

# **School Partnership and school visits in a Global Citizenship Context:**

**Scottish Secondary Schools and their links with developing countries.**

**By Irma Arts**

**October 2020**

# School Partnership and school visits in a Global Citizenship Context: Scottish Secondary Schools and their links with developing countries.

Report for the International Development Team, Scottish Government

Author: Irma Arts

## Terminology

*Global citizenship/Global learning:* global learning encourages learners to think critically about equality and social justice, connecting the local to the global and understand the impact of their actions. It aims to prepare young people to live in a globalised, interconnected world and enables them to respond to global challenges whilst advocating for social justice for all and the minimisation of harm to people and the planet.

*School links:* One of the ways of incorporating global learning in schools is through establishing international links. These can include different kinds of initiatives from short-term projects such as visiting a country to long term partnerships.

## Introduction

The Scottish Government places great importance on being a good global citizen. This study provides a first exploration of one way to develop global citizenship: establishing school links with developing countries. The aim of the research is to understand what kind of activities Scottish secondary schools are engaged in when it comes to linking with a developing country. This insight will be able to support discussions on global learning, international development, school partnerships and volunteering.

The report explores five research questions:

1. What potential benefits and disadvantages are linked to school partnerships according to current academic literature?;
2. Which organisations and resources do Scottish secondary schools have available to them, and what kind of activities are they promoting?;
3. What activities do Scottish secondary schools undertake when partnering with a school in a developing country?;
4. What is the motivation for these activities?; and
5. What narratives of development aid and global learning are involved?

## Methodology

To address research questions one and two a review of the literature and meetings with relevant organisations were undertaken. To address research questions three to five, a rapid quantitative assessment of secondary school partnerships and visits was conducted along with follow-up qualitative interviews with seven secondary schools who had a link with a developing country. To add some insights on the perceptions of the partner schools on school links a questionnaire was sent to Malawian schools.

## Results

A rapid assessment showed that 82 Scottish secondary schools had a link to a developing country, with about two-thirds of the schools having organised, or planning to organise, pupil visits. Next to the school visits, which are often an important part of the link, activities include educational projects and fundraising.

Evaluating partnerships and pupil visits, the literature review draws attention to the need to address power imbalances and take into account the voices of local communities when visits are made and schools are involved in fundraising. If not addressed issues of dependency and paternalism to the partner school and community might arise. Academics suggest projects should therefore focus on intercultural exchange and learning instead of any type of 'development' based activities.

The empirical research showed that teachers seem to be aware of issues of inequality and dependency, and actively engage with their partners in developing countries to discuss their needs. However, as there is little research on the experience of the partner schools and impact on the wider community, it remains unclear what influence partnerships have on the schools in the developing countries. The Malawian schools in our survey were largely positive about their partnerships, but more detailed studies are needed to understand wider impact.

## Results - continued

A potential negative impact is the promotion of stereotypes of poverty and cultures and the idea that students will “help” or “change” a community. Images and narratives of school visits and partnerships shared in Scotland do not always address, and sometimes (unconsciously) reinforce particular ways of viewing a developing country.

Teachers and organisations seem to make the assumption that having a partnership will make teachers and pupils more aware of global problems such as poverty, and this automatically leads to evaluating issues of power, equality and social justice. However, to become a good global citizen, pupils and teachers need to develop *critical literacy* so they can evaluate and challenge global problems and their links to social justice. Some Malawian schools also mentioned there was a need for more sustained contact (beyond the visits) and projects that enhanced (shared) learning

## Conclusion

Overall, the focus of partnerships and pupil visits can be seen as two-fold: to improve education and resources in partner school and to let students learn about other cultures. The drive to improve education in the developing countries can sometimes obscure the necessity for a critical reflection on development, power and poverty in the Scottish school. To encourage global learning for students, a critical understanding of social justice, stereotypes and inequality is needed. Moreover, entering and sustaining partnerships require reflection and evaluation of the impact of the projects involved, as there is still little known about the effect of school links on partner countries.

## Recommendations

### **Start with global learning, not partnerships.**

This is a general recommendation for both schools and organisations involved. If the aim is to raise awareness about global issues, partnerships, and specifically peer-to-peer contact, can be a vehicle to start a conversation on these issues, but this will need more than just ‘coming in contact with other cultures’ and asks for the development of critical understanding. Developing links, **organisations and schools should be aware of and take into account issues of inequality, dependency and reinforcing stereotypes.**

This recommendation can be strengthened through supporting initiatives that work towards increasing people’s critical global awareness and linking volunteer and partnership experiences with discussing social justice. Schools and organisations can be supported in reflecting on the impact of their practices by:

1. Encouraging cooperation between organisations.
  - a. Bring organisations with different backgrounds together to improve impact and make sure partnerships (and school visits) are connected with global learning.
  - b. Encourage research on the impact of partnerships and school trips, and share this research with schools and other organisations.
2. Creating spaces for discussion and information exchange for school staff.
  - a. Encourage discussions on the impact of visits, partnerships and fundraising and the aim of global learning. To help them with these questions it will be useful to include information on issues of international development and wider global issues. Organisations, such as the Development Education Centres and volunteer organisations, can play a role in brokering these discussions.
  - b. Encourage exchanges between schools and between schools and organisations. Ensure that teachers keep in touch and develop an understanding of the information channels teachers use and need.
3. Developing thinking around the opportunities to use digital technologies as well as reflect on the negative (environmental) impacts a visit will have and if they can be justified.

**For more information** please contact the International Development Unit of the Scottish Government

**Disclaimer:** This two page summary is based on a report prepared for the Scottish Government. Views expressed and conclusions drawn are those of the author and not Scottish Government and in no way pre-empt future policy in this area.

# School Partnership and school visits in a Global Citizenship Context: Scottish Secondary Schools and their links with developing countries.

By Irma Arts

Scottish Government Social Science Scholarships  
(SGSSS)  
January 2020



This is a piece of independent research by the author as part of the ESRC / Scottish Government academic scholarship scheme in collaboration with the International Development Team, Scottish Government. The content is the views and opinions of the author only and do not constitute Scottish Government policy.

# Contents

1. Introduction .....	1
2. Literature Review .....	4
2.1 Volunteer Tourism.....	4
2.2 Global Citizenship, International Educational Trips and School Partnerships ...	9
2.2.1 Evidence of Global Learning.....	10
2.2.2 Critical Literacy .....	11
2.2.3 Research on the Partner Countries .....	15
2.3 Recommendations for Partnerships and School Trips .....	16
3. Partnership Programmes and Resources .....	20
3.1 Education Scotland – National Improvement Hub.....	21
3.2 Connecting Classrooms .....	22
3.3 Scotland-Malawi Partnership – A Practical Guide to School Partnerships .....	23
3.4 Twende Pamoja Trust – Developing Partnerships .....	24
3.5 Oxfam – Building Successful School Partnerships .....	25
3.6 Build – Partnership Toolkit .....	27
3.7 FORUM – The Global Standard for Volunteer Development .....	28
3.8 NHS Scotland Global Citizenship– Doing it Well.....	30
3.9 Comparing the Guides .....	31
3.9.1 Developing a Good Partnership.....	31
3.9.2 Aim of a Partnership .....	33
4. Teacher’s Experiences.....	35
4.1 Partnership Activities and Pupil Visits .....	35
4.2 Goals and Motivations.....	38
4.3 Equal partnerships and Stereotypes .....	40
4.4 Sustainable Practice .....	43
4.4.1 Communication and commitment .....	44

4.4.2 Integration in school programme .....	45
5. A Malawian Perspective .....	47
5.1 Introduction .....	47
5.2 Survey Results .....	47
5.3 Discussion.....	55
6. Conclusion .....	57
7. Recommendations .....	60
References.....	66
Appendix I – Partnership and volunteering organisations .....	73
Appendix II – Global learning classroom materials .....	82
Appendix III – Methodology.....	85
Literature Review .....	85
Document analysis.....	85
School-list .....	86
Interviews.....	87
Questionnaire.....	88
Appendix IV – Interview Guide .....	90
Appendix V – Questionnaire.....	92

## 1. Introduction

The Scottish Government's International Development strategy takes a two pronged approach to "*fight against global poverty, inequality, injustice and promote[s] sustainable development*" by: 1) encouraging relationships to empower partner countries and; 2) engaging the people of Scotland to enhance Scotland's position as a good global citizen (Scottish Government 2016, p.6). One key area where work has been undertaken to develop good global citizenship and raise awareness on global issues is through global learning in Scottish primary and secondary schools. In Scotland, this is embedded in the Learning for Sustainability (LfS) approach, which combines sustainable development, outdoor learning and global citizenship in Scotland's education system.

Global citizenship education, or global learning, can be defined as "*an approach to education that prioritises a global dimension*" (Bentall et al 2014, p. 624). It aims to prepare (young) people to live in a globalised, interconnected world and enable them to respond to global challenges whilst advocating for social justice for all. This is done by connecting the local and the global and discussing global problems and connect this to the context of the learners. One of the ways of incorporating a global dimension in the curriculum is by establishing international links. International partnerships with developing countries have been promoted since the end of the 1990s by the UK government for example through the Global School Partnership programme which ran from 2003-2012 and the Connecting Classroom programme that ran from 2012 onwards (Bourn 2014). This led to several NGOs setting up linking programmes as well, fuelled by the then Secretary of State stating in 1999 that "*she wanted to see every school in the UK have a link with a school in a developing country*" (Bourn 2014, p. 4). The programmes were focused on establishing school links and integrating these with global learning throughout the curriculum. Although due to a change in funding the number of schools and NGOs that are engaged in partnerships has declined (Bourn et al 2017), the connecting classrooms programme is still running and promoting the creation of school partnerships. In Scotland the Scotland-Malawi Partnership is an important and influential supporter of school links between these two countries.

According to Leonard (2014) we can view the different kind of initiatives schools develop on a continuum from “link” to “partnership”, where links are often short term and not embedded in the wider curriculum of a school, and partnerships are longer term and integrated across staff, pupils and different subjects. Partnerships, or links, can be made with any school in any country but the key focus of this report are links made with developing countries as they have been promoted in the past, and can have – as we will see in the next chapters – an important impact on thinking about global issues. One specific type of link, or activity within a partnership, can be organising pupil visits to the partner country. These visits can be either organised by the Scottish school themselves, or by a volunteer organisation that enables school groups to participate as a volunteer in specific projects. The experience pupils have on these visits can be an important starting point for learning but can also have impact – both positively and negatively – on the communities they visit.

Although we know that some Scottish schools have established long-term partnerships and other schools participate in short term projects, there is little know about the actual number of schools involved, the kind of activities that are undertaken and the schools’ motivation for supporting these activities. This report provides a first exploration of school partnerships, in a secondary school context, with the aim to understand what kind of activities Scottish schools and young people are engaged in when it comes to partnering with a school and/or visiting a developing country. The overall purpose of this report is to support discussions on global learning, international development, school partnerships and volunteering.

The research explores five research questions:

1. What potential benefits and disadvantages are linked to school partnerships and pupils visits according to current academic literature?;
2. Which organisations and resources do Scottish secondary schools have available to them when linking to a developing country, and what kind of activities are they promoting?;
3. What activities do Scottish secondary schools undertake when partnering with a school in a developing country?;
4. What is the motivation for these activities?, and;
5. What narratives of development aid and global learning are involved?

The first question is addressed in chapter 2, which provides a review of the relevant literature on school partnerships and volunteer visits and known benefit and challenges with such activities. Chapter 3 addresses question two and gives an overview of relevant organisations and (online) resources that support school partnerships and interactions. Questions three, four and five are discussed in chapter 4, which looks at primary data gathered from meeting with organisations and conducting interviews to understand the kind of school activities and interactions with the partnership institutions involved. Chapter 5 introduces the results of an exploratory survey to understand the perspective of Malawian partner schools. The report ends with a conclusion and recommendations, drawn from the literature review and data analysis to improve the sustainability of school links as well as to improve their connection to global learning.

## **2. Literature Review**

To better understand the impact school partnerships and educational exchanges to developing countries can have on both Scottish schools and partner schools, the next sections will give a brief review of the relevant academic literature. This will not only include research on school links and school trips, but also literature on the wider context of volunteer tourism. Volunteer tourism is defined as: “*volunteer[ing] in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or environment*”, with the rationale to create encounters that foster mutual understanding and respect (Wearing in Wearing & McGehee 2013 p.121). The rationale of volunteer tourism is similar to the aim of global citizenship, and school partnerships are often set up with the aim to promote good global citizenship. The goal of volunteer tourism – to create mutual understanding – has received critique both in popular media and academic literature, as it is not always reached, and difficulties occur when analysing the (power) relationships created between volunteers, tourist organisations and host communities. Similar dynamics may play a role in school partnerships, as they strive to reach the same aim of mutual understanding while also encountering difficulties in reaching equitable relationships. Moreover, schools also organise visits, which can include volunteer experiences as well. Therefore, the first section of this literature review will explore research on the dynamics of volunteer tourism, the difficulties of reaching mutual learning and potential negative impacts volunteering can have. This insight is then linked to research on global learning and school partnerships, showing similar dynamics and potential negative impacts that have to be considered. The chapter concludes with an overview of recommendations from the literature when considering school links and school visits.

### **2.1 Volunteer Tourism**

Volunteer tourism, or voluntourism, became popular in the 1990s and 2000s as a new type of tourism that focused on global citizenship in travel. It was expected that this form of tourism, that included volunteering on development projects, would counter the negative effects of the “acculturation effect of mainstream tourism”, where the culture of the tourist has a dominating and diminishing effect over the

culture of the host country to the host countries' detriment (Lyons et al 2012). This potentially mitigating impact of volunteer tourism on host countries and the promotion of good global citizenship was emphasized at a policy level and of interest to early researchers in the field of sustainable tourism. In this initial phase there was a specific focus on the motivation of volunteers, to better understand their choices and desires (Guttentag 2009). Wearing and McGehee (2013) give a comprehensive overview of this research on volunteer motivations and show that motivations include a variety of reasons: from cultural immersion; to making a difference; seeking camaraderie; experiencing something new; meeting host country's citizens and learn from and living in another country. No matter the motivation for going, when returning home, volunteer tourism seemed to make an impact on the participant and they made changes in their purchasing behaviour or got more involved in social movements. The most observed impact was seen on the development of 'self', with greater personal reflection and civic awareness (Wearing and McGehee 2013). Research also showed the benefits volunteer tourism could bring to education, the health system, historical restoration and ecological conservation in the host country (Wearing and McGehee 2013).

However, these initial research findings have been countered by a more critical look at the volunteer tourism industry and researchers like Guttentag (2009) have pointed out that there are some very serious potential negative effects that need consideration. For example, Guttentag has found that

- By focusing on the motivation and desires of the volunteers, the needs and desires of local hosts can become neglected, resulting in a lack of local involvement. This was particularly the case when volunteer tourist organisations are private companies in search of profit but was also the case for some NGO programmes.
- There is a risk of volunteer tourist organisations assuming an 'expert' role and acting on their own opinions of what is best for the host region and local communities.
- Volunteers are often unskilled and can therefore hinder project progress or deliver unsatisfactory work. Even skilled volunteers have been observed to

have negative impact on progress, as local hosts shift their focus to make time to manage preparations and guidance.

- By having a volunteer come into a community and work for free, it can decrease the employment opportunities for locals.

Even though one important benefit is quoted as personal growth and reflection, researchers have warned that in some case volunteer tourism could actually reinforce stereotypes and rationalise poverty (Palacios 2010, Andreotti 2014). This last point is unpacked in more detail by Simpson (2004), who researched the promotional material of gap year volunteer tourism organisations. She found that this material used homogenous descriptions of cultures and promoted a simplistic understanding of development. For these organisations development was portrayed as something that can be 'done' (by non-skilled volunteers) and resides outside of local stakeholder communities (Simpson 2004). According to Simpson's analysis of these organisations, there was very little evidence of strategic project planning with local groups and no critical questions about volunteers' impacts and what impact would be most appropriate were asked. She states that "*the dominant ideology is that doing something is better than doing nothing, and therefore, that doing anything, is reasonable*" (Simpson 2004, p. 685). Simpson (2004) point out that these ideas of development are criticized and not support by the international development literature and community, but that volunteer tourism organisation seem to be behind on these critiques.

