

**Annual suggestions,
complaints and
commendations report**

JANUARY – DECEMBER 2021



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Coordinated and written by: Global Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations (SCC) Commission

Languages available: Spanish, French, English

Related documents:

- Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Policy
- Terms of reference for the Global Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Commission
- MEAL 6.11 Guide to designing and implementing SCC mechanisms

Special thanks to the members of the National Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Committees in the countries we work in.

Contact details:

For more information about the issues covered in this document or to request related documents, contact the Global Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Commission at: ComisionGlobalSQF@educo.org

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Introduction

This document is the Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations (SCC) Report for the year 2021. This is an annual report, which aims to analyse global trends in SCCs received and the use of SCC mechanisms, to report on SCC management and actions taken, and to raise awareness of the importance of the SCC Policy as a tool for learning and ongoing improvement.

At the end of 2021 the Board of Trustees approved the new version of the [Educo SCC Policy](#), reviewed in collaboration with all the Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Committees in the organisation. The updated policy is an important milestone for the implementation of the SCC mechanisms, as it consolidates the roles and responsibilities of the teams driving this process and ensures coordination with the teams responsible for managing Educo's reported incidents. It also constitutes a new key reference framework that will guide all our work in this area and ensure that SCC are opportunities for identifying areas for improvement as part of a continuous learning process.

As shown in this report, the overall number of SCC received in 2021 was substantially higher than in 2020, probably due in part to the lifting of restrictions and the reactivation of face-to-face activities after two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, in 2021, the most commonly used way to present SCC was in person, in many cases in the context of the "Open Days" activity organised by some Country Offices.

As in previous editions, this report is the result of the collaboration and teamwork by the National SCC Committees and the Global SCC Commission. We would like to thank all the people who make up the committees for their commitment, efforts and the invaluable work carried out. The information and all the lessons learned included in this document encourage us to **continue to strengthen the quality and impact of our work in order to guarantee children's rights and wellbeing.**



SCC received during 2021

In 2021, we received a total of 422 SCC through the different mechanisms implemented globally. It is worth mentioning that 11 SCC were referred from the institutional whistleblowing channel, managed by the [WhistleB](#) platform, which is a reflection of how good the coordination between the two mechanisms is.

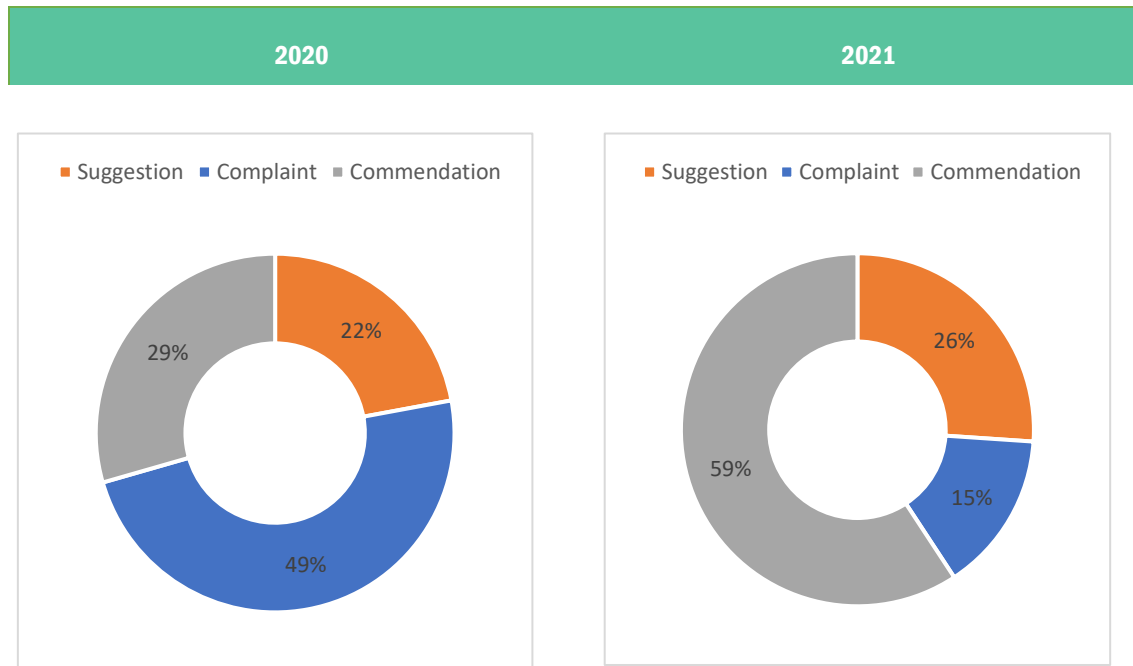
Below is a summary of the suggestions, complaints and compliments received, with a breakdown of the type of mechanism and origin (internal or external stakeholders).

