STREET CHILD UK PROJECT REPORT

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Overview

About Street Child UK (SCUK)
Street Child works with local organisations to ensure every child has access to an education. Their purpose is to see all children safe, in school and learning – especially in low-resource environments and emergencies.

Street Child in Somalia
African Education Trust (AET), part of Street Child, started working in Somalia in 1996, at a time when many organizations were leaving the country after the aborted UN Peacekeeping mission. By working through local staff, organizations, and institutions they have been able to continue to operate throughout the country despite successive cycles of drought, famine, and conflict. They provide essential quality education through school rehabilitation, psycho-social support for children experiencing long-term insecurity, teacher training, supporting parental involvement in school management and provision of hygiene facilities especially for girls and children with disabilities.

Context
Somalia and Somaliland face significant educational challenges, including low literacy rates and 4.8 million children out of school with 1.4 million children living in IDP (internally displaced) settlements. Most internally displaced children have little to no foundational education.
Street Child's initiative to improve foundational learning outcomes through the Teaching at The Right Level (TaRL) approach aims to address these issues in both regions. The TaRL focuses on assessing children's foundational literacy and numeracy skills and grouping them by ability rather than age and teaching is targeted at the child's learning level. This method is particularly useful in low-resource settings with diverse learning levels.

Project Host Need and Deliverables
LEAP Challenge Fellows were pleased to partner with SCUK to address challenges related to scaling their TaRL program.

Having recently concluded an initial pilot in Somalia and Somaliland, SCUK sought to determine how to adapt the programme for different settings, identify which programme components were scalable, and manage costs while maintaining programme quality. SCUK approached the LEAP Challenge Fellows with a number of broad questions:
1. What works?
2. What can be scaled/replicated?
3. Utilisation of NGOs and/or government for sustainability?
4. How effective is TaRL in a highly conflicted and fragile environment?

5. Can we use a stepped scale model in Somalia and a mixture of bridging and remedial approaches?

Considering these questions, as well as opportunities recently presented to SCUK, we identified three core deliverables to address their needs:

1. **A Flexible Implementation Model** to adapt the programme across contexts.
2. **Education Scalability Checklist** to consider the feasibility of scaling the programme from the perspective of key stakeholders.
3. **A Budget Analysis Tool** to simulate various budget scenarios and compare cost effectiveness across different implementation approaches.

These deliverables are designed to help SCUK make informed decisions about scaling the TaRL programme sustainably while also serving as resources that other organizations can adapt for similar challenges.

How We Worked Together
LEAP Fellows, Annelise Buzaid, Drew Edwards, Melissa Hogenboom, and Simi Lawoyin, partnered with the Project Host, Street Child UK, over a 12-week period to learn about their programme and co-create solutions to support their scaling endeavours.

- *Collaboratively*
  We worked closely with the Project Host to understand their goals, challenges, and priorities. Through a series of working sessions, we ideated, built out initial drafts and refined them together to align with SCUK's vision for the project.

- *Iteratively*
  At every stage, we gathered feedback from the SCUK team to ensure our deliverables were relevant and feasible to implement. This iterative process allowed us to make real-time adjustments and ensure alignment with SCUK's operational realities.

- *Leveraging Existing Frameworks and Tools*
  To benefit from proven methodologies and maximize efficiency, we used existing frameworks like the Brookings Education Scalability Checklist and a proprietary stakeholder engagement matrix (developed by one of the Fellows). These tools provided structure for our deliverables and ensured that the solutions were rooted in established best practices while tailored to SCUK's specific needs.

In approaching this project, we wanted to ensure the practicality of the tools we developed, making them user-friendly and actionable for SCUK's needs. We also had in mind the need for adaptable solutions that other organizations in the education sector could use to address similar challenges.

Deliverables

Flexible Implementation Model

This model is designed to ensure the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) programme can adapt effectively across the distinct environments of Somalia and Somaliland. A flexible model helps SCUK maintain programme integrity and relevance across varied contexts, ensuring the TaRL programme remains impactful regardless of regional constraints or changes in local infrastructure.