Simpson's research not only showed that tourism organisations can promote stereotypical views of cultures, but that the participants themselves also reproduced some uncritical views on development. When talking about poverty the participants Simpson interviewed used a discourse of 'luck' to explain poverty (Simpson 2004). This narrative of being 'lucky' not to encounter poverty explains the material differences between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' "*through a fatalistic faith in the 'luck of the draw', rather than in structures and systems in which we all participate, and which are ultimately, open to change*" (Simpson 2004, p.689). Moreover, when relating experiences of poverty, participants drew on a 'poor-but-happy' narrative that trivialised and romanticised poverty and does not ask questions about the reasons and structures that reinforce poverty (Simpson 2004). Simpson (2004) therefore

argues that voluntourism needs to include a 'pedagogy of social justice' to recognise the existence of inequality, societies' role in this and to seek social change. We will see that the need to promote critical awareness of social justice and inequality is also repeated in research evaluating school partnership programmes.

In the last decade, following Simpson's research, more critique on the practice of volunteer tourism has been voiced, and some volunteer tourism organisations are now actively engaged in thinking about their ideas of and impact on development. However, from a first glance at some UK volunteer tourism organisations the promotional language and imagery can still be rather stereotypical, depicting the volunteer as the one that will "change lives". Moreover, other research has pointed out that it remains important to consider potential negative impacts of volunteering. Lyons et al (2012) for example specifically looked at the commodification of volunteer tourism, and suggested that as volunteer tourism becomes entangled with neoliberalist models of mass tourism it loses its ability to deliver on global citizenship. This impact is for example shown in the increased emphasis on skill development and career enhancement, where the volunteer will increasingly ask themselves how volunteering can be 'useful' to further their own career or studies. This focus on self-development, Lyons et al (2012) argue, can make volunteers lose focus on reflecting on one's own culture, which is vital to becoming a good global citizenship.

Commodification will also mean that the cost of volunteer tourism makes that it is not accessible to everyone, and this creates a specific power relation which "*involves the 'better off' providing aid in the some way to the 'worse off'; a situation that creates an unequal relationship whereby the giver might appear superior to the receiver*" (Lyons et al 2012 p. 371). Palacios (2010) adds that while in recent years questions have been asked whether volunteers have the right skills for the job and whether their help is effective, the question that *should* be asked is whether their help has any relevance at all. For Palacios (2010) voluntourism should focus on the cross-cultural learning and building of tolerance and global awareness, instead of effective development aid. He noticed, similar to Simpson, that programmes tell volunteers they will have a "positive impact" or help the community which raises expectations of both the volunteer and the host community, that often are not met. Palacios (2010) states that short-term volunteer projects should therefore limit their focus to

intercultural learning, making room for cross-cultural contacts, informal encounters and reflection.

The literature has assessed volunteer tourism on both its positive and negative impacts, but there is very little known on the experiences of host communities. Academics' point out that there is a lack of research focusing on host countries, and call for "*the utilization of structured, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, transnational, and mixed method approaches to examine volunteer tourism in a more systematic and logical way*" (Wearing and McGehee 2013 p. 122). Zahra and McGehee (2013, p.24) moreover reflect that the literature is rather dialectic, making an argument that volunteer tourism is either "panacea or pariah" rather than offering tangible insights across the scale. Their study provided empirical data on the influence volunteer tourism has on social capital in host communities in the Philippines (Zara and McGehee 2013). Local people reported a positive influence on building trust and cooperation in their community after being inspired by the volunteers to help others and invest time and communal working in maintaining their (build) environment (Zara and McGehee 2013). Another positive effect was that some community members felt increased pride and engagement with their own culture, because of volunteer interest and also felt more confident and empowered to let their voice be heard.

However, some participants did not necessarily trust the volunteers, feared that they would be told what to do or were disappointed when volunteers did not keep in contact. Moreover, financially it might not always be beneficial for community members to have volunteers staying, as they went on to buy cake they would normally not buy or give gifts they would normally sell, as an expression of thanks. This study shows that there can be diverse and multiple effects of volunteer tourism projects on the host community, where for some it might be beneficial, others can experience negative impacts. As Guttentag (2009) pointed out, every community is different and while some recommendations will work in one community, they will be ineffective in others. What should be clear though is that the voices, desires and needs of local hosts should be heard and local communities have to be involved in programmes taking place in their regions (Guttentag 2009).

In summary the literature suggests that volunteer tourism offers the possibility for volunteers to increase their understanding of different cultures and reflect on their own practices. For the hosts it can offer opportunities to build confidence and active participation in the community. However, to fulfil these opportunities volunteer tourism organisation have to be aware of the power relations at play, resist commodification, have a genuine focus on reflexivity, as well as always consult and involve the host communities during every stages of the programme. Volunteer tourism organisation then need to communicate these realities and good practises to their volunteers. These are also key issues when addressing school links to developing countries, as similar dependencies and unintentional impacts can occur and reflexivity is needed to develop global citizenship education.

## **2.2 Global Citizenship, International Educational Trips and School Partnerships**

Where volunteer tourism mainly focuses on ‘gap year’ and university students, the idea of developing global citizenship is also embedded in present day primary and secondary education. It recognises that young people are growing up in an ever-interconnected world and schools should therefore, through global learning, encouraged learners to “*think deeply and critically about what is equitable and just, and what will minimise harm to our planet. Exploring Global Citizenship themes helps learners grow more confident in standing up for their beliefs, and more skilled in evaluating the ethics and impact of their decisions*” (Scotdec 2019). In the Scottish context, this is part of the Learning for Sustainability (LfS) approach that brings together global citizenship, sustainable development and outdoor learning, with the explicit aim to “*enable[s] learners, educators, schools and their wider communities to build a socially-just, sustainable and equitable society*” (Education Scotland 2019a). One way to bring global citizenship to the classroom is establishing links or partnerships with schools and/or communities in other countries. This can for example be with European countries through Erasmus+ exchange programmes but can also be directed to developing countries. MacKenzie et al (2016) studied school partnership arrangements made through the Scotland-Malawi partnership, where the aim of the partnership was to develop skills in both countries, based on principles of equality and reciprocity. It encouraged schools to organise shared educational

projects, as well as reciprocal visits or support the partner school with learning materials, clothes or the building of classrooms (MacKenzie et al 2016). Another activity that can be part of a partnership is a teacher exchange, where teachers visit another countries to increase their own understanding of global issues and take these experiences back to their school. This professional development is a particular focus of the British Council's Connecting Classrooms programme.

For developing mutual understanding and sharing projects, partnerships can be an important component in participants development as global citizens. However, to engage in global citizenship learning it is not necessary to work with a partner school, and not all partnerships necessarily establish global citizenship (Andreotti 2014). As with volunteer tourism, educational trips and school partnerships which work with communities in different cultural, economic, political and social context, need to be aware and take into account inequalities, power imbalances and stereotypes for both host and home nations.

### **2.2.1 Evidence of Global Learning**

Evaluations of school partnerships have shown some positive influence on the development of good global citizenship as partnerships can help in motivating schools to incorporate global learning into their teaching programme (Bentall et al 2014). Bourn (2014) evaluated school links and concluded that students showed an *“increase understanding, raising standards of learning and engagement with the everyday life of the school”* (p.26). This is similar to the outcome of Sizmur et al (2011) who looked at the impact of the Global School Partnership programme from the Department of International Development (DfID), where teachers reported positive impact on pupils understanding of and respect for people from developing countries; on knowledge of global issues; on attitudes towards inter-cultural differences and on awareness of pupils' impact on the world. In another evaluation on school partnerships Bourn and Cara (2013) made a similar observation of achieved learning, although they wondered about the level of depth of this learning: *“there is evidence of increased understanding of global and development issues, the quality of teaching and learning appears to have improved, and materials produced were valued. However, the evidence does not tell us a great deal about depth of*

*learning and understanding within schools.*” (Bourn and Cara 2013, p.52). Sizmur et al (2011) conclude that the highest benefit was seen in schools that had global learning fully embedded across the school and it was seen as a school priority. Moreover, the teachers in these schools had received professional development training on global learning and focused their teaching on global citizenship, sustainable development, interdependence and conflict resolution (Sizmur et al 2011). When it came to partnership building with another school, the activities that was seen as most beneficial was the communication with partner school pupils, to exchange ideas, make friends and learning about each other’s culture (Edge and Khamsi 2012).

Although there have been several impact and evaluation reports of different school partnership programmes, unfortunately these reports do not always make a distinction between the different activities undertaken i.e. teacher training and exchanges, student trips, fundraising, or educational projects and it is therefore difficult to conclude what causes changes in global learning. However, as we will explore in the following sections, pupil visits and being involved in charitable funding are activities that are often criticised when evaluating impact.

### **2.2.2 Critical Literacy**

To achieve the critical reflection and understanding of power, social justice and poverty that global citizenship wants to promote, in-depth learning about these issues is needed. Andreotti (2014) points out that in schools often a form of ‘soft’ global citizenship education is given. This form of global citizenship constructs poverty as “*a lack of resources, services and markets and of education*”, however, to understand social justice, pupils will need to reflect on poverty as a “*lack of control over the production of resources*” (Andreotti 2014, p. 5). To become a good global citizen, pupils and teachers will need to have a critical literacy, that promotes a view of global problems as issues of justice and unequal power relations (Andreotti 2014). The basis for caring about these issues should be a responsibility towards each other and a willingness to learn together, instead of feeling you have a responsibility for the other and need to teach them, which is often promoted in a more ‘soft’ approach to global citizenship (Andreotti 2014). For Andreotti this means pupils in western countries need to focus on analysing their own position and participate in

changing structures, assumptions, attitudes, identities and power relations, instead of focusing on 'helping' by donating time and resources to partner countries. This is a similar conclusion as Simpson (2004) and her call to create a "critical pedagogy".

To reach a more critical reflection the contribution of teachers is important. Bentall et al (2014) show that teachers who took part in a school partnership, especially if they travelled to the partner country, used their experience to inform their teaching. They concluded it enhanced teachers' commitment to global learning as "... *their first-hand experience of a developing country, particularly through the partnerships, gave them a strong desire to involve their learners in understanding and making a difference to those communities the colleges were associated with*" (Bentall et al 2014, p. 631). These first-hand experiences gained by teachers also motivated their students, as they felt it gave their teaching more credibility and authority (Bentall et al 2014), and allow them to learn from real-world examples (Bourn 2014). Overall, Bourn (2014) concluded that developing partnerships can give teachers the opportunity to reflect on their own assumptions, views and values, which would enable them to encourage reflective practice in their students. However, as Andreotti (2014) stressed, this is not always necessarily the case and *critical* reflection – especially on power relations – is not present in pre- and post-trip discussions.

The concept of global learning draws strongly on ideas of experiential learning, where teachers and learners will go through cycles of experience and reflection. Reflection should therefore be part of any visit and pre- and post-trip discussions can increase global learning (McGladdery and Lubbe 2017). This is similar to literature on voluntourism pointing out that volunteer organisations should have a continued involvement in the volunteers journey, even after they are back home, and use the concept of "transformative learning" to improve what volunteers take out of the experience (Wearing and McGehee 2013). These reflective sessions were included in Wilson's (2019) case studies, where pupils taking part in a trip would be involved in 18 months of preparation, which included critical reflections on global issues. However, an interesting finding was when students were fundraising for the trip and writing about their activities in a blog they focused on charitable giving and donor-recipient relations (Wilson 2019). Wilson concludes that part of these partnership

relations include a 'performance' of stereotypes, to fulfil expectations from audiences at home, from donors, but also expectations that were very much embedded in the students themselves. While the students were able to reflect on stereotypes and power relations in pre-trip sessions, when talking about their own experiences they emphasised a stereotypical image of "poor African" in need of "help".

That some "development" narratives can be very persistent was also shown by Fizzell and Epprecht (2014) in a study on Canadian secondary school visits to developing countries. Their study shows that secondary pupils would explain poverty in terms of the 'lotto logic' described by Simpson (2014). The pupils explained being in or out of poverty as a matter of luck and not a matter of social structures, history and power relations. Fizzell and Epprecht (2014) conclude that there is a vagueness in global learning concepts which results in them not being linked to a critical pedagogy. They therefore suggest that it is not only important for teachers to gain first-hand experience of global issues, but that they also need to develop baseline understanding of the concepts related to development (Fizzell and Epprecht 2014).

The academic literature points to the danger of reinforcing notions of dependency and paternalism, as well as evoking pity and sympathy rather than empathy, which lack the critical reflection on power imbalance. Bourn (2014) for example indicates that research on linking schools in western countries with projects in developing countries raised concerns among researchers about "*the extent to which links encouraged a more critical view of development and questions assumptions about schools and communities in Africa and South Asia.*" (p.12). After evaluating a school linking programme, Bourn and Cara (2013) concluded that a lot of UK schools saw the partnership more as a donor-recipient relationship, rather than one of mutual learning. They warn that partnerships that focus on charitable actions or fundraising, more than global learning, might actually reinforce stereotypes. This corresponds with observations made by Simpson (2004) and Guttentag (2009) who pointed out that volunteer tourism can reinforce stereotypes and trivialise or rationalise poverty. This is further reinforced by Wilson (2019) who showed that in partnerships where university students and secondary school pupils visited Malawi, the visiting students often acknowledged inaccuracies in stereotypes. However, these students were still uncritical of the donor-recipient relation and, as Wilson argues, failed to critique the

“modernisation-as-development discourse” that promotes the European students as active agents and their African counterparts as passive recipients (Wilson 2019).

Wilson’s case studies are particularly interesting as they focus on Scottish programmes, linked to the Scotland-Malawi Partnership (SMP). The SMP holds a strong view on establishing partnerships that are focused on global learning (rather than fundraising or charitable action) and that those partnership should include mutual learning. They acknowledge that there is a danger of seeing the partner as “the needy other” and the Scottish school as the one who is able to “make the world better” (McKenzie et al 2016, p.130). In their guidance for schools they therefore warn that the partnership should not just consist of providing material aids and funds and that the impact of aid should always be carefully assessed (Mackenzie et al 2016). The programmes Wilson (2019) researched all acknowledge this need for mutual learning and reciprocity, however, in practice the activities show a more muddled picture. One of the organisations providing secondary school trips, for example stated that they were “not into traditional activities” like painting schools, yet on one of the trips they had arranged pupils did just that (Wilson 2019). This idea that students will “help” a community can be problematic and some programmes and volunteers adopted practices and roles similar to professional aid agencies, without the extensive knowledge and training for handling these practices. Wilson has observed situations where this led to student volunteers “*being placed in positions of considerable authority, in a country they did not know*” (Wilson 2019, p. 164). The individuals were “*expected to perform as a development worker, offering advice and insights into areas that they had very little understanding*” (Wilson 2019, p.165). This highly problematic focus on development aid is similar to Palacios (2010) warning on volunteer tourism and his call to step away from a development aid focus and instead look at intercultural exchange and learning.

To establish a partnership that focused on mutual learning, as well as establishing a critical literacy of global issues requires long-term school wide investment. Unfortunately, evaluating UK school linking programmes, Blum et al (2017) showed maintaining the partnership beyond the initial support and grants from the British Council or other funders was often difficult. Usually the initial links started through

personal connections, which in some cases matured through accessing additional funds such as the Connecting Classroom programme (Bourn 2014) but ended after the school failed to find further funding. Some partnerships have gained support from local authorities, organisations, charities and/or private companies, but the danger is that this support will focus the partnership more on sponsoring and fundraising for the partner school and enlarges the risk of increasing stereotypes and power imbalances and undermining the partner countries agency (Blum et al 2017).

### **2.2.3 Research on the Partner Countries**

As with the research on voluntourism, there is little work done on understanding the impact of school partnerships on the partner community in developing countries. Leonard's PhD thesis (2014) is one of the exceptions. In this study Leonard showed that the collaboration had a positive impact on the partner school and its teachers' pedagogy. Moreover, pupils in the partner schools also saw the impact from the exchange, firstly through physical changes: buildings, books, equipment and other educational materials were provided through fundraising, but also through learning about issues such as social justice and human rights as part of the shared educational projects pupils were engaged in. Bourn and Cara (2013) point to the positive impact a partnership can have on both home and host teachers' knowledge of different teaching methods. However, they also make clear that schools will have to acknowledge that agendas and needs between the two partners will be different and almost always will lead to a partnership that has a mix of educational and development projects (Bourn and Cara 2013). Wilson (2019) makes a similar point in his research, where the teachers in the Malawian partner schools stressed their need to gain access to more resources. This was opposed to the emphasis the UK organisations and schools put on educational and shared learning. Wilson concludes that while focusing on the latter might challenge stereotypes and what he called "conceptual marginalisation" it can ignore the "material marginalisation" that does exist and ignore the situation on the ground where material needs are often at the forefront. However, addressing this inequality has to be done with care. Wilson (2019) shows in his research that partnerships and school visits can be seen as a resource that organisations and schools have to bid for, rather than a long-term source of mutual exchange and educational improvement. Moreover, to access

these resources, the partner schools and local host organisations would ‘perform’ a very stereotypical narrative of poverty, for example showing the visiting students an orphanage in expectation that this would secure funding (Wilson 2019). Again, these activities are in danger of promoting instead of challenge stereotypes and exacerbating power imbalance as one school lack resources, while the other arguably has the ability to provide them. What this research shows is that it is important to make sure all voices, needs and goals are carefully considered in partnerships and partner communities are involved in the discussions.