Summary of SCC received in 2021

	INTERNAL	EXTERNAL	TOTAL
SUGGESTIONS	18 email 03 in person 01 others	05 email 45 in person 26 survey 04 social media 04 telephone 03 physical suggestion box 01 others	110
COMPLAINTS	05 email 02 in person	01 physical suggestion box 16 email 07 in person 04 others 15 social media 12 telephone	62
COMMENDATIONS	09 email 01 in person	75 physical suggestion box 14 email 01 post 43 in person 29 survey 01 others 68 social media 09 telephone	250
TOTAL	39	383	422

Progress and lessons learned during 2021

1. Classification by communication type (suggestion, complaint, commendation)



The global total of SCC received increased substantially from 163 in 2020 to 422 in 2021. One of the reasons for this increase is the lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions and the reactivation of the activities in the field. On the other hand, after analysing the records, it can be deduced that the increase was also due to a greater use of the available SCC mechanisms, as well as the promotion of SCC at events such as Open Days, and the detection of SCC in monitoring reports.

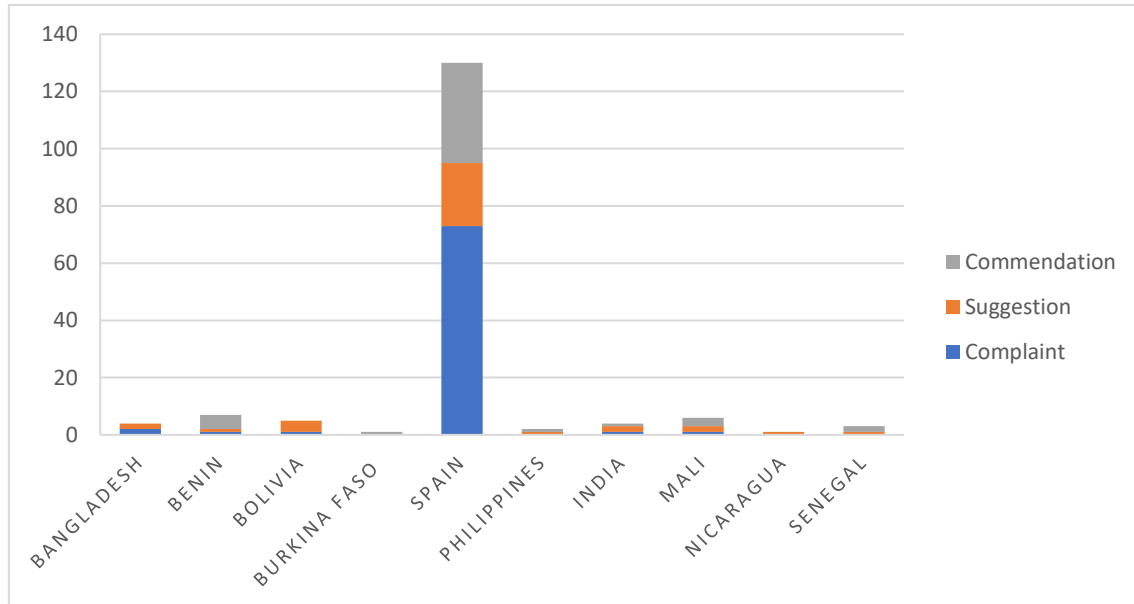
The number of commendations increased from 48 in 2020 to 250 in 2021. Some general expressions of gratitude were recorded as commendations. This is due to the fact that currently the criteria for registering a SCC as a commendation is very broad. The need for specific criteria for registering commendations is considered necessary, so this is something we will work on in 2022.