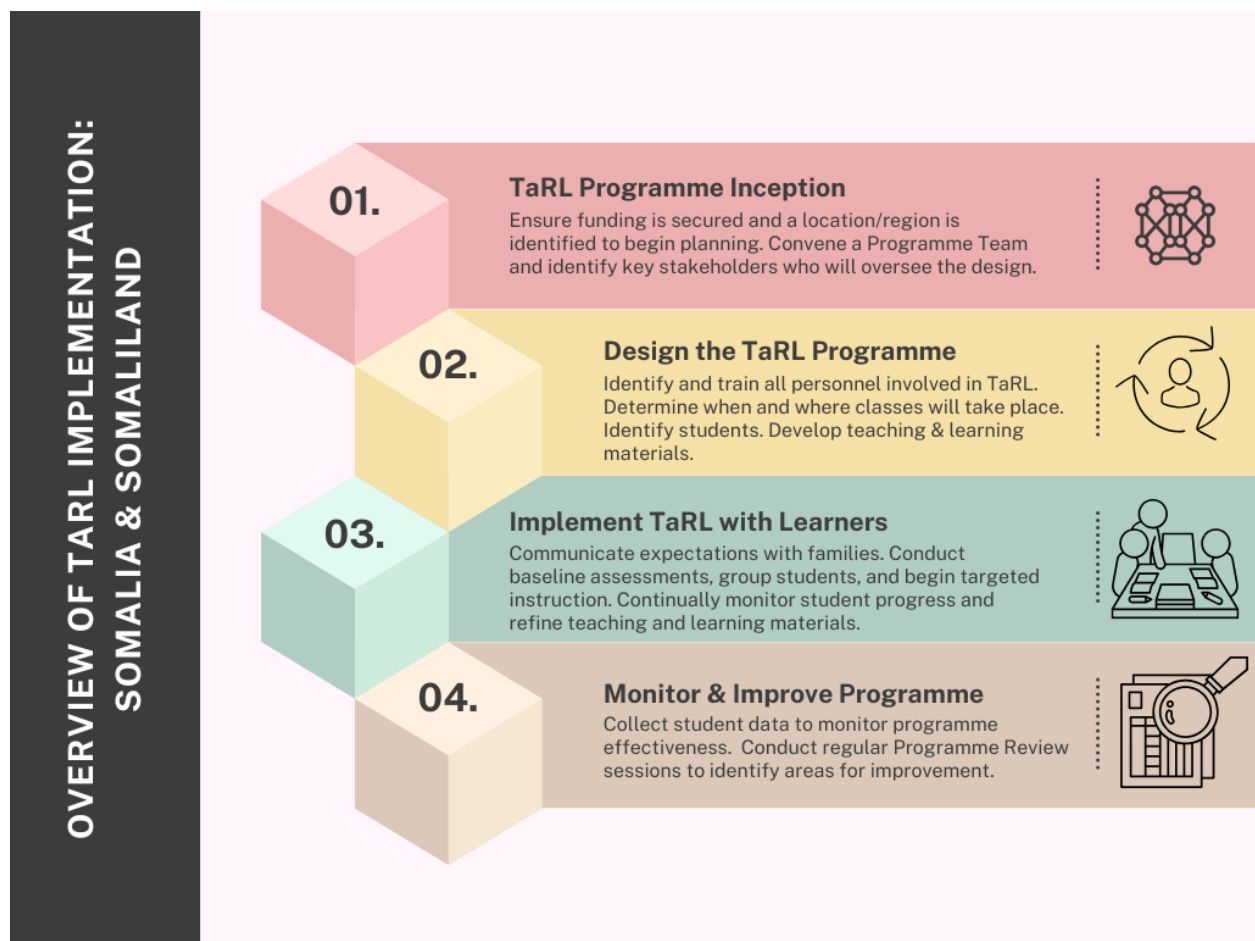See Appendix for a snapshot and description of the model components.