Overall the studies have shown that partnerships have the ability to enhance pupils’ global citizenship, but this highly dependent on how programmes are designed and delivered. The main critique of current school links is that it does not always promote critical thinking on issues such as social justice, power imbalances and equality. To tackle this, teacher development is an important element, as well as the way school links are set up. When establishing a partnership, schools should invest time in discussing the needs and expectations of both parties as well as the learning outcomes that each wants to achieve. Deciding to include a school visit should include further examination of what such a visit would achieve and the risks it carries for partner institutions and communities. Questions remain on the impact of these activities on partner schools in developing countries such as, how much power do they have in the relationship and how are the agendas set?

### **2.3 Recommendations for Partnerships and School Trips**

To achieve global learning, promoting critical literacy or “a pedagogy of social justice” (Simpson 2004), the academic literature advocates a range of approaches for the home (in this case the Scottish) school; the partner (the developing country’s) school; and in some cases both:

- Strongly embed the partnership in the host school’s curriculum and priorities (Bourn 2014; Sizmur et al 2011)
- Make sure a partnership includes communication and exchanges of ideas between both schools’ pupils, to create global learning opportunities (Edge and Khamsi 2012)

- Provide professional development training that helps home teachers develop a theoretical understanding of notions related to development (Fizzell and Epprecht 2014) and an understanding on issues of social justice, inequality and power imbalance (Andreotti 2014)
- When teacher-exchanges are set up they should ensure that a teacher's personal learning in both schools is translated to all teachers in the school (Bourn 2014)
- Experiential learning (e.g. through visits) can be an important part of global learning. To have a transformative impact, learners should go through a cycle of experience and reflection. This can be achieved by including pre- and post- trip discussions (McGladdery and Lubbe 2017), which should address assumptions and stereotypes (Andreotti 2014)

To prevent power imbalance and allow for reciprocity the academic literature proposes:

- Involved home organisations, schools and teachers should engage themselves with the field of international development and its critical reflections. They should distance themselves from a language of development aid but instead be firmly placed in the language and thinking of global learning (Simpson 2004; Palacios 2010; Wilson 2019). It is important that home teachers planning a visit, or volunteer organisations supporting home schools, are engaged with the debates within international development literature (Simpson 2004) and organise a visit that focuses on critical global citizenship and education aspects and not on development aid (Palacios 2010; Andreotti 2014)
- Establish learning partnerships, rather than link through fundraising. This needs leadership and resources in both home and partner institutions to establish a long-term partnership (Blum et al 2017). Short term or ad hoc links should be avoided and linking agreements should be formalised (Leonard 2014)
- The home school, teachers and organisations involved should ensure that ideas and actions are discussed with the partner school, who should be engaged in all stages from planning, assessing impact to deciding on future activities (Mackenzie et al 2016; Guttentag 2009). The partner school should be able to set their own "school linking agenda" (Leonard 2014)

- Even though the focus lies on global learning, home schools should be aware of the material inequality and resource need of partner schools, and engage in open discussions on what expectations both schools have in addressing these (Wilson 2019; Bourn and Cara 2013)
- Volunteer activities that replace employment opportunities in local partner communities should not form any part of the exchange. This should be discussed with host communities (Guttentag 2009).
- When planning an overseas visits and thinking through the range of activities that all pupils will be involved in, careful assessment is required in terms of the potential stereotypes promoted, the power imbalances involved and if critical global citizenship is reached (Fizzell and Epprecht 2014; Wilson 2019; Andreotti 2014). Partner schools need to be equal partners in these discussions and plans.

In general, the literature is most critical about fundraising and volunteering activities. This poses the question whether school visits are the best way to promote global citizenship? Do the positives, such as personal development and engagement, outweigh possible negatives, such as reinforcement of stereotypes and power imbalances? The main question as a school to engage with is: 'What do I want to achieve with my school partnership?' - if the answer is global learning, fundraising activities and pupil visits might not always be the best choice.

Other factors associated with volunteering and school visits are less reflected upon in the literature: the costs to parents and communities that are asked to help with the fundraising; but also the impacts to the environment, such as the carbon footprint of flying.

Lastly, with very little known on the impacts on, and motivations of, partner schools the question remains whether the promotion of global learning through partnerships is a dominantly Western approach to expanding young people's education? Do host schools in partner countries share the same idea of global citizenship education? If not, what does this mean for establishing viable and sustainable partnerships that meet the needs of both parties? Are partnerships for example mainly established through Scottish schools looking for a school to partner with, or are schools in

developing countries (actively) looking for partnerships themselves, and if so, are some schools more equipped to do so than others?

### **3. Partnership Programmes and Resources**

Understanding the Scottish context of school and volunteering projects /exchanges requires having insight into the organisations and programmes that schools can use to access such links and partnerships. The two larger organisations that support partnerships in Scotland are the British Council and the Scotland-Malawi Partnership (SMP). The “Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning” programme from the British Council provides support and funding to schools who want to link to another country focused on providing funding for reciprocal teacher visits. The SMP, together with their Malawian counterpart (the Malawi-Scotland partnership), supports Scottish schools who have or want to establish a link with a school in Malawi. The SMP does not provide funding, but if desirable, directs schools to the Connecting Classrooms programme, to initiate teacher visits.

Aside from these organisations there are several other organisation who: support partnerships (e.g. Malawi Leaders for Learning and the Twende Pamoja Trust); supporting teachers development of global education (e.g. Wood foundation and the Development Education Centres); supporting trips to developing countries (e.g. VineTrust and Classrooms for Malawi, supported by Orbis); or providing funding for teacher or pupil trips (e.g. Livingstone Volunteer programme from the McConnell International Foundation). A more detailed overview of these organisations can be found in Appendix I.

These organisations and programmes also provide resources for teachers to help them include global learning into their curriculum. An overview of these classroom materials are available in Appendix II. These materials, aimed at teachers, includes lesson plans, materials about specific topics and more strategic guidance on how to include global learning in wider school curriculum. Although it is beyond the scope of this report to look into the content of all these resources, we can make a couple of general observations based on their websites:

- There are a lot of resources available, although it is not always clear how up to date the material is.
- There is a diverse range of lesson materials, sometimes which focus on specific subjects other that promotes cross-curricular activities. Often the

materials have an 'action' component, to let pupils reflect on what they can *do*.

- All organisations concerned with global learning, highlight that it is as much about promoting critical thinking and reflection as it is about gaining knowledge on specific topics. The focus lies on understanding interconnectivity (local-global links) and issues of social justice and human rights.

Next to these specific lesson materials some of these organisations provide guidance documents on how to build and sustain a positive partnership. To better understand what kind of partnerships and activities are promoted, these guidelines have been reviewed below and then compared to the key recommendations from the academic literature made above. .

### **3.1 Education Scotland – National Improvement Hub**

On the website of education Scotland there is a page dedicated to international partnerships<sup>1</sup>. This site provides information for schools on how to develop and embed international activities in their curriculum. A short explanation the aim of international activities is provided along with a range of links. Main aims are:

- to improve knowledge and skills across curriculum areas;
- to challenge stereotypes and prejudices;
- to make learners aware of the possibilities that exist for learning and work outside Scotland.

One document on the portal provides tips on how to develop international activities (Education Scotland 2019b). These include joining the Connecting Classroom programme, encourage writing/communication or share a project with students in the partnership country. The webpage does not give more specific information on how to set up these activities, but instead provides links to organisations and resources teachers and schools can use, such as the British Council website, the Development

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/learners-international-international-learning-opportunities/>

Education Centre's, Oxfam, the Wood Foundation and the Vinetrust (Education Scotland 2019c).

### **3.2 Connecting Classrooms**

The Connecting Classrooms (CC) programme in Scotland provides a Teacher Handbook that includes information on the programme as well as information on Learning for Sustainability (LfS). The programme has the aim to “*raise awareness of global issues amongst young people by supporting collaboration with their international peers*” (British Council 2019c, p.1). The handbook embeds this approach in LfS as a part of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.

The CC programme aims to provide a way to “*effectively plan for and implement LfS approaches in your school and wider community in ways that will significantly enhance the educational experience of all learners*” (British Council 2019c, p.2). The handbook introduces the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals as a core theme that underpins the programme. The handbook refers to the classroom materials, available on the British Council website, and provides ideas and lesson planning on global issues.

The chapter on partnerships introduced the aim of these school links: “*to fully engage with learning through joint learning activities focusing on global themes. They also offer teachers the chance to share experiences and learn new thinking, ideas and practices from colleagues in other countries*” (British Council 2019c, p.6). To help schools reach this aim the CC programme supports reciprocal teacher visits, setting up virtual partnerships and collaborative pupil projects. The handbook itself does not provide any more information on how a partnership (should) work in practice, but they do refer to an evaluation tool that helps guide the management of partnerships and to including LfS into a “whole school approach”.

This evaluation tool not only focuses on development education and partnerships, but on LfS as a whole, and asks the school to consider how LfS is integrated in the curriculum, specifically how the SDGs are part of the schools learning and whether both local and global connections are made. The tool suggests that a school has an advanced level of LfS when the school and teachers “*actively work towards*

*achieving the SDGs on a local and global scale*” and learners “*regularly have the opportunity to take effective and responsible action on local and global issues to promote social justice and sustainability within our school and into our wider community*” (British Council 2019d). Partnerships with schools internationally can be supported to reach this level of learning.

The CC programme provides a second handbook, aimed at the co-ordinator of a cluster partnership. This type of partnership is made by a cluster of schools in Scotland and overseas. This handbook mentions that a partnership (within a cluster) is not without its challenges and the advice of CC is to make sure not just one teacher but a number of staff are involved from each school (British Council 2019e). This encourages to improve long-term sustainability as well as shares the workload. When it comes to establishing and maintaining the international partnership, the handbook mentions that equality and reciprocity are important, although it doesn't specify further on this. The handbook does reference additional information in a latter part of the handbook, which is supplied when a school enters the programme. This second handbook provides more specific information on what activities can be delivered and how within a cluster, as well as reflecting on different ways of working within a school cluster.

### **3.3 Scotland-Malawi Partnership – A Practical Guide to School Partnerships**

The SMP has produced “A practical guide to school partnerships” (SMP 2019). This guidance provides advice on how to setup a partnership, which includes:

- Do background research
- Appoint a coordinator and include teachers and school leaders, parents and/or pupils to ensure long-term sustainability. Think about how the group will work together and how you will work with the partner school.
- Apply the ‘Partnership Principles’ as guidance. SMP provide a Partnership Principles worksheet that teachers can use.
- Broker a partnership by either becoming a member of the SMP (or MaSP if a Malawian school) and contact the SMP schools’ coordinator, or by signing up for Connecting Classrooms Programme

- Set up a partnership agreement, which includes the objectives of the partnership. These should be discussed openly beforehand. The agreement should furthermore include the activities both schools will undertake, a timescale, means of communication and roles and responsibilities

Once initial contact is made the SMP guidance also provides some thoughts on how to proceed. They highlight that there should be open communication from both sides on what each school wants to get out of the partnership. The documents make clear that it is not uncommon for Scottish schools to receive request from their Malawian partner school to support the school with material resources. SMP point out that providing material support can be a helpful exchange but they advocate that it should not be the sole purpose of the partnership, and that there should be an educational component embedded. Moreover, they point out that it is important to consider the educational impact of fundraisers events have in the wider (school) community. The final section of the SMP handbook focuses on factors to consider once the partnership is established. These include: setting up good communication structures; sharing curriculums by setting up joint projects; tying fundraising to learning outcome; finding funding if visits to partner schools will be made, and; involving the wider community. For SMP focusing on educational benefits of the partnership makes “*the relationship between schools more egalitarian and therefore more likely to endure*” (SMP 2019 p.6). They suggest schools to look at the Connecting Classrooms programme for funding visits.

When it comes to visits the SMP guidelines suggest reflecting on the cost-benefit of a visit, and whether fundraising for the partner school in the developing country might not benefit the school more than a visit. They go on to say that reciprocal visits can greatly strengthen the partnership as well as personal development of teachers and pupils. They suggest schools will consider the impact, cost and planning of the visit and if going ahead to make sure learners are involved.

### **3.4 Twende Pamoja Trust – Developing Partnerships**

On the website of the Twende Pamoja Trust the organisation provides a “*guide to developing partnerships between schools in Tanzania and Scotland*” (Twende Pamoja 2019b). Apart from breaking down the aim of building a partnership –

understanding other cultures, respecting diversity, challenging injustice and understanding local-global interconnectedness – the guide breaks down the steps schools will have to undertake to build a partnership.

When starting a school partnership, the guide points out it should be a partnership for the whole school, not between individuals. It therefore states that it is important to embed the links into the school's plan, because it can take some time to develop a sustainable relationship with a partner school. If a link is made, both schools will need to find out whether they have similar aims. The most successful partnerships, the guide claims, are those where staff are clear about what they expect from the partnerships and regularly review what they are doing and achieving.

The greatest benefit from a partnership according to this guidance comes from joint curricular activities and to take schools "*beyond superficial comparisons, and [place] children's learning at the centre of the partnership*" (Twende Pamoja 2019b). The guide recommends to start small, with short topics, linked to global issues of sustainability, such as water, food, transport or recycling. These issues are often of shared interest and experience between the two schools. In time, these topics can become more complex and talks progress to more challenging issues such as equality, citizenship and democracy. There are many ways of sharing activities on these topics, but the guide suggests that through expressive art or as a shared enterprise activity can be particularly effective.

There is a short section on school visits. The main conclusion is the "*key to their success is that the outcomes from the exchange benefit the whole school community – not just those participating*" (Twende Pamoja 2019b). Moreover, they advocate that visits should take place once the "groundwork" of establishing the partnership has been achieved and the working relationship is strong.

### **3.5 Oxfam – Building Successful School Partnerships**

Oxfam provides several guides on their website on global learning in general, on fundraising and on partnerships. The latter, their guidance on partnerships is referenced by several other organisations. The "Building Successful School

Partnerships” guide (Oxfam 2007) aims to help schools avoid pitfalls by understanding the essential elements of a partnership and exploring how a partnership can contribute to global learning. The guide states that: a good partnership can motivate learners; increase their understanding of how local and global are connected; appreciate diversity, and; inspire a desire for positive change or to fight injustice (Oxfam 2007). However, the guide is clear that there is risks that these goals are not met and points out that some partnership might even undermine these goals and close minds instead of opening them. The guidance details some of the risk of focusing on differences and promoting pity, which might actually reinforce stereotypes, cultivate paternalistic attitudes and eventually fail to examine global issues of injustice and inequality (Oxfam 2007). With this in mind this Oxfam guidance provides four elements that are important to ensure a partnership builds global citizenship (Oxfam 2007, p.4):

- Commitment to an equal partnership with educational aims;
- Commitment to partnership learning through the curriculum;
- Effective communications;
- Good whole-school practice in Education for Global Citizenship.

To reach an equal partnership the guide points to ongoing dialogue, where imbalances and objectives are acknowledged. Moreover, understanding that equal does not mean the same, as each school will have different educational priorities, structures and curricula that have to be taken into account. The guide asks teachers to consider their own and the partner school’s motivation for establishing the partnership and examine these motivations openly and critically. Throughout the Oxfam guide reflective questions are raised, to help teachers think critically about their partnerships.

To make sure partnerships lead to good educational outcomes, Oxfam states that learning needs, need to be embedded through the curriculum and global citizenship included in the school’s mission. However, they advocate for starting small, with a couple of curriculum areas to ensure quality, and ensure that there is strong professional development support for teachers before expanding further.

The guide then goes on to provide suggestions for building teaching that enhances global learning. Six building blocks are given: exploring global interdependence;

exploring our own identities; exploring and challenging perceptions; developing media literacy; thinking critically about poverty and; exploring rights. Overall, the guide states that there should be a willingness to tackle sensitive and controversial issues. The guide points out that even if the partnership has an educational aim, the question of financial aid will probably come up. Oxfam's advice is to reject charitable aims, but instead ask the question 'how can we support each other?'. Moreover, they point out that schools can think about fundraising to support the partnership itself. The Oxfam guide is focused on the general structure, goals and motivations for a partnership, and says less about teacher and student exchanges. However, it does ask teachers to reflect on the following questions when it comes to making visits: Are exchange visits genuinely reciprocal and mutually beneficial? What is their impact on each partner – in economic, social, cultural, political and environmental terms? (Oxfam 2007, p.5)

### **3.6 Build – Partnership Toolkit**

Build is a network of organisations that promotes the creation of partnership. They describe their goal as “*bring these partnerships into the mainstream in the UK to the point that no one can escape life without at some time being touched by an international, cross-cultural partnership ...*” (Build n.d. a). Even though it is unclear from their website whether the network is still active, they have a lot of resources on partnerships on their website that can be valuable for teachers when thinking about setting up a partnership. The website provides a “toolkit for linking”, which is broken down in several leaflets.

