they can speak for themselves.”

The lockdowns and restrictions affecting international travel had widespread implications for amplifying partner voices and empowering partners to give voice to the communities they serve. In particular, remote content gathering has been effectively supported as a consequence of the long-term, trust-based relationships with overseas partners. Partners and national consultants have been supported to engage more closely through and with social media to produce and provide photo and video content, with more planned for later in 2021. These systemic shifts are empowering partners and communities to control the portrayal of their communities and projects in ways which enhance both accuracy and ownership.

4. Conclusions and horizon-scanning

The past strategic cycle has ended during a period of seismic global change; the restrictions affecting travel and assembly have had far-reaching impacts across the organisation and the increase in online working has illuminated opportunities and advantages to pursuing new ways of working and a hybrid model into the future. The effects of the pandemic are likely to be felt throughout the next strategic period, and the associated Partnership report documents some of the emerging challenges and opportunities identified by SCIAF's overseas partners. In the 2016-2020 period these included changes within the UK government in Westminster and Holyrood, the UK's decision to leave the EU, changes in the global development and humanitarian sectors; as well as the increasing recognition of the threat of climate change and the increasing engagement of the private sector in development processes, and concomitant trends reducing the civil society space.

In Scotland and globally, the political and economic landscape is shifting, the ramifications of Brexit and the associated loss of EU funding are still emerging, while DFID/FCDO merger has transformed institutional funding opportunities in the UK. In response IF income has been diversified, for example in 2020, SCIAF won the first grant from Jersey. In 2017 SCIAF secured the biggest CCPM contract from the Scottish Government, despite intense competition. The £3 million CCPM project was SCIAF's first ever commercial contract, and was used to effectively pilot innovative levels of collaboration between (and resourcing of) advocacy, communications and programmes teams.

SCIAF is in a strong position to predict and respond effectively to external opportunities and changes, and the pandemic has demonstrated the agility with which the organisation can respond, adapt and innovate when faced with unprecedented challenges. The support of the Scottish public, government and media, coupled with the strength of SCIAF's networks with Caritas Internationalis, CIDSE, SCES and others; in alliance with capacitated and trusted partners; all contributes to a solid foundation for future planning and action, united by guiding principles grounded in CST.

The new strategy embeds innovation in line with SCIAF's new strategic priorities: embracing multipliers, structural influencing, a reduced number of more coherent country programmes that deliver an increased breadth and depth of impact using the integral human development approach, and doubled funding over the lifetime of the strategy.

Looking to the future, SCIAF and partners have already begun to predict and innovate in response to emerging challenges and opportunities. The implementation of the partnership principles are increasingly empowering partners to plan, implement and monitor their projects and advocacy strategies with tailored remote support, and to engage more effectively in processes of national, regional and international change. Recognising the emerging socio-economic trends, SCIAF predicts that the increasing electrification of vehicles in the developed world is likely to increasingly fuel demand for conflict minerals, while off-grid solutions will be needed to support rural developing world populations to enjoy electrification and move beyond basic needs.

The strategic focus on *"peaceful and just communities"* and *"sustainable, resilient livelihoods and a flourishing environment for all"*; now combined under the strategic objective of contributing to *"a just and green world"* are likely to become even more relevant over time. It is also noteworthy that for an international development organisation of SCIAF's size, the willingness and ability to respond swiftly and effectively to emerging humanitarian crises in target countries is remarkable and exemplary, and is deeply appreciated by overseas partners and supporters alike. Similarly, SCIAF's

targeted and effective partner-led advocacy implemented nationally, regionally and internationally has catalysed and contributed to impressive outcomes and strengthened civil society and good governance across target countries.

It is accurate to characterise the culture of SCIAF as both authentic and innovative. The self-critical assessment of innovation within internal process and practices (e.g. in the BOND innovation survey) is perhaps more reflective of the culture of candour and humility than an objective assessment of the state of innovation across the organisation. SCIAF is, in practice, a learning organisation which embraces opportunities to improve. Staff continually challenge themselves to do better -inspiring each other and contributing to multiplier effects across both the organisation and partners (and potentially networks, but that was outside the scope of the FE). This is even articulated in “reflect – act – do”; an adaptive management cycle is embedded in SCIAF’s mission statement.

5. Recommendations

Looking to the future, the report concludes with several recommendations. Internally, SCIAF has implemented innovative practices organisation-wide and the last strategic cycle has included significant shifts in working practices and departmental structures, internal systems overseas partnerships, southern-based advocacy and priority countries, MEL and accountability practices and development education, to name just a few.

Ensure MEL systems capture and share organic, unplanned outcomes

The MEL systems have undergone extensive improvement and alignment over the last strategic period. Capturing unplanned, unintended, emergent and organic outcomes; particular those initiated or experienced by partners, remains challenging. An approach such as outcome mapping, outcome harvesting, or process tracing could be fruitfully employed here.