In contrast, the number of complaints fell from 79 in 2020 to 62 in 2021.

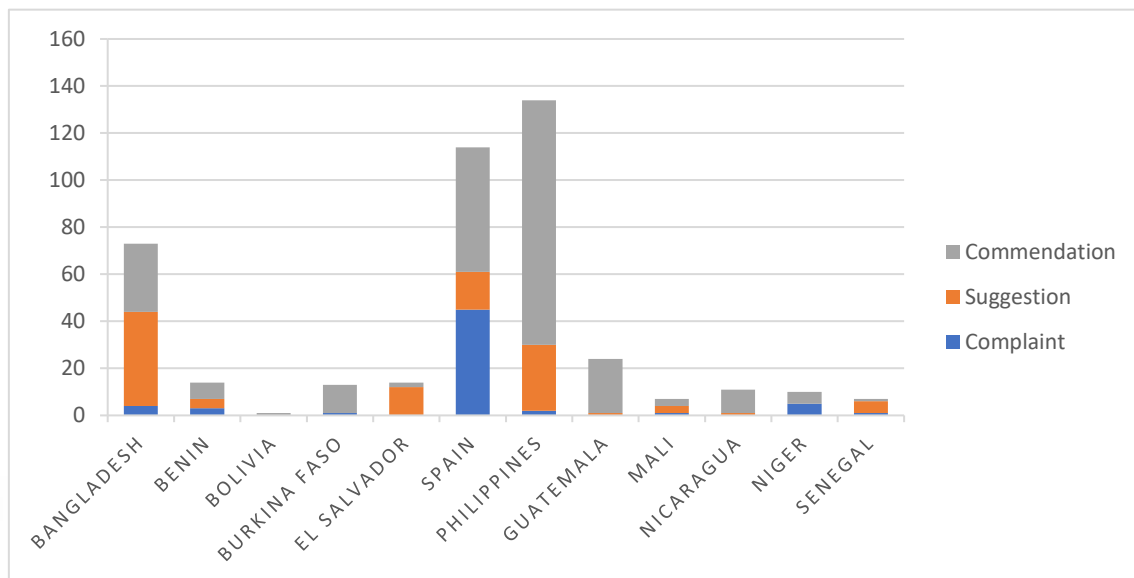
Suggestions increased from 36 in 2020 to 110 in 2021. This is a positive development as it helps us to implement improvements wherever possible. It also reflects that a culture of participation and constructive criticism of Educo is being established among our stakeholders.