A partnership is described in this toolkit as mutually sportive and built on fairness, support and trust. It “*should not be about charity and should not be dominated by one partner*” (Build n.d b). The leaflet states that to build a real partnership out of a link is requires time, commitment, openness and honesty and people will have to have a willingness to share and learn from each other. It provides a list of questions and issues partners should consider when forming a partnership, such as roles and responsibilities, values, accountability and evaluation.

There is a specific leaflet in the toolkit that focuses on school linking (Build n.d. c). The guide points out that school links can enable students and teachers to share learning as well as provide an opportunity to reflect on their attitudes and increase understanding of different perspectives and challenge stereotypes. However, the guide also acknowledges that establishing a partnership can be challenging, therefore, to make sure the partnership is sustainable the guide suggest that a school must make sure to have at least: 1) senior management involvement; 2) a link management committee; 3) include the link in the school development plan; 4) have plans for sustainability and continuity; 4) makes sure there is teacher training on global dimension, and; 5) make sure resources (time, energy and money) are available. If a school cannot provide these 5 things, the guide suggests not to start a partnership.

The guide follows with a couple more lists of aspects schools should be aware about. It makes a distinction between resource rich and resource poor countries, where resource rich countries will have to engage with global issues and interdependence, acknowledge the legacy of colonial relationships, take care not to lead the agenda, avoid representations of partner as poor and avoid engagement of pupils on fundraising for 'poor' partners. Resource poor countries, should amongst others create opportunities to reciprocate, recognise what they can offer the partnership and explore perceptions of what the relationship means to each partner. Another leaflet focused on visits and exchanges (Build n.d. d). This leaflet recognises the benefits visits can give, especially in establishing and sustaining a strong partnership relations. Yet, it also recognizes that visits may reinforce stereotypes, or show an imbalance when visits are not reciprocal. To avoid this, the leaflet advocates careful planning which includes a pre-visit programme. It also suggests that both partners reflect on their own reasons, but also those of their partner, for organising a visit and make sure they both share the same objectives of the visit. The leaflet then goes through all the steps of organising a visit.

### **3.7 FORUM – The Global Standard for Volunteer Development**

Forum is a network for volunteering organisations. This year they published “The Global Standard for Volunteer Development” (Forum 2019). The Standard is

voluntary, but agreed upon by stakeholders all over the world “*with the aim of improving the outcomes of volunteering for development activities, ensuring organisations that work through and with volunteers are both impactful and responsible in their practice*” (Forum 2019, p.4). While this Standard is not focused on school links or exchanges, part of Volunteer Development is global citizenship development by volunteers and some of the projects and activities these organisations offer, are similar to the activities schools undertake when visiting a developing country. The Standard is therefore included in this overview.

The Standard wants to make sure volunteering is impactful and responsible.

Impactful means it “*delivers measurable and sustainable improvements for poor and marginalised communities*”; responsible refers to the fact that “*volunteering activities are locally-identified and designed to respond to the needs of communities as defined by those communities*” (Forum 2019, p.4). These aims are explored in four themes “designing and delivering projects”, “duty of care”, “managing volunteers” and “measuring impact”. In each of these themes key actions and indicators are described. The Standards are extensive and for individual linkages, where schools visit a developing country through organisations such as ‘Classrooms for Malawi’ or ‘Vinetrust’, are likely to be over-burdensome. However, these Standards are useful for schools to check whether the organisation through which they liaise, follows the standards. Moreover, there are a couple of actions and indicators which are relevant for a school to think about, especially when it comes to establishing more expansive partnerships.

The most important action or commitment that the Standard advocates is to ensure that communities, organisations and volunteers collaboratively design a project which responds to community needs. The Standard also states it should be effectively delivered, with impact and sustainable outcomes. This commitment is broken down to key actions and indicators that include: building strong relationships; ensure continued input from community; design volunteer roles that meet the identified needs but do not take away from local employment, and; ensuring the project delivers development impact, long-term sustainability and environmental protection. It also put emphasis on the need to evaluate the project and learn from outcomes.

Part of the Standard focuses on safeguarding and duty of care. It is interesting to note here that the actions include that “*organisations do not work with companies that have orphanages and other residential care centres incorporated (or with the possibility to incorporate) in tourism programmes or packages*”, or “*do not allow or facilitate one-off and short-term visits to orphanages or residential care facilities for children*” (Forum 2019, p.16). Looking through blogs and pictures on pupil visits of Scottish schools there have been schools that have visited care centres. Wilson’s (2019) also included an example of a group visiting an orphanage, which reinforced stereotypical images of poverty and development needs. It would be good to understand more both on the motivation of schools to visit care centres as well as the reasoning behind the Standards guideline to not allow one-off or short-term visits and make schools aware of them.

### **3.8 NHS Scotland Global Citizenship– Doing it Well**

The NHS Global Citizenship guidance provides advice about “*how to get involved in Global Citizenship*” (Scottish Government 2019, p.4) for NHS staff. The guidance also discusses health partnership stressing that these partnerships are based “*on ideas of co-development between people and institutions from different countries*” (Scottish Government 2019, p.16). While the NHS global citizenship guide obviously covers a different sector than secondary school education, their guidance on partnerships and volunteering has relevance. This guidance advocates the collaborative working model of the Tropical Health and Education Trust (THET) principles of Partnership. These included: making sure it is strategic, with a shared vision and long-term aims that are jointly agreed; partnerships should be harmonised and aligned, consistent with local and national plans; partnerships should be effective and sustainable, achieving long-term results; partnerships should be respectful and reciprocal; organised and accountable; responsible; flexible and innovative, and; lastly there should be a commitment to joint learning.

The guide states that when volunteering with a charity or organisation (rather than a partnership), it is good practise to research the organisation beforehand to make sure that the organisation “*have processes and support in place for collaborative partnership working, and ethical volunteering*” (Scottish Government 2019, p.21). The guide includes a list of questions such as “*Is the work community led?*” and “*Is*

*the organisation's vision based on social justice?"* when considering a project or organisation to volunteer with.

### **3.9 Comparing the Guides**

#### **3.9.1 Developing a Good Partnership**

The different partnership and volunteering guides discussed above show a large overlap in the proposals they make for good partnership working. These are also largely in line with the recommendations from the literature. The recommendations from the guides can be broadly categorised under four themes: reciprocal and equal relations; joint educational projects; sustainability; and fundraising. The next section will discuss each theme.

***Reciprocal and Equal Relations*** - Advice in this category includes:

- Co-develop activities, make sure decisions and projects are mutually agreed and beneficial for both parties;
- Discuss expectations, aims, objectives and activities;
- Promote open communication and ongoing dialogue on expectations, needs and objectives;
- Acknowledge imbalances and the legacy of colonial relation.

All guides agree on the importance of making sure the voices of both partner schools are heard and included in the projects. The Oxfam and Build guide add that as equality is important in the partnership, it is also important to acknowledge power imbalances that exist between the global north and global south.

**Joint Educational Projects** - All guides agree on the main aim for the partnership, to set up joint educational projects. These educational projects should include:

- Exploring global interdependence and identities; challenging perceptions and thinking critically about poverty and injustice
- Working on topics of shared interest (e.g. global issues like climate change). Start small with a project on specific topic such as water, recycling and then start building it out: projects throughout curriculum and working on bigger themes such as equality
- Do not be afraid to tackling sensitive issues, and;
- Support teacher training on the global dimension of topics.

The Oxfam guide is most specific about advice on educational projects offering several building blocks teachers can use to develop activities, projects and modules.

The Build toolkit specifically mentions the importance of professional development for teachers to be able to incorporate themes of global interdependence, poverty and injustice. This is also endorsed by the Connecting Classrooms programme, which offers professional learning.

The FORUM volunteering standard is an exception to the focus on educational projects, due to the organisations not exclusively focusing on school pupils. However, it is interesting to acknowledge that their main focus is delivering “*measurable and sustainable improvements*” while the academic literature questions whether (young) volunteers on short-term projects should aim for any development impact at all and a focus on intercultural learning would be more fitting.

**Sustainability** - An element that all guides mention is the need to make sure the partnership is sustainable, this includes:

- Time, commitment, and having available resources;
- Establish long-term aims;
- Having a whole school approach and including that in the school plan. The responsibility for this plan should be shared across the school(s), and not by one teacher who ends up managing the partnership;
- Involve the wider community.

The whole school approach is emphasised in all guides. The involvement of the wider community is only specifically mentioned in the SMP’s guide, although suggested activities in other guides also include reaching out into the school’s local community. The literature review showed that sustainability is actually often quite difficult for schools and is something reiterated by teachers when discussing some of the challenges they face with their partnership (see chapter 5).

**Fundraising** - The main advice on fundraising is to avoid it with some guides being more explicit than others. The Oxfam and Build guide both advise not to undertake charitable activities, although Oxfam’s guide also mentioned that fundraising for the sustainability of the partnership is an option. Other guides advise not to focus on fundraising as the main activity - which should be the educational projects - but if fundraising is included schools, should think about the educational impact.

This advice very much repeated in the academic literature, which is critical of the impact fundraising can have on global learning but promoting stereotypes and power imbalances. The literature however also acknowledges the inescapable fact that there are inequalities in resources between schools, which need to be given careful consideration during establishing a partnership and during school fundraisers the sustainability of the partnership.

**Visits** - Some of the guides also included some specific advice on visits:

- Think about the costs vs the benefit and reflect on the reasons for the visit. More specifically think about the impact economically, socially, culturally, politically and on the environment;
- Make sure visits are reciprocal to avoid bring imbalances to the partnership;
- Make sure visits are mutually beneficial and both partners share the objectives:
  - An important aspect to consider is that the activities should not take away from local employments;
- Include a pre-visit programme for those that will be part of the visit;
- Evaluate and learn from the impact and outcome of the visit;
- Do not include visits to orphanages or care facilities for children unless these are very carefully researched and any activities are fully justifiable.

What these guides show is there are well developed resources available for teachers to think about establishing a partnership and planning a visit. However, a key question remains, which is whether these guides find their way to schools and teachers for utilisation and at what stage in the partnerships/exchange process? These guides are valuable before a school exploring a relationship prior to any commitments. Interestingly the Education Scotland website, a key resource for Scottish schools, does not specifically link to any partnership guidance, or mentions some of the questions or areas that schools should be considering before establishing a partnership.

### **3.9.2 Aim of a Partnership**

The guides all mention the aim of a partnership, such as to understand local-global connections, to learn about other cultures and challenge stereotypes. These aims encompass the definition of global learning: “*being knowledgeable about global issues and one’s role within a global context, as well as possessing way of thinking*”

*that reflects and acknowledgement of social and environmental interdependencies and responsibilities that extends beyond personal and national boundaries.”*

(McGladdery and Lubbe 2017, p.294). What remains unexplored, however, is what a partnership specifically brings to global learning. There are some mentions of learning from direct examples and encouraging engagement, but there is little reflection on what exactly a partnership can bring to global learning.

In meetings held with organisations involved in partnership programmes, this question was also put forward: Is a partnership the most effective or best way to develop global learning, or in the Scottish context to develop learning for sustainability? A partnership takes a lot of investment from teachers, and requires whole school integration, including the curriculum, to make it sustainable and ensure its delivers on its educational focus. Moreover, as the Oxfam and Build guides point out, if a partnership does not include elements of education and critical thinking it might have the opposite effect and actually reinforce stereotypes. Build therefore states that if a school cannot facilitate a couple of key elements, they should reconsider a partnership. This goes for school trips as well. School trips often ask for lot of investment from teachers, including the time to fundraise with a risk that it reinforces power imbalances and stereotypical images of poverty and developing countries. As one development education expert mentioned, perhaps we should ask more often whether a partnership, or a trip, is always the best way to teach pupils about global citizenship?

## **4. Teacher's Experiences**

While there are multiple guides and organisations supporting school partnerships, there is a need for more empirical insight on how schools and teachers actually develop their partnerships and trips. Although the timeframe for this study did not allow for an elaborate in-depth data collection and analysis, exploratory empirical research has been conducted to provide some first insights. The first step for this primary data collection included establishing a list of secondary schools in Scotland which are involved in a partnership and/or visits. Because this study had a specific focus on pupil visits, the schools approached were secondary schools, as they are more likely to incorporate pupil visits. At the start of the study, it became clear that no current list of school links with developing countries existed. To gain insight in the potential number of secondary schools involved in partnerships and visits several organisations, such as the SMP and British Council, were asked to share a list of the schools that participated in their programme. With this list of school links, the second step focused on understanding the kind of links that were established, and the activities these links include. Qualitative data was collected through approaching ten schools selected from the list. A first exploration of the webpages of these schools showed that they had diverse ways of establishing links and organising school trips and were therefore chosen as to represent a range of school activities and partnerships. Of these ten schools, seven replied and were able to take part in a semi-structured interview. A more detailed discussion of the methodology can be found in appendix III.

The aim of the data-collection and analysis was to answer the following research questions:

- What activities do Scottish secondary schools undertake when partnering with a school in a developing country?
- What is the motivation for these activities?
- What narratives of development aid and global learning are involved?

With the recommendations of both literature review and the partnership guides in mind a fourth theme was included: the sustainability of the links made.

### **4.1 Partnership Activities and Pupil Visits**

A rapid assessment of Scottish secondary schools found that at least 82 schools have a link to a developing country. Fifty-five of these links were with Malawi, most of them with support by the Scotland-Malawi Partnership, the Malawi Leader of Learning (the Glasgow area), Classrooms for Malawi or Connecting Classrooms. With 358 secondary schools in Scotland (Scottish Government 2019), this equates to at least 23% of all Scottish secondary schools having a link with a developing country. Given that this data was collected as part of a rapid assessment, it does not represent all secondary schools and is most likely a conservative estimation of the total amount of secondary school links to developing countries in Scotland (see appendix III). Moreover, as most data has been gathered through organisations linked to Malawi, it is most likely an underestimation of school links outside of Malawi. Time unfortunately did not allow to follow up on each of these schools to understand what kind of link was established. It remains therefore unclear how active all the partnerships are, and what kind of activities are included (e.g. educational projects or fundraising). The interviews with the seven schools, however, do provide some insight in the range of approaches, and will be discussed further below.

What did become clear was that of the 82 schools about two thirds had made a pupil visit or had pupil visits planned. These trips were either made to a partner schools, to community projects or as part of volunteer programmes such as Classrooms for Malawi. Of the seven schools interviewed, only one had not organised a pupil visit, although this school was considering a trip in the next years. Table I give an overview of the seven schools and their links. Four of the schools that have organised visits, visited their partner school and included activities such as joining lessons, sharing cultural activities and visiting tourist sites. These visits were arranged together with the partner school and a travel organisation. Two of the seven schools have had pupils from their partner school visiting them in Scotland. These schools pointed out that this was important to ensure an equitable and reciprocal partnership. However, a former head teacher mentioned that he would be hesitant in getting pupils from partner schools over to Scotland, as it might be really difficult for them to readjust to their home life and would require very good guidance in pre-and post-sessions.

To establish a relationship before the pupil visits were organised, Scottish teachers would visit the partner school. All schools except on (school D) have had teachers from their partner school visiting the Scottish school. These reciprocal teacher visits are seen as important, to establish close relationships and allow for an open discussion on the goals and activities of the partnership. School D, instead, made a visit through a volunteer organisation, where the pupils had joined some development projects. Lastly, School G has an unusual partnership, which includes seven other schools in seven different countries. The schools organise a conference in which students discuss a key global theme, such as immigration or sustainability. Every year the conference is held in one of the eight countries involved in the partnership.

Teacher and pupil visits seem to be an important aspect of the partnership, although the schools also had a range of other activities linked to the partnership. Most schools had shared educational projects, but it was stated that these projects were not always easy to implement because the school curriculums were generally packed. There was a diversity in the approaches schools took to link the partnership to the curriculum. One teacher mentioned that their pupil trip was not linked to the curriculum at all, while some other teachers mentioned that the teachers involved in the partnership sometimes talk about their partner school in their own lessons or show some pictures of previous visits. In some schools there are posters about the partnership in the hallway. One school integrated the partnership in a module of Modern Studies, which is given to all S2 pupils, while in another school the partnership is mainly carried by a small group of engaged pupils. The Connecting Classrooms programme encourages schools to develop joint lessons with the partner school, and a teacher in school E talked about working on developing lessons on the Sustainable Development Goals with their partner school by using the British Council template. However, not all teachers interviewed were well connected to these organisation and programmes and some struggled with questions on how to start thinking about sustainable partnerships and set up an integrated approach in the school.