OVERVIEW OF TARL IMPLEMENTATION: SOMALIA & SOMALILAND

01. **TaRL Programme Inception**
Ensure funding is secured and a location/region is identified to begin planning. Convene a Programme Team and identify key stakeholders who will oversee the design.

02. **Design the TaRL Programme**
Identify and train all personnel involved in TaRL. Determine when and where classes will take place. Identify students. Develop teaching & learning materials.

03. **Implement TaRL with Learners**
Communicate expectations with families. Conduct baseline assessments, group students, and begin targeted instruction. Continually monitor student progress and refine teaching and learning materials.

04. **Monitor & Improve Programme**
Collect student data to monitor programme effectiveness. Conduct regular Programme Review sessions to identify areas for improvement.

Figure 1. Overview of Planning and Implementation Process

Recommendations

The Flexible Implementation Model table can be referred to at any stage of a TaRL programme to identify how specific components can be adapted to the environment. It will help clarify what

the non-negotiables are, which must be in place for each programme to be effective. It is especially useful to refer to in situations where TaRL needs to be adapted in IDP settings. We recommend the components are updated regularly to capture additional lessons learned from informal settings.

Programmatic Improvement
As the TaRL programme prepares to scale across informal settings in Somalia, it is important to note that many of the Core Components and Effective Practices in this framework are hypothesized based upon a robust pilot, rather than rigorously tested. As the programme scales, a focused effort on continuous improvement will be critical to building a robust knowledge base on what works with TaRL implementation in IDP settings.

A continuous improvement approach will benefit the Programme Team, as it will enable the team to strengthen the TaRL programme and build knowledge about effective practice in real time.

Application

This model is both a guide for SCUK and a resource for others aiming to scale educational interventions in fragile settings. It allows for systematic adaptation while staying true to the principles of evidence-based learning.

Education Scalability Checklist

Developed by Brookings,[1] the Education Scalability Checklist (ESC) is a comprehensive framework for assessing the factors that influence the success of scaling efforts, such as adaptability, sustainability, and stakeholder alignment. Specifically, the tool serves as a guide to:
- Assess how easy or hard it will be to scale up a particular education initiative;
- Identify opportunities for and constraints to scaling;
- Plan actions to increase the viability for scale
- Keep track of how the scalability of the education initiative evolves over time.

"The Education Scalability Checklist… is meant to help determine the ease of scaling a particular education initiative—not as a one-off evaluative exercise but as a dynamic diagnostic tool to help identify areas where an initiative might require further consideration and adaptations in order to increase the likelihood of scaling." ([Brookings](#))

As part of the LEAP project, we adapted the ESC framework to meet the specific needs of SCUK. While we did not implement the checklist directly, we prepared SCUK for its use by creating:

1. An implementation schedule for conducting the ESC assessments.
2. Guidance documents with instructions for SCUK staff and stakeholders on using the ESC effectively.
3. ESC templates and worksheets tailored to SCUK's TaRL program, enabling them to easily implement the programme evaluation exercise.

See Appendix for additional information about the ESC resources.

Application

Our work ensures that SCUK can leverage the ESC to make informed, strategic decisions about scaling the TaRL programme across diverse and challenging contexts.

Recommendations

The ESC is a critical tool for assessing how well the TaRL programme components can be scaled sustainably across diverse contexts. It is most effective when used regularly as a planning instrument during programme reviews or annual strategic planning cycles. We recommend that SCUK integrate the ESC into its broader decision-making processes to identify opportunities and constraints to scaling.