2. Classification by country and communication type

2020

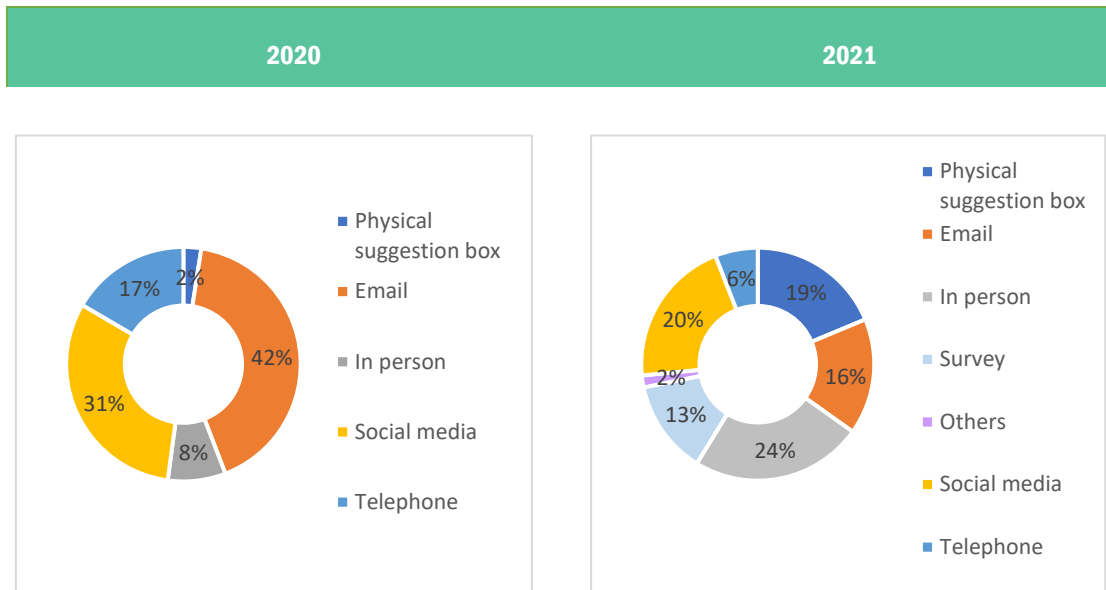


2021



In 2021 the number of Country Offices who reported SCC went up to 12. In 2021, the Philippines was the Country Office where the most SCC were registered, followed by Spain and Bangladesh, where the SCC mechanisms have been opened up to external stakeholders such as local partner organisations we work with, suppliers, and, most recently, project participants. Of particular note is the addition of El Salvador, Guatemala and Niger, Country Offices that did not submit SCC in 2020. On the other hand, India did not register any SCC in 2021.

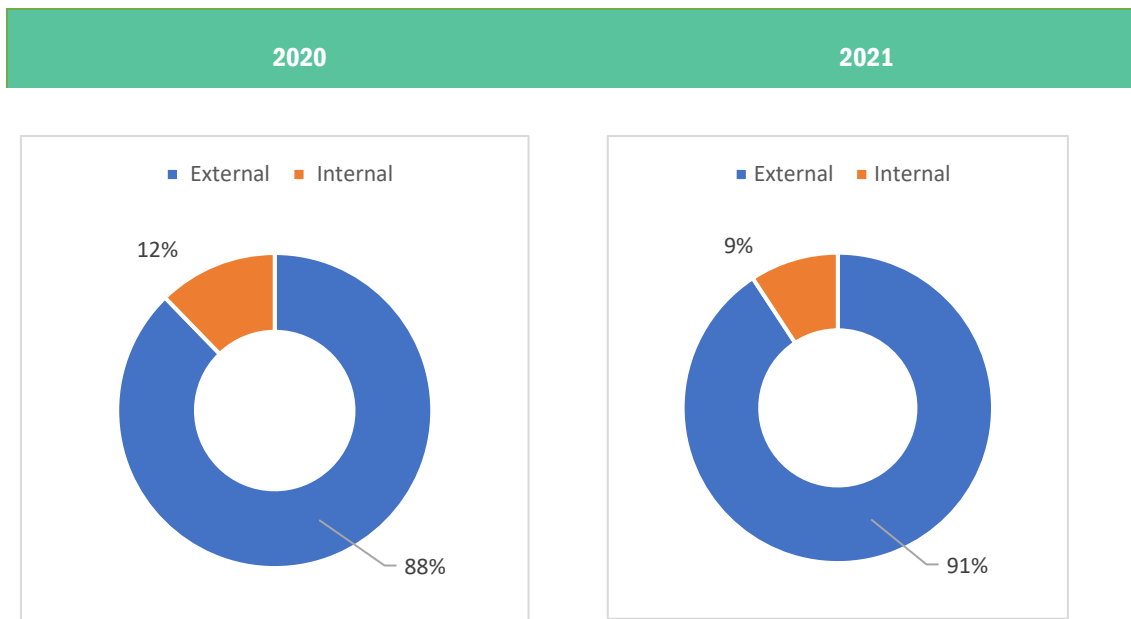
3. Classification by mechanism type



According to the data provided by the Country Offices, in 2021 the **in-person** channel was used the most, accounting for 24%. This is partly due to the end of COVID-19 restrictions which allowed a return to in-person activities. That is how SCC were registered during events such as Open Days. The second most used mechanism in 2021 was social media and in third place was the telephone, the same as in 2020. It is important to mention that in 2021 surveys were incorporated as an SCC mechanism in some Country Offices.