School	Active link?	Partner country	Pupil visits?	Description
School A	Yes	Malawi	Yes	Partnering with 2 primary schools. Visits every three years
School B	No	Zambia	Yes	Partnering with secondary school Visits in 2015 and 2017. After 2017 little activity
School C	Yes	Tanzania	Yes	Partnering with secondary school. Visit in 2016, unlikely to visit again.
School D	No	Peru/Kenya	Yes	Pupil visit in the summer, through volunteer organisation. Did have previous link with Kenya
School E	Yes	Malawi	No	Partnering with secondary school. Are thinking about pupil visits
School F	Yes	Malawi	Yes	Partnering with secondary school. Visit every 2 years
School G	Yes	7 countries, including South Africa	Yes	Yearly conference with the other 7 partners, on a specific (global) theme

*Table 1: Overview of the seven schools included in the interviews*

The activities in a couple of schools also included the supporting of the partner school through providing funding or resources. These fundraising activities included bake sales, music nights and sponsored events that would be advertised throughout the school and local community. These were occasions where the partnership, and the partner country, would be highlighted and talked about. Some schools mentioned that their fundraising was mainly focused on supporting the partnership, such as providing iPads to ease communication or supporting scholarships and staff coverage for the partner school. It was not always clear whether these activities had been discussed when establishing the partnership, but some teachers did mention that it was also a reaction to local circumstances. One school for example had started a partnership by setting up a shared educational project on hunger but switched to raising money to cover school and staff fees of their partner school, after the country was hit by a draught and attendance dropped.

## 4.2 Goals and Motivations

The goals of starting a partnership seem to be very similar across the schools, specifically to raise awareness of global citizenship and to “*learn from each other*”. Two teachers mentioned that their school was situated in a more deprived area, that was not necessarily very outward looking, and therefore the partnership would help make pupils more aware of other countries and “*come in contact with kids they normally wouldn't have contact with*”. Another teacher mentioned that in his school the pupils had diverse backgrounds and he was very aware that they would mainly see “*white faces*”, such as Scottish authors and learn about British history. The partnership allowed him to show positive images of Africa and people of colour and include lessons on stereotypes.

This learning about other countries and having awareness of the lives of people in developing countries was then, by several teachers as well as organisations, linked to understanding inequality and issues such as wealth distribution and immigration. However, the question is whether there is a direct link between experiencing life in a developing country and understanding development issues. In the interviews the teachers seem to assume there was an automatic positive relation between visiting a country (or having a partnership) and understanding sustainable development issues, but as the literature showed, to critically understand global issues would request more than just a personal experience. Teachers for example described the impact a visit would have on their students for example as having an awareness other might be “*worse off*” or “*appreciate what they have more*”. This comes close to Simpson’s (2004) description of explaining poverty through the “lotto-logic” of being “lucky” for where you grow up. This logic does not question underlying systems and structures linked to poverty, and overall does not work towards a critical global citizenship.

That is not to say that the personal experience is not impactful. Teachers pointed out that what was most impactful for their pupils were the one-on-one conversations pupils had with their peers in the partner country. Through conversations about each other’s life they gained a strong connection to the other, which can be a good starting point for in-depth reflection. However, in this first exploration it remained somewhat unclear whether and how this reflection was promoted and supported.

Apart from a goal to enhance global learning in their own school, some teachers also expressed the motivation to help improve (access to and quality of) education in their partner school. This goal would for example lead to schools fundraising to send resources to their partnership, or establish scholarships to help pupils progress from primary to secondary school. Some interviewees linked this to contributing to the sustainable development goals, particularly Goal 4: Quality Education. However, the question is whether the impact of all these activities are always understood. One teacher for example struggled with answering the question what the positive value or impact of a partnership is on education. He felt the partnership should aim for sustainable educational improvement, for both the Scottish and the partner school. With the partnership his school had developed, he struggled to see this impact and felt that the partner school had lost its focus on the educational programme during the three years the partnership developed. He suggested it therefore is important to reflect on what it is that schools want to achieve with a partnership.

When supporting a partner school with funds or material resources schools are becoming linked with development work. This would require the schools to ask questions and apply guidelines applicable for development work, such as the 'do no harm' and 'leave no one behind' principles, as well as evaluate safeguarding principles to reflect on power imbalances. One organisation spoken to during this research for example pointed out that by giving resources and funding to one school, they might become very popular in the region, attracting pupils from other schools. This can leave other schools in the neighbourhood with less and less pupils, which makes it harder to keep these other schools running. In the partner school fees could go up which makes it even harder for marginalized families to let their children go to school. As it stands, we know very little of these potential (unintended) negative consequences. It requires both more research on communities in partner countries, and critical reflection on the impact of funds from participating schools and organisations.

### **4.3 Equal partnerships and Stereotypes**

The literature review showed that although partnerships can challenge stereotypes, develop critical thinking and let pupils link the local with the global, it can also do the opposite when certain development narratives – focussed on the Scottish schools as active agents and the partner school as passive recipient – are reproduced.

However, in the interviews all teachers showed their awareness of this tension and mentioned the need to focus on equitable and reciprocal relations. Some teachers had clearly thought about this a great deal:

*“For me the partnership has always been about connection and partnership. We work really hard in our school with our kids to recognize this is not kind-a band aid charity kind of nonsense. This is not the kind of thinking that we are better, it is both schools working together (...) hand in hand, to walk together. To kind of support one another and learn from each other. That is really important for us.”*

Several teachers had expressed their discontent with the previous connecting classrooms programme for only funding Scottish teachers visiting the partner schools and not teachers from the partner schools visiting Scotland. In the new connecting classrooms programme this is supported and as a result some schools got involved in the programme (again).

While all teachers stressed the need for an equitable partnership, there was a difference in viewing possible imbalances. One teacher for example pointed out he felt some parent, pupils and other teachers thought the partnership was not equally beneficial as the partner school was getting more out of it in terms of funding and new resource material. He was quick to point out that in his view the partnership, and specifically the visits, had a huge impact on the Scottish pupils as well. On the other hand, there were a couple of teachers pointing out that Scottish pupils seemed to get more out of it, as they were the ones able to travel and develop new skills. What all teachers did agree upon was that this needed to be discussed openly with the partner school to make sure both schools were on the same page. The literature review showed that a partnership always includes some power imbalance as the Scottish school is resource rich and the partner school often resource poor (see Wilson 2019; Bourn and Cara 2013 and Oxfam 2007). Schools tried to navigate this tension by providing funding, but with a specific focus on improving education (e.g. scholarships) or for improving the partnership interactions (e.g. providing internet or

lpads). Yet, as we have discussed in section 4.2, these funds can have unintended consequences, which need to be assessed and discussed beforehand.

There was a concern from some teachers that an equitable relationship is not easily reached. One interviewee for example wondered whether a link with a developing country could be equitable as he felt it sometimes looked a bit like “*poverty porn*”. A sentiment that was reiterated by a teacher of school D who visited development projects with pupils, organised through an external organisation. Reflecting back on the trip he felt that the visit was more charitable than he would have liked and saw that it could become “*a bit voyeuristic*”. He started thinking about “*what image pupils get*” of the other country. What he really wanted was to change the dialogue, from a charitable partnership to an equitable partnership, but he wondered how to create this equitable dialogue.

Several teachers mentioned they had “*serious issues with ‘building-type’ visits*”, similar to comments found in Wilson’s (2019) study. The general picture of these ‘type’ of visits was that you get unskilled people to do skilled work and perpetuate an image of the volunteer as active agent and the host community as passive recipients. However, in practice these school trips that include building activities can be more nuanced. Local contractors and builders will be in charge of the building, while the pupils will be a helping hand for about a week. This raises the question where certain images and narratives come from, and what they mean in practice. The way some projects are promoted, fundraised for and communicated might sketch the image that pupils will have certain impacts that in reality is much more subtle. Wilson’s (2019) study showed that the ‘performance’ of visiting a developing country is still filled with stereotypical images used to communicate about development projects, volunteer activities and experiences. As one organisation pointed out, stereotypical images of Africa are very much ingrained into the whole society and for example emphasised by pictures fundraisers use. Volunteer organisations pointed out that they had been including more and more sessions on responsible volunteering, discussing for example the issues with volunteer tourism and how pupils would communicate their experience. This is an important step in tackling the reinforcing of narratives, although the interviews also showed that post-

sessions discussing pupils experienced weren't always well developed. The language of 'making a contribution' still lingered, something that was also mentioned by several organisations who had come across teachers that had visited a developing country and seem to talk a "*white saviour narrative*". This suggests that "a pedagogy of social justice" (Simpson 2004) is not yet integrated throughout partnership programmes. Several academic articles have suggested that the activities focused on and language used of students "helping" those in poverty or "contributing to development" should be changed to a focus on intercultural learning (Palacios 2010, Andreotti 2014, Wilson 2019).

Moreover, two Malawian young people shared their experience in this research on schools group coming to "help" paint their home. It showed that the voices of the local community are not always consulted or taken into account. The young people pointed out they would have liked to paint themselves and wondered why this school group came in to do it for them. There can also be an experience of powerlessness, as some schools or care homes are dependent on the donations school groups bring when they visit. To ensure the stream of donations is kept, the partner schools or partner organisations can agree to activities they actually do not approve of or gain any benefits from. This was touched upon by teachers when mentioning it was sometimes difficult to discuss the desires and needs of the partner school. An understanding and evaluation of the power imbalance in these situations, which can go together with an evaluation of potential (both positive and negative) impact, is essential. It also shows that what is missing, from the wider literature but unfortunately also from this report, is an understanding of the experience of partner communities.

#### **4.4 Sustainable Practice**

The literature review and good practice guides highlighted a couple of themes important for sustaining partnerships: communication, commitment and integration of the partnership in the school and wider community. The integration of the partnership in the curriculum is also an important aspect to ensure global learning, especially when it involves schools setting up shared educational projects and tackle sensitive

issues such as inequality (see 3.9 Comparing the guides). The next sections will discuss how schools integrated these aspects.

#### **4.4.1 Communication and commitment**

Communication between teachers in Scotland and the partner country seemed to mainly go via Whatsapp. Some teachers had almost daily contact with teachers in the partner school, and really appreciated the friendship it established. However, several teachers did remark that discussing aims and needs could be more difficult, as they felt that the teachers in the partner school would not always speak their mind. Establishing a partnership agreement was seen as helpful, to get these expectations, needs and aims clear. This document would then be used during the course of the partnership to reflect whether all parties were still happy with the agreements made. It also gave purpose and focus to the partnership and some schools established a clear structure on how the partnership would be run.

To start a partnership the reciprocal teacher visits were seen as valuable, not only to discuss the partnership face-to-face and establish close relationships, but also to show the intention of setting up a partnership that is equitable. These visits also helped to engage more teachers (and pupils) in the school as the obvious presence of teachers from the partner country in a Scottish school would get conversations going.

Pupil-to-pupil contact was more difficult to organise. Sending written letters to each other was seen as too slow to keep pupils interested, while using digital media was limited. This was partly caused by a lack of devices in the partner country. Some schools mitigated this by providing an iPad or laptops to the partner school.

However, using FaceTime, skype or Facebook in a Scottish school proved to be difficult, as IT policies for schools did not allow for easy access to these programmes. Moreover, these ways of contacting the partner school could allow for conversations between whole classrooms but would not cater for individual peer-to-peer contact. This peer-to-peer contact has been shown to have a big impact on pupils' global learning as it allows pupils to make friends and learn about the other pupils' culture (Edge and Khamsi 2012).

#### **4.4.2 Integration in school programme**

The partnership guides discussed in chapter three emphasised the importance of an integrated school approach to the partnership to make sure it is sustained over time. However, the literature already pointed out that this proves to be difficult for many schools (Bourn 2014, Blum et al 2017). Our interviewees remarked that apart from funding, the structure of the schools in their partner country could also problematize sustainability. The schools that had partnerships with Malawian schools all mentioned the high turn-over rate of Head Teachers in Malawian schools. These Head Teachers are generally reallocated every few years. This could make sustaining a connection with one school difficult. One Scottish school for example had established a link with a school in Malawi, they had two staff members of this partner school visiting Scotland and made preparations to support the school. However, after the visit of the Malawian staff members the head teacher of the Malawian school changed and the new head teacher was not keen on continuing the partnership. Having had this experience, the Scottish school now has a link with two other Malawian schools and as part of this partnership each school has established a committee of teachers, not including the head teacher, that coordinate the partnership. This has proved to be a good way to sustain relations, as even if one teacher leaves, there is a team to carry on. However, establishing this commitment from several staff members is not easy and other interviewees expressed their concern of carrying the partnership mostly by themselves. One Head Teacher pointed out that he had asked teachers to step in and take the partnership forward, but nobody had expressed an interest to lead this process. One organisation involved in supporting school pointed out that partnerships are not necessarily well structured, and can require a lot of work to establish. They might therefore be less attractive than other more structured programmes such as Eco-schools, Right-respecting schools, the Duke of Edinburgh Awards or the World Challenge. Within the structure of these programmes there can also be room for visits to developing country or teaching about global issues. The daunting prospect of sustaining a partnership and setting up your own communication and structures might also be a reason why schools choose to have more short term projects linked to (schools in) developing countries, for example through supporting Classrooms for Malawi, Vinetrust or Mary's Meals.

These difficulties with establishing a long-term link raise questions about the educational benefits and global learning outcomes. Schools struggled to link their partnership to the wider curriculum and some teacher admitted that mainly those that would participate in a pupil visit would benefit from the partnership. In preparation for the pupil visit, the group of pupils that would go on the trip would take part in preparatory lessons and some schools mentioned specifically including lessons on stereotypes, while others focused more on skills building. Several organisations mentioned that they would deliver lessons in schools, sometimes in preparation of a pupil visit, sometimes in assemblies or one-off lessons. However, from this first exploration of school practices it remains unclear how much of a focus there is on discussing more abstract issues of social justice and inequality.

## 5. A Malawian Perspective

### 5.1 Introduction

The literature review (Chapter 2) showed that there currently is a lack of research on the impact of partnerships and visits on the schools in the developing countries. Moreover, there is very little insight in what motivates those schools to join programmes and partnerships and their perception of the current implementation and impact of partnerships and visits. Although a large-scale study was beyond the scope of this research, an initial exploration was undertaken to gather insights in Malawian teachers' perception on the partnership.

A questionnaire was sent to the partner schools of the Scottish schools that had a link to Malawi. In this questionnaire teachers were asked to describe the practicalities of the partnership as well as their perceived benefits and potential challenges. Appendix III includes a more detailed description of the methodology. The aim of the questionnaire was to gather initial insights in the Malawian teachers' understanding of partnerships and school visits. The sample was not representative and no generalizations can be made from it. However, it does provide important discussion points for evaluating partnerships and global learning.

### 5.2 Survey Results

#### *Highlights*

- 50% of partnerships were established through a personal contact with a Scottish teacher.
- The main motivations for establishing the school partnership were friendship, learning and sharing and educational support.
- Around 42% of schools were in contact a couple of times a month followed by about 26% of school a couple of times a year and this was mainly via email or WhatsApp.
- 50% of Malawian schools reported receiving resource and/or funding from their Scottish partner.
- Over 50% of Malawian schools had hosted Scottish students.

- All partnerships were reported as meeting the expectation of the Malawian partner and almost all Malawian schools said their needs and ideas were well integrated into the partnership.
- Key challenge in maintaining the partnership was the low levels or slow communication which is a key area they would like to see improve. This was also linked to a change in management which impacts on the partnership.
- Equal exchange in visits was a key area Malawian schools would like to improve in the future but costs were cited as a major barrier.
- Main activities for visiting Scottish students were classroom construction and renovation along with joint lessons and shared activities.

Twenty primary and secondary schools across Malawi returned the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were submitted from 12 primary schools and 8 secondary schools; from 6 schools in the southern region of Malawi and 14 in the northern region of Malawi. None were submitted from the central region.

All Malawian schools had established partnerships with one Scottish school with the exception of two, which have partnerships with two Scottish schools. All partnerships were active at the time of the survey with the exception of one which ended after three years in 2017.