Embrace hybrid ways to working to maximise efficiency and staff satisfaction

It is advisable to carefully assess opportunities for hybrid ways of working, drawing on the best practices and strategies developed during the pandemic and integrating both home and office based working. It is also an excellent opportunity to consider embracing new, more flexible work practices to enhance productivity and efficiency. This is particularly relevant given the seasonal spikes in workload across some departments. The use of effective online tools (collaborative digital whiteboards, visual collaboration platforms, and similar) could also enhance coordination and communication and build participation in the context of hybrid ways of working.

Support staff to prioritise high value tasks

Internal staff surveys frequently identify challenging workloads, with seasonal burdens affecting IHDD and PED in particular. It is advisable to support staff to strategically prioritise high value tasks and discontinue low-reward tasks (80:20 Pareto principle). Processes of change management should be balanced with opportunities for staff to pause and reflect, in teams and as an organisation. Processes with high effort and low reward should be identified, and staff should be supported to reflect on their most productive activities and prioritise their workloads accordingly, spending less time on lower-value tasks and more on those which contribute directly to key outputs and outcomes. While SCIAF has achieved impressive gains in the short term, there is a risk of over-burdening staff with intense workloads coupled with unprecedented internal transformations, which could result in high staff turnover and the risk of burnout over time.

Maximise the value of volunteer support

Hybrid ways of working introduce new opportunities to engage with skilled volunteers, staff seconded from partner organisations, remote mentorship and other innovative approaches to maximising the value of human resources. To address gaps in manpower, SCIAF would benefit from maximising the value and use of highly skilled volunteers across departments to provide consistency in technical skillsets and build organisational memory. The new paradigm of online working provides opportunities to draw these highly skilled volunteers both from Scotland and elsewhere (e.g. retired professionals, potentially paired with/ mentoring graduate students). It may also be worth reflecting on opportunities for overseas partners to build their capacity by engaging more directly with SCIAF, e.g. providing a stipend for mid-career professionals to be seconded from partner organisations to achieve specific outputs.

Cross pollinate ideas

The report highlights the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of outcomes of the partnership principles, the success of SCIAF's model in the context of restricted international travel, and the potential for amplifying positive outcomes through networks and multipliers. The cross-pollination of ideas and programmatic tools between partners and networks has proven effective and powerful and has also resulted in broader outcomes at wider civil society and government levels.

Amplify partner voices and achievements

It is also advisable to embrace opportunities to amplify partner voice, and take advantage of new opportunities in the digital environment for breaking down physical and geographical barriers. This includes both real-time and pre-recorded knowledge sharing, and horizontal and vertical networking for partners. The success of the Agro-Ecology Promising Practices Toolkit also highlights the potential for intentionally cascading knowledge and sharing learning to strengthen civil society in target countries, particularly through developing and disseminating accessible learning tools and resources.

Diversify income streams

Brexit has also required adaptive and innovative responses from SCIAF, reducing the future significance of the strong relationships developed with DfID and the EU over many years. While SCIAF maintains an excellent relationship with the Scottish government and remains eligible for EU grants administered through country delegations, this loss of central EU and DfID funding contributes to reduced opportunities on the institutional funding horizon. Looking to the future, it is important to take action now to increase income from other sources and find new ways of engaging with donors.

Horizon scan for emerging opportunities and risks

To future-proof the organisation, it is important to maintain a long-term, horizon scanning perspective to identify and respond to emerging risks associated particularly with new technologies and remote working (data protection, digital security, scams etc.), and keep in mind that successful risk prevention is invisible innovation, but failure can be catastrophic. Identified risks should be regularly and systematically fed into the risk register, frequently reviewed and updated by senior management. Data security is likely to become increasingly relevant and it is essential to respond to emerging risk proactively, avoid complacency, and build and continuously review and improve data protection systems - particularly moving into a hybrid working model to prepare staff to work safely at home, in the office and when travelling.

Invest in internal systems

The widespread perception that donations should be spent overseas, and that investment in internal systems development is somehow wasteful, is counterproductive. SCIAF needs robust IT systems to streamline processes and reduce the time burden on staff, and it is important to raise awareness with supported of the cost effectiveness of investing in internal systems in terms of enhanced staff capacity and improved wellbeing.

Regularly review and adapt strategic plans to ensure ongoing relevance

In terms of strategic planning, the 5-year plan is a powerful tool to provide organisational focus and direction in combination with meaningful goals and benchmarks to improve, evolve, scale and adapt. However, it's essential to prioritise agility and realistic planning with a closer horizon to enable SCIAF to respond appropriately to the rapidly transforming landscape. Regular review is needed and strategic targets and high-level metrics should be adjusted and adapted in response to changing circumstances to ensure they remain relevant.

6. Annexes

6.1 External sources

- BOND. 2016. Briefing 'An Introduction to Social Innovation for NGOs'
- BOND. 2016. Innovation Audit and Benchmarking Report: UK-based INGOs.
- Elrha. ND. Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF).
- SCIAF. 201 Integral Human Development Framework.
- SCIAF. 2018. Manual for Global Advocacy Practitioners.
- SCIAF. 2018. Agro-Ecological Toolkit.
- SCIAF. 2017. SCIAF Innovation Policy.
- Stones, E. 2021. SCIAF Overseas Partnerships Report.
- Stones, E. 2021. SCIAF Strategic Aims Report.