Also, by returning to some degree of movement and less periods of confinement, the use of the feedback box increased compared to 2020 from 2% to 19%.

4. Classification by origin



The number of external SCC is once again higher than the internal ones, the same as in 2020, with an increase from 88% in 2020 to 91% in 2021. The analysis of the information provided by the Country Offices shows that, as in previous years, one of the reasons for the difference between internal and external SCC is due to the **high number of SCC sent by Educo's supporters** to head office and Educo Spain. Another reason is that the Open Days have been used as an SCC mechanism for external stakeholders.

5. SCC management and the results

During the analysis of the data from 2020, we identified the need to have access to more detailed and comprehensive information about the SCC received in each Country Office, in order to carry out a more precise analysis of the global trends. Therefore, in 2021 **all Country Offices have carried out their own qualitative analysis of the SCC received** and how they were handled.

In many cases, the SCC received allow us to identify and introduce improvements in our work, both in the projects we set up and in our internal management processes. However, it is important to point out that **sometimes it is not possible to resolve the suggestion or complaint with the implementation of corrective measures**, either because we do not have the necessary resources at the time, or because after considering the suggestion or complaint, we decide that it is not viable or safe, or it doesn't represent an efficient use of resources, or it is not aligned with our mission, vision and values, among other considerations. In these cases, just as for SCC involving corrective actions, we always register the SCC and inform the person who submitted the SCC of the reasons for the decision taken.

The following are examples of SCC received and the decisions made:

SUGGESTIONS	DECISIONS MADE
<p>Suggestion to create a more pleasant environment in empty spaces in the office (put in horticultural plants and maintenance of fruit trees: lemon trees, banana trees). <i>(Educo staff, in person, Educo Senegal).</i></p>	<p>Management has placed natural flowerpots in several places to improve the surroundings with green spaces and help to make our working environment healthier.</p>
<p>Suggestion regarding the procedures required to carry out medical examinations. <i>(Educo staff, via email, Educo Spain).</i></p>	<p>A more streamlined management procedure was introduced and communicated to all staff via the intranet (Synergy).</p>
<p>Suggestion regarding the construction of toilets in a school. <i>(Girl project participant, feedback box, Educo Senegal).</i></p>	<p>Outside the scope of Educo Senegal's competences, the project was relegated to a meeting with the CESE (Commission d'exécution suivi et évaluation) of the project, which brings together local authorities (mayors), administrative authorities (sub-prefect), educational authorities (Education Inspector), children's organisations and communities. As a result, the children at their advocacy day included these points in the memo that was given to the local and administrative authorities, as a result of which the authorities included them in their 2022 budget.</p>
<p>Suggestion regarding the internal survey related to SCC Committee function, proposing to talk to staff to get their feedback as well as using the online surveys. <i>(Educo staff, Educo Philippines).</i></p>	<p>The Country Director clarified the role of the SCC Committee during the general assembly to staff and it was realized that there is a need for the SCC Committee to re-orient the staff on what the functions of the SCC Committee are.</p>
<p>Suggestion about the use of institutional mobile telephones. The person submitting the suggestion indicates her concern about the risk to fellow project officers who use their personal phones to communicate with families and adolescents who are at social risk. She suggests providing them with an institutional phone or a safe alternative to avoid them putting themselves at risk. <i>(Educo staff, Educo El Salvador, email).</i></p>	<p>The IT team was asked to look for alternatives to alleviate the communication needs of the technical teams and the budget constraints that limit the acquisition of telephone equipment to cover the needs of each region. It is hoped that this will be incorporated into the new country budget.</p>
<p>A proposal is made to assess the workloads so that the technical staff can comply with the biosecurity protocol, i.e. to assess the number of people in vehicles, the number of hours in the office, etc., as these factors prevent the outstanding workloads from being met. <i>(Educo El Salvador, Educo staff, email).</i></p>	<p>The Program Coordinator was informed about the excessive workload of the technical teams, and it was noted that this type of activities were specifically focused on the western zone, and as a work team, the role of the teams had to be reviewed so that the work activities were fair and balanced for each team member.</p>
<p>A suggestion is made to the executive directors to include more information (agenda/topics to be discussed) in the</p>	<p>The executive management explains that these are not monographic capsules to talk about a specific</p>