Of the schools surveyed the earliest school partnership commenced in 2000 followed by two further partnerships in 2006 and 2007. Two other schools commenced partnerships in the early 2010s, but the majority, which totalled nine schools (45%) started between 2016 and 2019. Six of the schools did not know when their partnerships commenced.

All the Malawi schools partnered with a same grade school, which the exception of one.

Half of the schools (50%) created the partnerships via personal contacts with a teacher in Scotland; Just over a third (35%) through an unspecified organisation and the remaining 15% through the Scottish Government supported Malawi-Scotland Partnership (MaSP – Malawi-based) or the Scotland-Malawi Partnership (SMP –

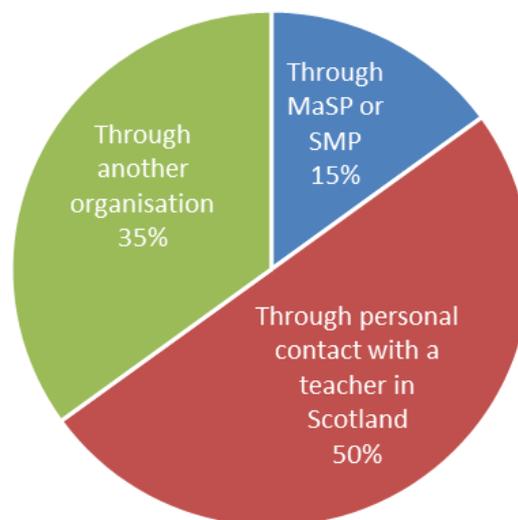


Figure 1: Responses to how did you established your partnership? (n = 20)

Scotland based) (figure 1). Other organisations that facilitated partnerships included the British Council’s via their Connect Classrooms programme; The Chesney Trust UK; Mary’s Meals, a school feeding charity; Classroom’s for Malawi and Malawian district education officers.

The Malawian school’s motivation for establishing a partnership with a Scottish school were diverse and each responded listed a number of reasons (figure 2). The most listed motivations were learning and sharing; friendship, and; educational support (n = 6). These were followed by joint education projects, and; support with school resources, which was mainly around support with school buildings and in one case financial support (n = 5). Gaining global experiences, often in language and cultural exchanges, was a motivation for four schools and two schools listed peer-to-peer learning for teachers as a key motivation. One school listed hosting visiting volunteers to support disable children as their key motivation for the partnership.

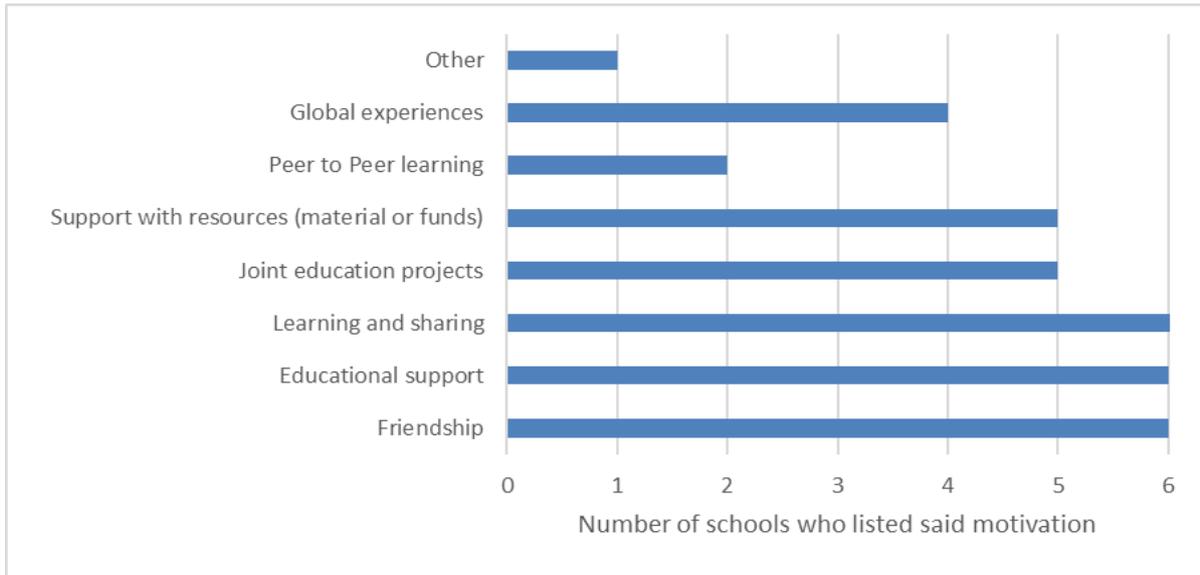


Figure 2: Responses to what were your motivation for forming this partnership. Most respondents listed more than one motivation. (n = 19)

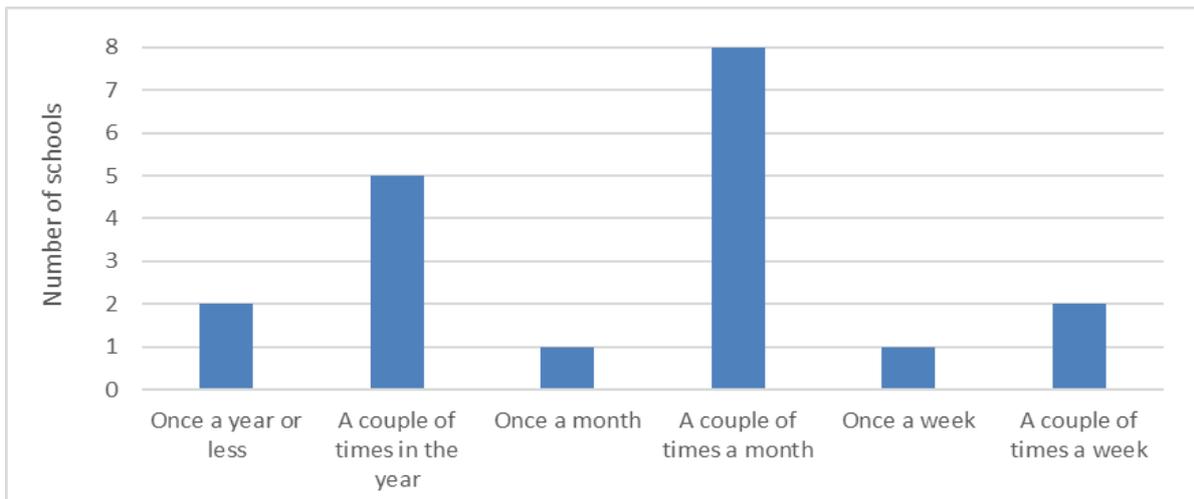


Figure 3: Responses to how often are you in contact with your Scottish school partner? (n = 19)

Of the 20 schools who responded to the survey, 19 detailed the frequency of contact with their Scottish partners (figure 3). The most cited frequency was a couple of times per month for eight schools (42%), followed by a couple of times a year of five schools (26%). Three schools had a high frequency of contact i.e. over once a week (16%).

The most frequent method of contact between Malawian and Scottish partners is email followed by WhatsApp (figure 4). Exchange visits was listed by three schools as modes of contact as well as Face time and Skype for two schools. Phone calls and letters were also listed a modes of communication.

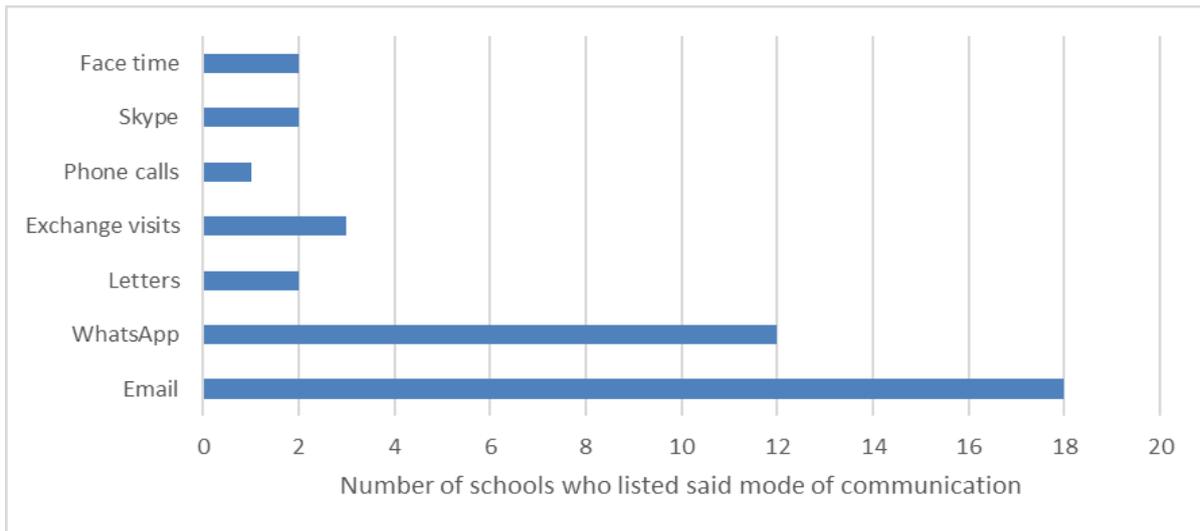


Figure 4: Responses to how do/did you usually make contact with your partner school? Most listed more than one mode of communication ( $n = 19$ ).

When asked what activities the Malawian schools engaged in with their Scottish partner schools, 50% listed “receiving resources and funds” ( $n = 10$ ). This was followed by the sharing of teaching methods and projects, listed by seven schools (Figure 5). The exchange of gifts, pictures and letters and Scottish teachers visiting Malawi was the next most cited activities by six schools. Four schools listed Malawian teachers as having visited Scotland and two more as exchanging visits with no further details. Hosting Scottish students in Malawi was listed by three schools, as was building classrooms. When asked if these activities met the expectation of the Malawian partner, all except one said yes. Where the Malawian partner’s expectation was not met, the activity undertaken was building classrooms. The reason the expectation was not met was due to the enduring relationship post

activity rather than in relation to the activity itself.

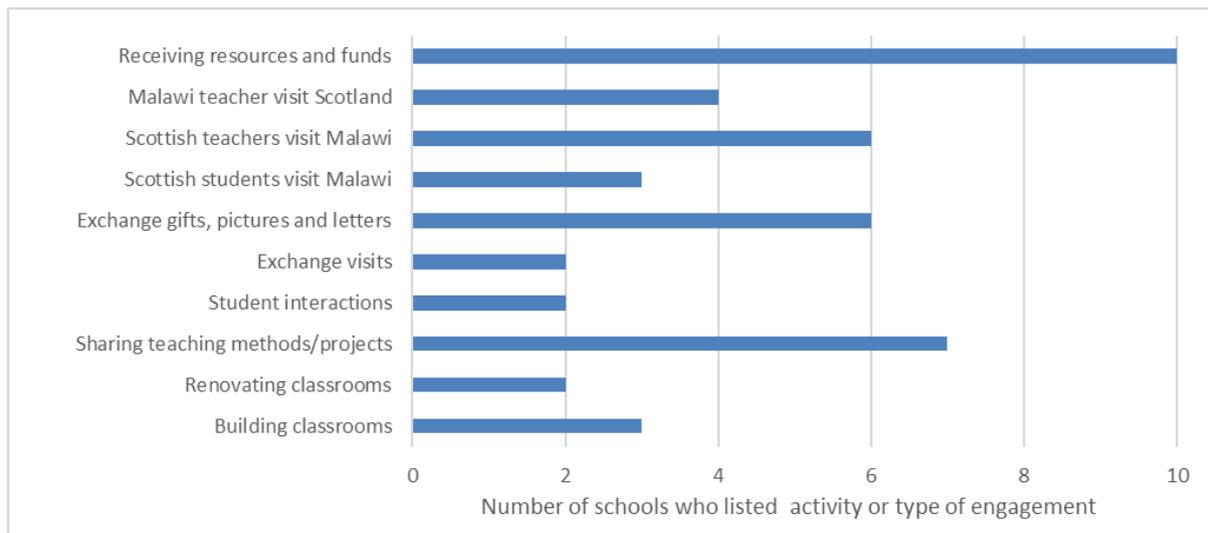


Figure 5: Response to what activities did the Malawian school engaged in with their Scottish partner school. Most respondents listed more than one activity. (n = 20)

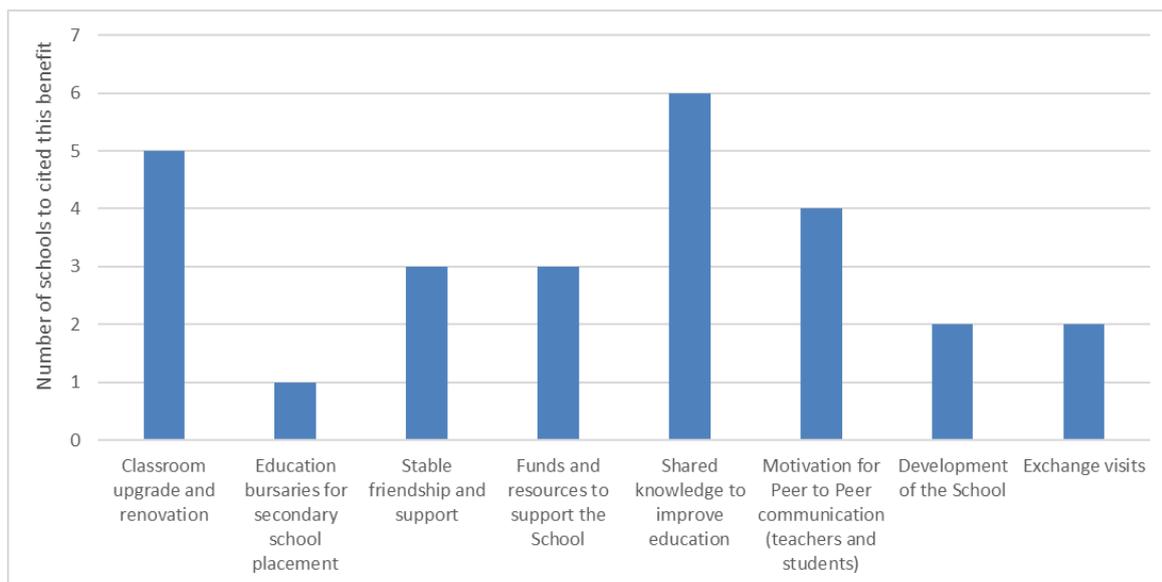


Figure 6: Responses to what do/did you feel is most beneficial of having the partnership? Many listed more than one activity. Most respondents listed more than one benefit (n = 20)

Also, most of the Malawian schools felt that their needs and ideas for their school are well integrated in the partnership. A range of benefits were mentioned, ranging from shared knowledge to improve education and being engaged in peer-to-peer communication to an upgraded classroom and funds and resources to support the schools. Only one said no, which was stated as due to the lack of engagement of the learners during visits and letter exchanges. It is unclear if this is in relation to the Scottish or the Malawian learners.

When asked about key challenges for sustaining the partnership, six schools said that they faced no challenges and all was working well (figure 7). Six schools said communication was a key challenge and this was in relations to a lack of communication; slow response rates; and for one, limited involvement of learners in Scotland which made peer-to-peer learning for students difficult. A lack of communication was also linked with change in management, which also caused disengagement of Malawian partners. Cost of visits, especially in the cases of Malawian visiting Scotland was a key challenged cited by four schools. In the case of other challenges, poor internet access and the issue of visits to Scotland being undertaken by head teachers, which limits the impact to the school if the head teacher moves to another school, were mentioned. One other challenged cited was that the partnership, which was based on receiving resources, had limited impacts as once the school building was finished, support with educational development declined.