As SCUK continues to scale the TaRL programme, the ESC should be revisited to account for changing contexts, new data, and evolving priorities. A collaborative approach to completing the ESC, engaging key stakeholders across implementation sites, will provide a more holistic understanding of scalability challenges and opportunities. Finally, tracking progress and

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[1] Brookings CUE, Educate!, MSI, Pratham, STiR Education & VVOB (2021). Education Scalability Checklist. [Online] Available at: https://www.vvob.org/en/news/education-scalability-checklist-resources

recording outcomes from action plans created through the ESC process will strengthen institutional memory and improve long-term programme scalability.
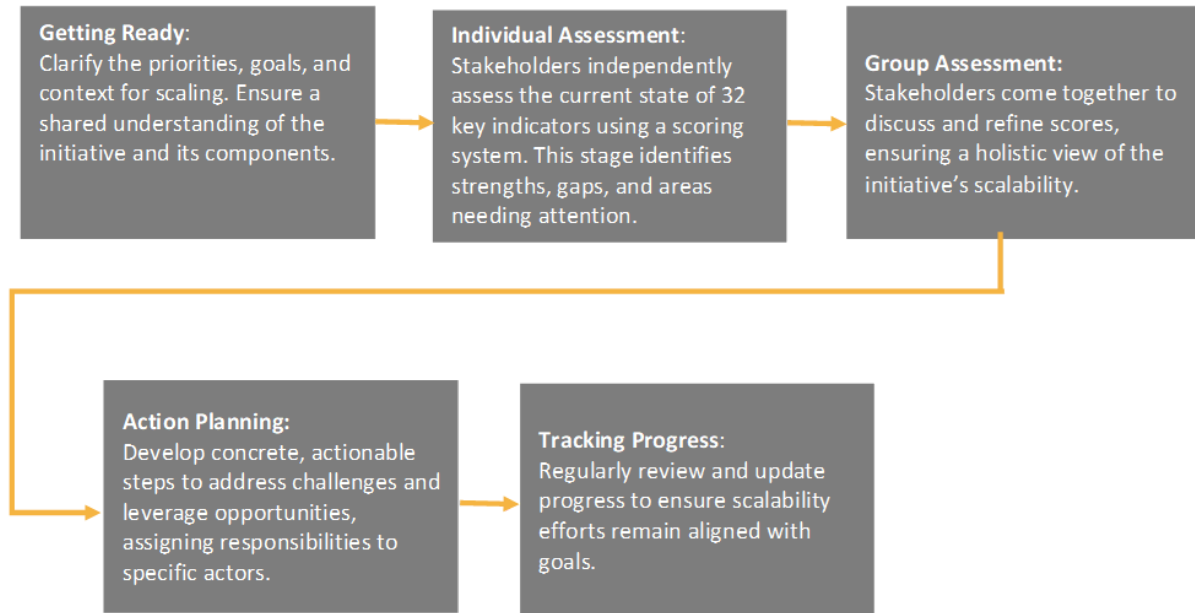
Steps for Implementing the ESC

Getting Ready:
Clarify the priorities, goals, and context for scaling. Ensure a shared understanding of the initiative and its components.

Individual Assessment:
Stakeholders independently assess the current state of 32 key indicators using a scoring system. This stage identifies strengths, gaps, and areas needing attention.

Group Assessment:
Stakeholders come together to discuss and refine scores, ensuring a holistic view of the initiative's scalability.

Action Planning:
Develop concrete, actionable steps to address challenges and leverage opportunities, assigning responsibilities to specific actors.

Tracking Progress:
Regularly review and update progress to ensure scalability efforts remain aligned with goals.

Figure 2. Implementing the ESC

Budget Analysis Tool

The **Budget Analysis Tool** is designed to help SCUK and similar organizations assess the financial viability and effectiveness of scaling their programs. This Excel-based tool provides a detailed framework to evaluate costs and outcomes for programme components, enabling informed decision-making and strategic planning. It offers insights into:

- The distribution of costs across key programme phases.
- Cost comparisons and effectiveness across multiple implementation sites.
- Efficiency drivers and key factors that influence cost and effectiveness.