briefings for the information capsules. *(Educo Spain, Educo staff, email).*

topic, but rather to generate a space where we can verbalise some of the key issues that are happening in the organisation at that moment and ensure that there is time for comments or questions.

COMPLAINTS	DECISIONS MADE
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<p>Complaint from one of Educo's ex-teachers regarding provident fund (PF) money. <i>(Educo Bangladesh, ex-staff, social media).</i></p>	<p>Educo staff were reoriented on HR policy and staff benefits. Staff also clarified about the difference between official benefits and insurance company benefits. Staffs are requested to go through the benefit policy carefully and communicate with HR if any issue is unclear to them.</p>
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<p>Complaint about the lack of an inclusive policy in the selection of the Dakar office. The location of the office on the third floor does not take into account the elderly and people with reduced mobility. This makes the site difficult to access. <i>(External visit, in person, Educo Senegal),</i></p>	<p>Currently a search for new and more inclusive premises has begun in order to take into account the complaints from the public and local partners.</p>
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<p>Complaint about the exclusion of a municipality from a project. The complainant does not understand the choice of municipalities for rehabilitation and that his/her municipality is excluded. <i>(Project participant, via telephone, Educo Niger).</i></p>	<p>A meeting to share the needs assessment was organised by the inspectorates and town halls and the Regional Education Directorate. Importance of sharing with partners the basis for decisions that have been made.</p>
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<p>Complaint regarding compensation for work carried out. One of the former project staff of a partner organization, claimed that he didn't get 8 day's salary and other facilities from the organization. <i>(Educo Bangladesh, former project staff from partner organization).</i></p>	<p>Regarding this issue, the Country Focal Person several times discussed with manager of the project. It was decided that the local partner organization will provide the claimed salary in to bank account of the staff. Other facilities will be provided as per policy.</p> <p>From this experience, it was instructed to the partners to introduce and make clear the benefits and salary breakdown to the staffs during recruitment.</p>
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<p>Complaint about people offering fake jobs through false circular using the identity of Educo Bangladesh, in 4 local newspapers and job news sites. The job seekers applied through email which was mentioned in that fake circular. To gain public trust they have created a fake website too (link: http://www.educoschoolbd.com/). After that, they claimed money against job offer through mobile banking. Around 10 victims communicated with Educo in person and/or through social media. <i>(Educo Bangladesh, email, Educo staff).</i></p>	<p>Measures taken include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Informed Bangladesh Police about this matter through a General Diary at Gulshan Police Station. 2) Published Warning Notice at The Prothom Alo to raise awareness with mass people. 3) Attention/Warning notice has been published in Website and Facebook Page. 4) Communicated with the Authority of newspapers, who published the fake circulars.
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Several complaints about the gift of the hen and the cockerel. A proposal is made to offer other gifts that do not include animals. (*Educo Spain, general public, social media*).

The proposal is considered and a response is provided according to the reasoning (sometimes no answer is given because it is felt that the conversation is not going to be fruitful or because other users have already answered in defence). In the response, the reasons for offering this gift are explained, including the fact that we try to cover the most urgent needs identified in the communities we work in, and that our purpose with this gift is that growing children can diversify their diet so that they can have an adequate physical and mental development.