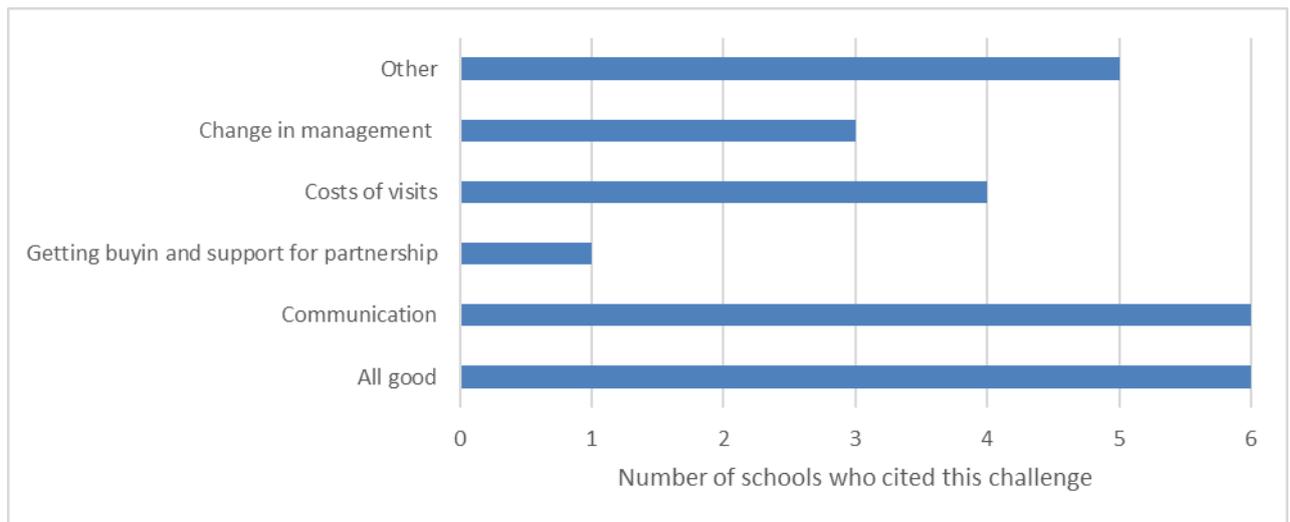


Figure 7: Responses to what are / were the key challenges in sustaining the partnership? Many listed more than one challenged. (n = 20)

Looking into the future of their partnership over 50% (n = 11) of the Malawian schools wanted an exchange of visits for teachers and students (figure 8). In some cases, this was to improve education support and solidify the partnership; and for other this was about motivating students and teachers to better engage and learn from each other. Other future developments included better communications (n = 3) and the maintenance of friendship already developed (n = 2).

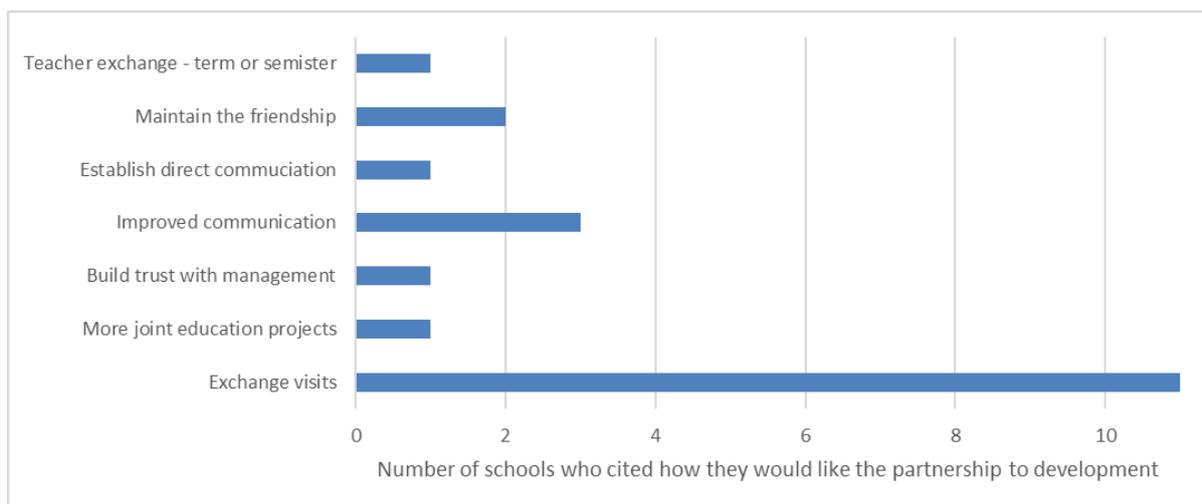


Figure 8: Response to how would you like to see the partnership develop in the future? Most schools listed more than one activity. (n = 20)

Over half of the projects surveyed (n = 11) had had visits from Scottish students and two schools did not know (figure 9). Of these 11 schools, 10 detailed what activities the school students participated in, the most cited activity was building and renovating classrooms (n = 8), followed by joint activities and joint lessons. Other activities included visiting other schools, sightseeing, cultural exchanges, sports and developing student to student friendships.

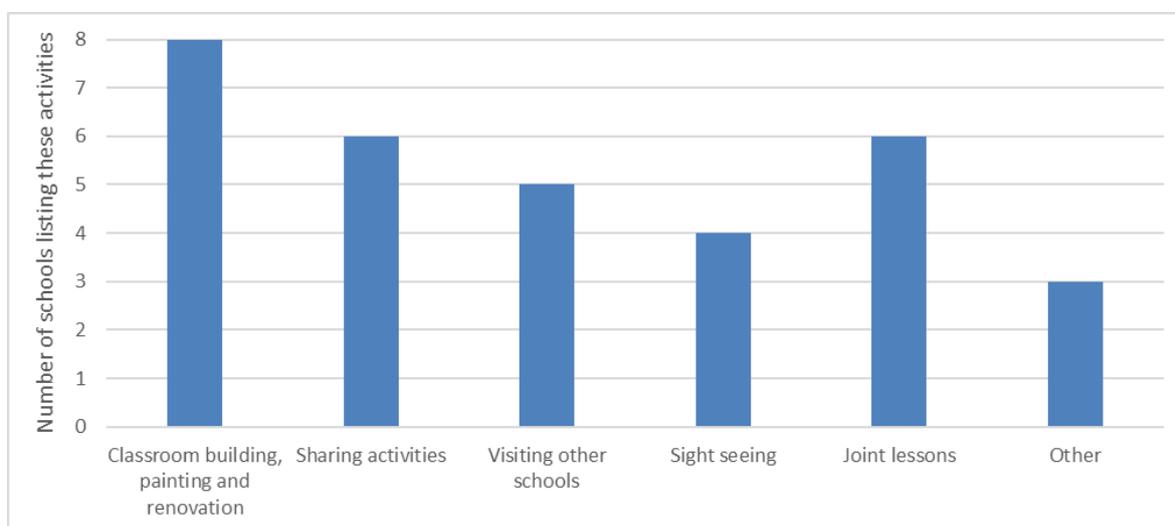


Figure 9: Responses to what activities did the Scottish students do on their visit? Most listed more than one activity. (n = 10)

In supporting these visits, in all but one case the Malawian school where involved in the organisation of these activities and provided a range of support such as organising classes, joint lessons plans and social activities including cultural dances for the students. For the visits that included classroom building or painting, the school was involved in identifying the need and location for the construction or

renovation of school buildings and finding sources materials. Some of the schools that had Scottish students visiting to renovate or paint buildings also mentioned that they planned shared or cultural experiences, it remains unclear, however, whether these shared experiences involved joint lessons or peer-to-peer learning.

### **5.3 Discussion**

This first exploration of the impact of partnerships on Malawian schools shows that there is a variety of motivations and outcomes involved, similar to what we have seen in the Scottish schools (Chapter 4). Partnerships for the Malawian schools often include a mix of receiving funding and resources, support and friendship for teachers, and shared learning. Although much more detailed research is needed to understand the impact of these different outcomes and motivations the exploratory data highlights some interesting questions.

First of all, it is interesting to note that half of the respondents stated that they developed the partnership through personal contacts. In line with the conversations with the Scottish teachers, both studies have not shown clearly how partnerships are first developed. A variety of contacts, organisations and spontaneous meetings can be involved in a school developing a partnership. This asks for a better grasp on these processes, for example to understand where, when first meetings are set up, both school get information and support.

One of the main constraints mentioned by the Malawian teachers was communication. This could be due to technical issues such as poor internet connection, or difficulty maintaining contact due to staff changes. This was also identified by the Scottish teachers as one of the challenges of a partnership. Yet, it is important to ensure long term engagement and continuity of a partnership to make sure global learning outcomes are met. This long-term stability was also something that was wanted, as one school mentioned that their link faded after the Scottish students had visited and renovated their school building, which they felt prevented any further development of partnership and friendship.

That an equal partnership was valued is also shown in the repeated appeal for exchange visits. The answers showed that face-to-face contact is valued and seen as a way to solidify and develop the depth of the partnership, as the schools saw more opportunities for learning. This reveals a strong interest in developing the partnership beyond resource support and a belief that linking to a school in Scotland can benefit learning on both sides. For some schools this was mainly focused on the exchange of knowledge and practices by teachers, one respondent for example suggested that teachers from both the Scottish and Malawian school could work in the other school for six months. Other schools mentioned they would like to see more peer-to-peer exchange and Malawian students visiting Scotland as well as Scottish students visiting Malawi. This raises questions about whether through current contacts shared learning is not reached and why, as well as what the current value is of Scottish students visiting. Only exchange visits were stated as beneficial, where Scottish students visited the benefit was often in the construction or renovation of a classroom. Although most respondents mentioned that they would arrange cultural activities for the visiting Scottish students, it remained unclear how much of these trips involved peer-to-peer learning.

## 6. Conclusion

The study has shown that partnerships and pupil visits to developing countries are not uncommon in Scottish secondary schools. Having a partnership is greatly appreciated by the teachers involved, both in Scotland and Malawi, and can bring pupils personal connections to different cultures, engagement with global (development) issues and function as a starting point for learning. Moreover, some Scottish schools showed they aimed to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, as they for example work with their partner school on improving (access to) education. However, while facilitating these activities there is a risk of reinforcing paternalism and dependency, and pity rather than empathy for the partner country. To mitigate this risk, critical reflection on global issues and structures of poverty and power should be included when discussing partnership and pupil visits.

Most partnership and visits will include fundraising activities. The literature and partnership guide reviewed suggests to avoid fundraising, however as the interviews and questionnaires showed, fundraising can play an important role in supporting partner schools and improve their ability to teach and help pupils. Teachers are aware of the imbalance that can exist between partner schools and do reflect on the equity of their partnership. Some teachers were struggling in how to best address these questions. It is important to include an assessment on both expected and unexpected impacts of activities supporting partner schools and development projects. Activities such as fundraising and pupil visits might be more prone to reinforcing stereotypes as they often (unconsciously) reinforce images and narratives of 'development-as-modernisation' and the western active agent, helping the poor, passive developing country. As the literature review suggest, promotion of professional training on international development, sustainable development goals and global citizenship can help address this. Some of the Malawian schools pointed out that current visits of Scottish pupils would not necessarily include a focus on shared learning or global issues.

Analysing the conversations with Scottish schools and organisations, there seem to be an assumption that having a partnership will make pupils more aware of issues such as poverty, and therefore lead to global learning. However, global learning

includes to “*think deeply and critically about what is equitable and just, and what will minimise harm to our planet.*” (Scotdec 2019) and therefore ask for a critical understanding of social justice. Pupils will not reach this by themselves, therefore pre- and post-sessions for visits are important including discussions on issues such as stereotypes and poverty as well as lessons for pupils exploring social justice and sustainable development. Partnerships can help with bringing these lessons to life, especially by including joint learning and peer-to-peer contact. Teachers stated that they wanted to raise awareness of global citizenship and the impact we have on the world, yet it remained unclear what educational activities, or pre- and post-session linked to the visits, would make sure pupils go from their personal experience to an understanding of issues of inequality. Moreover, thoughts have to be given on how to link it to global learning in the wider school, as often activities that connect pupils to the partnership are fundraisers and one-off lessons. This latter point was also raised by Malawian schools, who mentioned that in the future they would like to see more exchange visits and projects that enhance learning.

To build a strong relationship with a partner school and incorporate the partnership in the wider school programme sustainability of the partnership is important but can be difficult to achieve. The difficulties that were encountered, both at the Scottish and Malawian side, were the funding of the visits as well as the involvement of staff. Some teachers were the sole carrier of the project. This asked a lot of time investment and when other issues take priority the partnership can end up on the back burner. Direct contact with the partner school was made easier by digital technology, and this has the potential to be used more, although it runs into problems with access (of the partner school to technology and electricity) and IT policies (of the Scottish school).

Although the survey in Malawian schools gave a first insight in the perspective of partner countries, a good understanding of the impact of partnerships is still lacking. How do partner schools for example they feel about Scottish pupils visiting, and the potential images portrayed about their life and country? The fact that half of the Malawian schools would like to develop exchange visits might indicate that they are looking for more reciprocity in the visits. However, it remained unclear from this

exploratory study what purpose and programme these schools see for such visits. Do they look for joint learning programmes and cultural exchange? These are questions that still need to be addressed. Several organisations are currently working on studying the impacts of their programmes. This opens up the opportunity to discuss partnership impacts and the partner countries perspective.

## 7. Recommendations

To make partnerships reach their goal of educational improvement and global learning, some suggestions can be made to make sure school partnerships and visits have a positive, holistic impact. The first recommendation would be **to not take partnerships as a starting point, but global learning**. This is a general recommendation for both schools and organisations supporting school links with developing countries. If the aim is to raise awareness about global issues, partnerships can be a vehicle to start the conversation on these issues, but this will need more than just 'coming in contact with other cultures' and asks for the developing of a critical understanding. The partnership guides (Chapter 3) and literature review (Chapter 2) point out that some elements are essential to put into place to ensure global learning is reached through a partnership.

That is not to say that partnerships cannot be a valuable and positive influence on good global citizenship. Making personal connections with other pupils from other countries and discussing each other's life can open up conversations that allow to discuss issues such as social justice, poverty, immigration and climate change. However, there is a need to make sure these discussions will happen. At the moment, a lot of visits still seem to make short-term connections and evolve around supplying resources or building schools, instead of being embedded in a wider global learning focus of both schools. A way to show the local-global connections and promote critical thinking is for example to link partnerships to other initiatives such as Black History Month in Scotland or the Climate Change conferences (COP).

The literature review also points out that organisations and schools should **be aware of and take into account issues of inequality, dependency and reinforcing stereotypes**. The research showed that teachers seem to be very aware of issues of inequality and dependency and try to navigate having a relationship based on mutual learning with providing support for their partner school. This support is often thought through and based on the requests and recommendations of the partner school. However, there can be unintended impacts as well as a feeling of powerlessness in partner schools or organisations that will need to be considered and discussed beforehand. A potential danger lies in reinforcing narratives and practices that are

so common that they are not necessarily questioned. The way visits for example were portrayed in pictures and blogs can paint a narrative of the Scottish pupils “helping” the poor and reinforce certain stereotypes of the African continent. The drive to improve education in the partner country could obscure the necessity for a critical reflection on development, power and poverty.

These recommendations can be strengthened through supporting initiatives that work towards increasing people’s critical global awareness and linking volunteer and partnership experiences with discussing social justice. Schools and organisations can be supported in reflecting on the impact of their practices by:

### **1. Encouraging cooperation between organisations.**

Several organisations have mentioned that they would like to link up or work together with other organisations to make sure positive partnerships, global citizenship and in general educational improvement (in both Scotland and partner countries) are achieved. Supporting this cooperation can help discuss the impact of different practices and exchange ideas on good global citizenship and development education. This support could specifically focus on:

#### **a. Bringing organisations with different backgrounds together, to improve impact and make sure partnerships (and school visits) and global learning are connected.**

All organisations spoken to were reflecting on how global learning is impacted and agreed there is a need to tackle stereotypes and narratives and think about power imbalances. Some organisations did question the activity of other organisation, but the conversations part of this study suggest that even though organisations might have a different focus they were all aware and reflected on the impact partnerships, volunteer activities and fundraising can have on both Scottish and partner schools. It might be that this awareness has developed in the recent years, and some organisations have had different experiences in the past, which makes it valuable to bring them together to help and learn from each other. For example organisations

such as STEKA skills, that are specifically focusing on setting up peer-to-peer dialogues between Scottish pupils and pupils in developing countries. Experiences from these organisations will be valuable in helping schools develop a pupil visit that has impact on global learning. Moreover, organisations tend to be small and cooperation could help to increase their impact.

- b. **Encouraging to (continue) research on the impact of partnership and school trips**, and sharing this research with schools and other organisations. During meetings with different organisations, several pointed out that they are currently conducting research on the impact of their own practice, or in general on the impact of partnerships and visits on pupils, both in Scotland and in partner countries. Organisations that have mentioned they are conducting research are the McConnell International foundation, Classrooms for Malawi and SMP. STEKA skills has received funding for feasibility study on their dialogue approach. Sharing outcomes and discussing the impact on both global learning and development outcomes will be important, not only with each other but also with teachers.

## **2. Creating spaces for discussion and information exchange for school staff**

Some teachers were well connected, for example to the Connecting Classrooms Programme, DEC's or the SMP. However, others did not have this network. These teachers often question what the best strategy is to a partnership or global learning in general, or how to evaluate the impact of their trips. The literature review also points out that training of teachers on development perspectives, stereotypes and social justice is important in order to promote global learning. What the interviews with the teachers showed was that there is a real interest in discussing global issues with pupils, however, as some organisations also pointed out, teachers not always have the time and resources to do so. The schools focus can often be for example on their attainment result, and global learning can still be seen as 'a bit of an add-on'.