6.2 SCIAF Partner Survey Respondents and Interviewees

With thanks to all SCIAF partner organisations who participated in the survey or interviews in support of this research, including:

- CADECOM Malawi
- CADECOM Mangochi
- Caritas Colombiana
- Caritas Livingstone
- Caritas Mongu
- Caritas South Sudan
- Caritas Zambia
- CDJP Bukavu
- CDJP Cyangugu
- CDJP Kabgayi
- CDJP Kigali
- CDJP Malawi
- CDJP Uvira
- Centre Olame Bukavu
- CDJP Rwanda
- Development & Partnership in Action Cambodia
- Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection
- Kasisi Agricultural Training Centre
- Lisungwi Catholic Parish
- Mundri Relief & Development Association (MRDA)
- Pastoral Social Diocese de Quibdó
- Popoli Fratelli
- Secretariado Diocesano de Pastoral Social, Diócesis de Apartadó
- Sudan Evangelical Mission
- Zomba Diocese Research and Development Department

6.3 SCIAF staff interviews

With thanks to all SCIAF staff who participated in interviews in support of this research, including:

- Alistair Dutton
- Lorraine Currie
- Robert Swinfen
- Penelope Blackwell
- Geraldine Hill
- Eleanor McKenzie
- Mark Adams
- Rob Angove
- Mari Everett
- Margaret Law
- Mark Booker
- Anne Karlin
- Sarah Swaroop
- Blessings Kachale
- Mark Camburn
- Claudia Alloza
- Siobhan Wright

6.4 Documents Reviewed

- Achieving More – Innovation in SCIAF Policy Statement and Guidelines.
- Innovation in SCIAF Policy Presentation.
- Evaluation of SCIAF Strategic Plan: 2011 - 2015. 2017.
- SCIAF Strategic Plan 2016-2020.
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEaL) Framework and plan: Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020.
- Strategic Plan 2016 - 2020 Evaluation Data Collection Plan and Reporting Template.
- SCIAF Strategic Plan 2021-2025: Responding to the Cry of the Poor and the Cry of the Earth: Building a Just and Green World.
- SCIAF Communications Policy 2021.
- SCIAF Advocacy Manual.
- SCIAF Advocacy Manual Pilot: 12-Month Review.
- SCIAF Advocacy mapping report.
- SCIAF Advocacy Strategy 2017-2020.
- SCIAF Advocacy Strategy Review Discussion Paper 2020.
- SCIAF Partner Advocacy IHD Workshops 2019, 2020 and 2021.
- SCIAF Updated Brand Narrative 2021.
- SCIAF PEC Learning from Outreach and Campaigns Review 2020.
- SCIAF Marketing & Communications Strategy 2021 – 2025. Building a Just and Green World: Engaging and inspiring Catholics in Scotland
- SCIAF Annual Companies House Reports 2016-2019.
- SCIAF Partner Survey Report on Feedback and Complaints Handling Mechanisms.
- Caritas Internationalis Management Standards and Scoring Guidelines.
- COMED Restructuring Summary.
- SCIAF IHDD Departmental Meeting Template.
- SCIAF Review of IHDD business case, structure and interview guide.
- SCIAF Evaluation Summary and Scoring.
- SCIAF Guidance Notes: Drafting Organisational KPIs.
- SCIAF Evaluation Management Response Template.
- Caritas Internationalis Accountability Working Group: Real Time Evaluation Report Response to the Sulawesi Tsunami, Earthquake and Liquefaction Disaster, 2018 (EA27-2018).
- SCIAF project evaluations 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.
- SCIAF Integral Human Development Guide.
- SCIAF IHD Wheel Report.
- SCIAF Impact Magazine 2019.
- SCIAF Impact Evaluation in Schools Report 2018.
- SCIAF Operational Plan 2020.
- SCIAF Minimum Standards Checklist CI.
- SCIAF Partner Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- SCIAF Partner Organisational Profiles.
- SCIAF Partner Finance Questionnaire.
- SCIAF Partner Survey Report 2018.
- CAFOD & SCIAF Joint Programme partnership survey report 2021.
- SCIAF Public Engagement: Vision and Strategy.

- SCIAF PED Strategic Planning: Strategic Objectives 2021-25.
- SCIAF Public Engagement Committee Reports.
- SCIAF Quarterly Report Summaries 2016-2020.
- SCIAF Scorecard Reports 2016-2019.
- SCIAF Strategic Audit Report 2016 and Management Response.
- SCIAF Strategic Mid Term Report 2018 and Management Response.
- SCIAF Staff Satisfaction Survey Report 2017 and 2020.
- Caritas Internationalis Partnership Principles: Handbook for Reflection and Action.
- SCIAF Complaints Handling Mechanisms and Inclusion Report.