COMMENDATIONS

Commendation on the significant impact of the activities carried out (theatres, sketches) on cohesion. The themes chosen to work on were considered very relevant. (*Project participant, in person, Educo Niger*).

A commendation was received for the implementation of a useful tool (web file repository) for the Program team. (*Bolivia, staff, via email*).

Commendation on the progress made towards the commitments and conditions required to establish new projects in the work area and new relationships with local governments, despite the COVID-19 restrictions. (*Educo staff, Educo El Salvador, email*).

Commendation on the DRR training received: “knowledge from DRR Training will be very helpful for all of us, so many thanks to Educo for arranging this DRR training”. (*Bangladesh, project participant, in person*).

These examples show that the SCC mechanisms have been useful in giving voice to our stakeholders and are **essential for identifying improvements in our work**. It is important to continue to promote their use.

Progress in the implementation of the Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Policy in 2021

National SCC Committees

During 2021, the National SCC Committees, through the work plans developed and adapted to the situation that the pandemic has generated, made significant progress. Below are some of the highlights:

Spain

- The National SCC Committee was renewed, with the integration of new members.
- During 2021, the National SCC Committee made use of internal networks at head office to strengthen communication by conducting surveys and developing infographics to promote the SCC Policy.
- Specific materials were created to include in the welcome pack for new members.

El Salvador

- Regular meetings with the management team have been set up.
- Work has been done on the Country Office web platform mechanism to make it accessible to the general public.

Bangladesh

- The SCC Committee initiated orientation sessions with local partner organisations to extend SCC management to external stakeholders.
- A mobile telephone number has been set up specifically for receiving SCC.
- Eight open days were held with local partners to promote the SCC Policy.

Philippines

- Three IT tools were developed for handling SCC. The tools are handled online to manage external SCC.

India

- Induction session for new staff and refresher for Country Office staff on the SCC Policy and the internal SCC mechanisms that are in place.

Benin

- The National SCC Committee was renewed with the integration of new members.
- The SCC management procedure was shared internally and information about the different mechanisms for reporting SCC was reinforced.

Mali

- In coordination with the communication department, posters and brochures on the SCC Policy were produced.
- Awareness-raising workshops on the SCC Policy were carried out with staff and with the local partners we work with.

Niger

- Creation of the National SCC Committee.
- Development of internal processes for SCC management.
- Raising awareness about the SCC Policy among Educo Niger staff, as well as the local partners we work with.

Global SCC Commission

From the progress of the Global SCC Commission during 2021, we can highlight the following:

- Review and update of the Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Policy, in collaboration with the National SCC Committees.
- Support given for implementing the tool *MEAL 6.11 Guide to designing and implementing SCC mechanisms*
- Quarterly regional SCC meetings, and ad hoc bilateral meetings to support SCC Committees with specific issues.
- Development of the *Guidelines for consultations on SCC mechanisms*, to accompany and homogenise the consultation process on SCC mechanisms at the program level.
- Analysis of the SCC received globally during 2020, preparation and sharing of the 2020 SCC Report.
- Accompaniment for the National SCC Committees with the preparation of their 2022 action plans.

With regards to the recommendations we published in 2020 to improve the implementation of the SCC Policy, the following table shows the progress and achievements:

RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS/ACHIEVEMENTS
<p>Integrating contingency measures into existing procedures to ensure that National SCC Committees can continue to function as usual and that established SCC mechanisms continue to be used.</p>	<p>It has been possible to integrate online procedures to facilitate communication and work between members of the National SCC Committees.</p> <p>Some Committees have created online mechanisms (platform, WhatsApp, etc.) for SCC.</p>
<p>Strengthening the commitment of National SCC Committees to complete the SCC register to facilitate data analysis and provide the most reliable information possible.</p>	<p>The <i>MERA 6.14 SCC Registration Template</i> tool and its instructions section, with examples, have been modified and shared with the National SCC Committees in order to reduce possible errors in registration and to improve the quality and classification of the data registered.</p>
<p>Strengthening the capacities of National SCC Committees to prepare the quantitative and qualitative analysis of their data themselves for the preparation of the SCC 2021 Annual Report. This will facilitate the global analysis of trends.</p>	<p>Work has been done on some guiding questions to be included in the qualitative data consolidation tool to facilitate the National SCC Committees' self-analysis of the SCC they have received and handled during the year.</p>
<p>Consolidating advocacy work with Country Office management to facilitate the work of the National SCC Committees, and to involve them in the resolution of the SCC they receive and the improvements that are implemented.</p>	<p>The Global SCC Commission, through its regional and bilateral meetings with National SCC Committees, has continued to empower its members to share their action plans, and to hold regular meetings with their management teams.</p>
<p>Consolidating coordination between National SCC Committees and Program teams to facilitate the implementation of SCC mechanisms externally with local partner organisations.</p>	<p>The Global SCC Commission has held training sessions in each of the regions on the implementation of the SCC Policy. In addition to the members of the SCC Committees, the Program and MERA teams have also been invited to make their role visible and to foster coordination in these processes.</p>

Next Steps

- Remind the SCC Committees of the criteria for the in-person mechanisms. These should be prioritised mainly for participants who cannot access other types of mechanisms (digital divide, lack of internet connection, illiteracy etc.).
- Refine the definitions of what we understand by SCC, especially the criteria for commendations (issues linked to Educo's work, on a specific action, etc.) to ensure a shared understanding among all the SCC Committees, generate balanced records and make the SCC received more useful for continuous improvement.
- Continue to strengthen coordination between Program teams, MEAL and National SCC Committees to facilitate the integration of SCC implementation processes within the programming cycle.
- Continue to strengthen the capacities of SCC Committees to enable them to do more qualitative analysis of their national SCC register data.
- Develop an online training module on the Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Policy and ensure that all Educo team members complete it.
- Develop and share SCC evaluation forms.
- Continue strengthening how to identify and refer a reported incident, in coordination with the Compliance Committee.

I think it's dangerous for colleagues to use their personal mobile phones to communicate with participants who are at social risk. It would be good if Educo could provide us with phones.

(Educo staff, email, Educo El Salvador)

The procurement of institutional telephones for the technical teams in each zone is expected to be incorporated in the next national budget.

Why has my community not been included in your education projects?

(Project participant, telephone, Educo Niger)

Educo organized a meeting with all inspectorates, mayors' offices and the Regional Education Department to share their analyses. It is always important to share data on decision-making with partners.

"I loved the drama activity on social cohesion!"

(Project participant, in person, Educo Niger)

"Thanks a lot for the training on disaster risk reduction (DRR), it will be very useful!"

(Project participant, in person, Educo Niger)

Related documents and contact details

The SCC Policy is available [here](#) on the Educo website.

The following reference documents are available on demand by sending an email to the Global SCC Commission:

- Terms of reference for the Global Commission for the Implementation and Monitoring of the SCC Policy.
- MEAL 6.11 Guide to designing and implementing the Suggestions, Complaints and Commendations Policy.

For more information about the issues covered in this document, please contact the Global SCC Commission at: ComisionGlobalSQF@educo.org.

Listed below are the contact details for submitting an SCC via email to each Country Office:

Country Office	SCC email address
Bangladesh	myopinioncounts.bd@educo.org
Benin	monaviscompte.bj@educo.org
Bolivia	miopinioncuenta.bo@educo.org
Burkina Faso / Niger	monaviscompte.bf@educo.org
El Salvador	miopinioncuenta.sv@educo.org
Spain	miopinioncuenta.es@educo.org
Philippines	myopinioncounts.ph@educo.org
Guatemala	miopinioncuenta.gt@educo.org
India	myopinioncounts.in@educo.org
Mali	monaviscompte.ml@educo.org
Nicaragua	miopinioncuenta.ni@educo.org
Senegal	monaviscompte.sn@educo.org