Key Features

1. **Cost Categories**
   - Costs are categorized into **Inception**, **Design**, **Implementation**, and **Monitoring** phases, enabling detailed analysis of each programme stage.
   - Captures **primary outcomes** (e.g., improvements in learning levels) and **secondary outcomes** (e.g., broader educational goals).
   - Metrics are expressed as weighted scores to determine overall programme effectiveness.
2. **Cost-Effectiveness Ratios (CER)**
   - Calculates ratios to provide a clear measure of the program's return on investment, efficiency, and the relative cost to increase impact.
3. **Comparative Analysis**
   - Compares costs, effectiveness, and CERs across different sites (e.g., Site A, Site B, Site C).
   - Identifies disparities in cost-efficiency across regions to guide resource allocation.
4. **Cost Drivers**
   - Identifies and ranks the top 5 factors driving programme costs through correlation analysis and stakeholder validation
   - Enables data-driven decisions about resource allocation and cost optimization opportunities
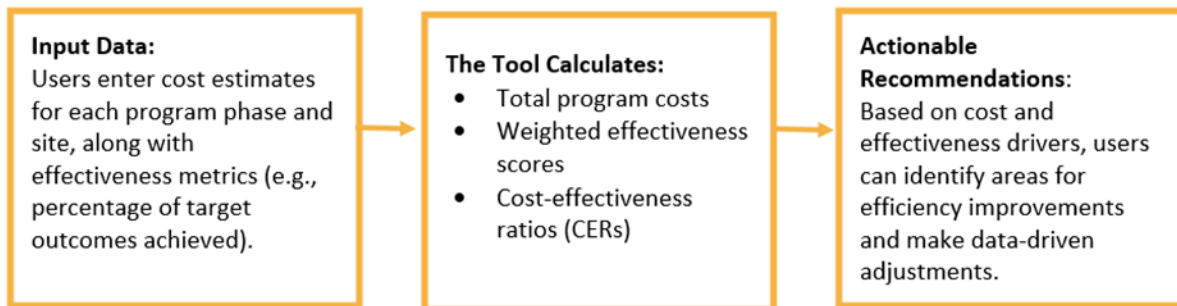   - Tracks cost driver trends over time to inform strategic planning
5. **Efficiency Drivers**
   - Quantifies programme efficiency through multiple lenses: per percentage point of effectiveness, per student, per teacher, and per master trainer
   - Compares efficiency metrics between original and scaled programs to demonstrate economies of scale
   - Provides evidence-based insights for funding decisions and programme expansion
6. **Opportunities for Optimization**
   - Highlights cost and effectiveness drivers, helping organizations identify areas where efficiencies can be gained or investments optimized.

How the Budget Analysis Tool Works

Input Data:
Users enter cost estimates for each program phase and site, along with effectiveness metrics (e.g., percentage of target outcomes achieved).

→

The Tool Calculates:
- Total program costs
- Weighted effectiveness scores
- Cost-effectiveness ratios (CERs)

→

Actionable Recommendations:
Based on cost and effectiveness drivers, users can identify areas for efficiency improvements and make data-driven adjustments.

Application

The tool will enable SCUK to:

- Make informed decisions about scaling their TaRL program.
- Optimize resource use while maintaining programme quality.
- Communicate cost-effectiveness to funders and stakeholders clearly and effectively.

The Cost-Effectiveness Ratio (CER) calculation tool enables SCUK to quantify and compare the efficiency of their educational programs by measuring the cost required to achieve specific outcomes. By analyzing costs across programme phases (inception, design, implementation, and monitoring) and calculating effectiveness scores based on primary outcomes like learning improvements and secondary outcomes like broader educational goals, SCUK can determine the investment needed per unit of impact.

This analysis is particularly valuable for SCUK's decision-making around programme scaling, as demonstrated by the comparative analysis capability between original and scaled programs. For this instance, the tool will provide immediate, comparative feedback to determine budgeting parameters for scaling decisions at each iteration of programme design.

A sample template for the Budget Analysis tool is available in the Appendix.

Recommendations

The Budget Analysis Tool helps SCUK evaluate cost-efficiency by analyzing programme costs across components and implementation approaches, providing insights into the financial trade-offs between maintaining programme quality and adapting to regional constraints. We recommend that SCUK use the insights generated to engage with funders, demonstrating clear cost-effectiveness for programme components. Transparency in budgeting and showcasing value-for-money calculations will help attract sustained funding and strengthen stakeholder confidence.

A continuous improvement approach, where cost data and effectiveness metrics are evaluated together, will allow SCUK to refine resource allocation strategies over time. For example, regular comparisons of cost-effectiveness across sites can identify best practices that optimize both

impact and efficiency, providing valuable lessons for future scaling efforts.

Next Steps: A Note from the Street Child UK Team

In the coming months, SCUK will work with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to adapt the pilot to a scalable programme through institutionalising the TaRL approach in Somalia government-managed primary schools. This will involve capacity and capability building of a state ministry of education in Somalia. We will then promote further adoption, state by state until the approach is embedded as a remedial programme in primary schools, Somali-wide.

We will also work with the Institute of Teacher Training in Hargeisa (Somaliland) to embed the TaRL approach in the pre-service teacher training curriculum.

We will collaborate with Quality Assurance, planning and basic education departments of ministries to deepen the adoption of TaRL and to ensure fidelity of implementation and maintenance of quality and impact on learning outcomes.

We will work with bi-lateral donors to support ministries of education in the above aims.

SCUK in collaboration with UNICEF will also continue to seek further funding and support for IDP children in temporary learning spaces to enable them to attain basic Somali literacy and numeracy.

The work of the LEAP Fellows will enable us to underpin all of these aims.

"In terms of public good - few (no?) TaRL scale plans have broken down the elements and analysed in this way establishing non-negotiable elements, elements that can be adapted to be more efficient at scale and elements that have cost efficiencies at scale. All the scale strategies I have seen have focused just on the what not the how e.g. increased numbers of schools/children/geolocation not how to achieve this. This system can be a tool that can be applied (as many TaRL elements are consistent in all TaRL projects) for scale in other countries and contexts"

Julie Polzerova, Street Child UK

Appendix

A. **Flexible Implementation Framework Table**
   Example of core, adaptable, and informal programme components as follows:

Component	*This is the specific component like "Selecting and Hiring Master Trainers" etc.*
Core Elements	*What are the non-negotiables, if any, which must be in place for this component to be effective?*
Approach in Permanent, Registered Schools	*This is the most common approach across TaRL Africa broadly, including Somaliland iterations*
Variations in Informal Settings (IDP)	*Describe how TaRL approach was adapted to meet IDP settings in Somalia*
Effective Practice in Informal Settings	*Capture lessons learned from informal settings; this component of the model should be updated regularly*
Scalability Notes	*Note whether this component or task needs to be completed in each new site, or whether this is something that's done once and can be scaled to all sites*

B. **Education Scalability Checklist:** The ESC implementation templates and resources developed for SCUK are not included in this report; however, a comprehensive set of resources, which formed the basis for this work, is publicly available here: https://www.vvob.org/en/news/education-scalability-checklist-resources

C. **Budget Analysis Template:**

This Budget Analysis Template was originally developed for Street Child UK as part of the 2024 LEAP Challenge. It is designed to support organizations in assessing the financial feasibility of scaling education initiatives by analyzing program costs, effectiveness metrics, and cost-efficiency ratios across multiple implementation scenarios.

The numbers and text included in this template are placeholders and should not be interpreted as actual data or financial advice. Users are encouraged to input their own program-specific information to ensure accurate and meaningful results. While the tool is tailored to the context of the Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) program, it is adaptable for use with similar initiatives seeking to optimize resource allocation and achieve scalability.