Support for teachers to think about global learning and partnerships can therefore be helpful.

- a. **Encouraging discussions on the impact of visits, partnerships and fundraising and the integration of global learning into the curriculum.** It is important for schools to ask questions such as “what is the image that you portray of your partner country” and “how do you communicate about the fundraiser/visit/partnership”, to make sure they have a good understanding of both positive and potential negative impacts. To help them with these questions it will be helpful to **include information on issues of international development when discussing global learning**, for example on the Learners International webpage of Education Scotland. This information could include guidance on fundraising, school visits and critical reflection as well as link to some of the partnership guides discussed in chapter three. When setting up monetary and material support for partner schools it will be important that schools are aware of good practice principles in providing international development aid. Furthermore, to the teachers can be encouraged to make sure there are pre-and post-session for pupil visits that focus on issues of social justice, colonial history and pupils’ own impact on the world. Organisations, such as the Development Education Centres but also volunteer organisations, can play a role in brokering these discussions. Where possible advice programmes that support teacher visits (such as the Connecting Classrooms programme) to include compulsory pre-and post-sessions that focus on issues of power, stereotypes, dependency etc.
- b. **Encouraging exchanges between schools and between schools and organisations.** Some of the interviewed teachers knew about other schools that also had a partnership or organised pupil visits. Most of them knew about each other either through the SMP or through events organised about partnerships of global citizenship. However, organisations also admitted that it was not always easy to keep in contact with teachers who for example had taken part in an exchange

programme or global learning course. To make sure these teachers can keep in touch and know how to find each other and useful organisations, it is important to **gain a better understanding of the information channels teachers use and need**. This can also include gaining understanding in how contacts are made with partner schools, as the survey showed that often contacts are made by personal connection or through a variety of organisations.

**3. Developing thinking around the opportunities to use digital technologies, as well as the potential negative (environmental) impacts visits might have.**

Visits, both of teachers and students, seem to be an important aspect of a partnership, although not one that is necessary or provides the best options for global learning. It would be good to open a conversation about alternatives to visits and understand better why at the moment this option seems preferred by both Scottish and Malawian schools. Both the issue of digital technology use and environmental impact have not been fully explored in this report. However, both can have an impact on school practices. Digital technologies offer opportunities for partnership, for example to make it easier to have peer-to-peer contact and to design joint lessons. At the moment both Scottish schools and partner school face difficulties in using these new opportunities. The partner school often has limited access, certainly for sending regular emails between pupils. The Scottish school runs into problems with IT policies as these restrict the way they can contact the partner school.

Environmental issues were only mentioned in the margins by the interviewees and organisations. It is therefore not further explored in this report. However, that is not to say that there are not important questions to ask. Concerns can for example arise around flying and its environmental impact. There is a need for a discussion on whether the positive impact of a visit outweigh potential negative impacts, and whether alternatives are available that can offer a similar experience for pupils.

While this research was conducted before the Coronavirus outbreak, this global pandemic adds another dimension to the need to re-think global travel and its potential impact. While understanding local-global connections becomes and global learning become ever more important, this might not necessarily be able, or need to, include traveling to each other's country.

## References

- Andreotti V.O. (2014) Soft versus Critical Global Citizenship Education. In: McCloskey S. (eds) *Development Education in Policy and Practice*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, p. 21-31
- Bentall, C., Bourn, D., McGough, H., Hodgson, A. & Spours, K. (2014) Global Learning for Global Colleges: creating opportunities for greater access to international learning for 16-25 year olds. *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 38 (5): 621-640
- Blum, N., Bourn, D., Mattingly, J. & Ndaruhutse, S. (2017) Overview of UK development education landscape with a focus on partnerships between UK schools and those overseas. *K4D Helpdesk report*. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies
- Bourn, D. (2014) School linking and Global Learning Teachers' Reflections. *Development Education Research Centre Research Paper No.12*. London: Institute of Education, University of London
- Bourn, D. & Cara, O. (2013) School linking – where next? Partnership models between schools in Europe and Africa. *Development Education Research Centre Research Paper No.10*. London: Institute of Education, University of London
- British Council (2019a) *Partner with schools*, viewed on 12 December 2019 <https://connecting-classrooms.britishcouncil.org/partner-with-schools>
- British Council (2019b) *Sustaining your partnership*, on 12 December 2019 <https://connecting-classrooms.britishcouncil.org/partner-with-schools/sustaining-your-partnership>
- British Council (2019c) *Connecting Classrooms – Discover the power of learning for sustainability. Teacher Handbook*, viewed on 26 November 2019 <http://learningforsustainabilityscotland.org/connectingclassrooms/>

British Council (2019d) *Connecting Classrooms - Discover the power of Learning for Sustainability!*

*Connecting Classrooms Through Global Learning: Whole-school self-evaluation tool*, viewed on 26 November 2019

<http://learningforsustainabilityscotland.org/connectingclassrooms/>

British Council (2019e) *Connecting Classrooms – Discover the power of learning for sustainability. Cluster co-ordinator Handbook*, viewed on 26 November 2019

<http://learningforsustainabilityscotland.org/connectingclassrooms/>

Brown, S. (2005) Travelling with a purpose: understanding the motives and benefits of volunteer vacationers. *Current Issues in Tourism* 8 (6): 479-496

Build (n.d. a) *About us*, viewed on 11 December <http://www.build-online.org.uk/jml/about-us>

Build (n.d. b) *Toolkit for linking: Challenges and Opportunities. 3 Partnerships*, viewed on 28 November 2019 <http://www.build-online.org.uk/jml/activities/toolkit-of-good-practice>

Build (n.d. c) *Toolkit for linking: Challenges and Opportunities. School links*, viewed on 28 November 2019 <http://www.build-online.org.uk/jml/activities/toolkit-of-good-practice>

Build (n.d. d) *Toolkit for linking: Challenges and Opportunities. 7c Visit and Exchanges*, viewed on 28 November 2019 <http://www.build-online.org.uk/jml/activities/toolkit-of-good-practice>

Classrooms for Malawi (2019) *Classrooms for Malawi*, viewed on 12 December 2019 <http://www.classroomsformalawi.org/>

Edge, K. & Khamsi, K. (2012) International school partnerships as a vehicle for global education: student perspectives. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education* 32(4): 455-472

Education Scotland (2019a), *A summary of learning for sustainability resources*, viewed on 29 November <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/A%20summary%20of%20learning%20for%20sustainability%20resources>,

Education Scotland (2019b) *Simple Ideas for International Engagement*, viewed on 11 December 2019 <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/int09-simple-ideas-for-international-engagement.pdf>

Education Scotland (2019c) *Links around Global Citizenship, Human Rights, Sustainability and general teacher support for International Engagement*, viewed on 11 December 2019 <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/learners-international-international-learning-opportunities/>

Fizzell, K. & Epprecht, M. (2014) Secondary School Experiential Learning Programmes: Critical Reflections from an Ontario Study. In: Tiessen, R. & Huish, R. (eds) *Globetrotter or global citizen?: Perils and Potential of International Experiential Learning*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Forum (2019) *The Global Standard for Volunteering for Development*, viewed on 12 December <https://forum-ids.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Global-Standard-for-Volunteering-for-Development-October-2019.pdf>

Guttentag, D.A. (2009) The possible negative impacts of volunteer tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research* 11(6): 537-551

IDEAS (n.d.) *Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning*, viewed 12 December 2019 <http://www.ideas-forum.org.uk/education/schools/projects/connecting-classrooms-through-global-learning>

Leonard (2014) School linking: Southern perspective on the South/North educational linking process: from Ghana, Uganda and Tanzania. *PhD thesis*. The Institute of Education, University of London

Lyons, K., Hanley, J., Wearing, S. & Neil, J. (2012) Gap year volunteer tourism: Myths of Global Citizenship? *Annals of Tourism Research* 39 (1): 361–378

Mackenzie, A., Enslin, P. & Hedge, N. (2016) Education for global citizenship in Scotland: reciprocal partnership or politics of benevolence? *International Journal of Educational Research* 77: 128-135

McGladdery, C.A. & Lubbe, B.A. (2017) International educational tourism: Does it foster global learning? A survey of South African high school learners. *Tourism Management* 62: 292-301

MLOL (2019) *Five year plan 2019-2024*, viewed on 19 November 2019  
<https://www.glasgoweducationmlol.org.uk/Content/UserGenerated/Image/Documents/MLOLPlan2019.pdf>

MLOL (n.d.) *About*, viewed on 12 December 2019  
<https://www.glasgoweducationmlol.org.uk/About/>

Oxfam (2007) *Building Successful School Partnerships*, viewed on 27 November 2019 <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/building-successful-school-partnerships>

Palacios, C.M. (2010) Volunteer tourism, development and education in a postcolonial world: conceiving global connections beyond aid. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 18(7): 861-878

Responsible Safari Company (2017) *About*, viewed on 12 December 2019  
<https://www.responsible-safari.com/about/>

Responsible Safari Company (2017) *Schools*, viewed on 12 December 2019

<https://www.responsiblesafaricompany.com/schools>

Scotdec (2019) *Global Citizenship*, viewed on 29 October 2019

<http://scotdec.org.uk/global-citizenship/>

Scottish Government (2019) *Summary statistics for schools in Scotland*, National Statistics Publication for Scotland

Scottish Government (2016) *Global Citizenship: Scotland's International Development Strategy*, Scottish Government

Simpson, K. (2004) 'Doing Development': the gap year, volunteer-tourists and a popular practice of development. *Journal of International Development* 16(5): 681-692

Signpost International (n.d.) *Signpost International- What we do*, viewed on 11 December 2019 <https://www.signpost-international.org/>

Sizmur, J., Brzyska, B., Cooper, L., Morrison, J., Wilkinson, K. & Kerr, D. (2011) *Global School Partnerships Programme Impact Evaluation Report*. Report for DfID. *National Foundation for Educational Research*

SMP (n.d. a) *Who we are*, viewed on 12 December 2019 <https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/who-we-are/>

SMP (n.d. b) *Primary and Secondary education*, viewed on 12 December 2019 <https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/areas-of-partnership/primary-and-secondary-education/>

SMP (n.d. b) *Partnership principles*, viewed on 12 December 2019 <https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/get-involved/principles/>

STA (n.d.) *School trips*, viewed on 11 December 2019  
<https://grouptravel.statravel.co.uk/school-tours-see-all.htm>

STEKA skills (2017) *STEKA skills - Building Brighter Futures*, viewed on 11 December 2019 <http://www.stekaskills.com>

Twende Pamoja (2019a) *About*, viewed on 11 December 2019  
<http://twendepamoja.org.uk/about/>

Twende Pamoja (2019b) *Developing Partnerships*, viewed on 11 December  
<http://twendepamoja.org.uk/education/developing-partnerships/>

Wearing, S. & McGehee, N.G. (2013) Volunteer tourism: A review. *Tourism Management* 38: 120-130

Wilson, B.R.L. (2019) Scotland, Malawi and the post-development critique: an analysis of power and equality in international development. *PhD thesis*. University of Glasgow

Wood Foundation (n.d. a) *Global learning* partnership, viewed on 12 December 2019  
<https://www.thewoodfoundation.org.uk/developing-young-people-in-scotland/global-learning-partnerships/>

Wood Foundation (n.d. b) *Volunteering overseas*, viewed on 12 December 2019  
<https://www.thewoodfoundation.org.uk/developing-young-people-in-scotland/volunteering-overseas/>

VineTrust (n.d. a) *What we do*, viewed on 11 December 2019  
<https://www.vinetrust.org/about/what-we-do>

VineTrust (n.d. b) *School Expeditions*, viewed on 11 December 2019  
<https://www.vinetrust.org/volunteer/school-expeditions>

Zahra, A. & McGehee, N.G. (2013) Volunteer tourism: A Host Community Capital Perspective *Annals of Tourism Research* 42:22–45

## Appendix I – Partnership and volunteering organisations

### **Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning**

Together with the Scotland-Malawi Partnership the main supporting programme for school linking in Scotland. The programme is co-funded by the Department for International Development (DfID) and the British Council, with the latter leading the programme. It is a follow up of the Connecting Classrooms programme that ran from 2012-2015 and 2015-2018.

The programme is free and open to all (state run) schools in the UK, and has as goal to help teachers *“equip [their] pupils with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to act more thoughtfully, ethically and responsibly as citizens and contributors to society”* (IDEAS, n.d.).

The programme has two strands:

- Professional development courses (CPD)
- School partnerships

The professional development courses are delivered in Scotland by a consortium of Learning for Sustainability Scotland, the Scotland-Malawi Partnership (SMP) and the International Development Education Association of Scotland (IDEAS). Part of IDEAS are the Development Education Centres (DECs) which run the CPD courses in each of their catchment area. The courses are aimed at global learning and international development education, focusing for example on the sustainable development goals, human rights and fair trade.

The school partnerships are divided in two different tracks:

- One-to-one partnerships
- Cluster partnerships

When a school would like to establish a partnership they can choose to go for a one to one partnership or find one or more schools and join in a cluster partnership. The cluster has to consist of at least two Scottish and two partner schools. There is funding available for both types of partnerships: £3,000 for one-to-one partnerships and up to £35,000 for clusters. This funding can be used for teacher exchanges,

especially at the initial phase of establishing the partnership, and for the clusters also include money to arrange time out of class for the cluster coordinator as well as training sessions for all teachers involved.

To be able to apply for the funding, the school will have to partner to one of the participating countries, of which the British council provides a list on their website. These are over 30 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Middle East.

The aim of the partnerships is to make global learning ‘authentic’ for pupils by working alongside their peers in another country (British Council 2019a). The prerequisite therefor is that projects set up around the partnership should have a “*genuine educational aims and any joint curriculum projects need to explore global themes*” (British Council 2019b).

On the websites of all the partner organisations involved teachers can also find resources such as lesson plans and materials to use when teaching about global issues. These materials are discussed in the next chapter.

### **Scotland-Malawi Partnership**

The Scotland-Malawi Partnership (SMP) is a network of organisation and individuals in Scotland that are currently engaged with Malawi. Their aim is to help these organisations and individuals with their projects in and on Malawi. They “*exist to support and inspire the many links benefitting both Scotland and Malawi*” (SMP n.d. a).

Part of the organisations and individuals that are linked to the SMP are Scottish primary and secondary schools which have active links with a school in Malawi or are engaged with educational projects on Malawi. The SMP provide support for these schools through (SMP n.d. b):

- Tailor-made workshops/presentations in school on themes like partnership and Malawi
- Advice on brokering, developing, and maintaining an international school partnership between Scotland and Malawi
- Signposting to useful resources, events, and organisations

- Supporting schools to hold events or sessions in school celebrating their link to Malawi
- Holding events and forums to bring experts and teachers together to discuss their experiences of school partnerships and using Malawi as a theme in the classroom. This includes our Schools Forum which is held online or at different locations around Scotland 2-4 times per year.

The SMP has a Malawian counterpart, the Malawi Scotland Partnership (MaSP), which can help to find a partner school for schools in Scotland who like to set up a school link. The SMP sees these school partnerships as beneficial for both school communities in Scotland and Malawi “*to learn from and understand other cultures better and feel connected in our global society*” (SMP n.d. b). On their website they state that activities that schools undertake are global learning activities, enterprise projects and visits between schools.

The SMP works with ‘Partnership principles’ to guide the development of partnerships. Their main principle is to establish a “dignified partnership”, which they unpack in 11 principles, including planning and implementing together, respect trust and mutual understanding and do no harm (SMP n.d. c).

### **Malawi Leaders for Learning**

The Malawi Leaders for Learning (MLOL) programme is based in Glasgow and aims to share “*good practice and learning opportunities between head teachers and teachers in both our countries [Scotland and Malawi] and key education professionals – resulting in improving attainment and achievement in our schools.*” (MLOL n.d.). The programme involves providing training for (head) teachers in Malawi, setting up libraries and establishing school links between secondary schools in Glasgow and Malawi.

There are reciprocal teacher visits as well as student trips from Scotland to Malawi. Pupils that will go and volunteer are part of the *Malawi Young Leaders for Learning programme*. In preparation of the student trips the pupils receive global education, specifically on poverty in both Scottish and Malawian context. The pupils then visit

Malawi and either work with Malawian young people to explore global issues and/or work on projects to improve school infrastructure (MLOL 2019).

### **Wood foundation**

The Wood Foundation, based in Aberdeen, has two projects that are linked to global learning: The Global Learning Partnerships (GLP) and a volunteering fund. The GLP provide a training programme for teachers that focuses on professional development on Learning for Sustainability. The aim of the programme is to “*enhance their knowledge, understanding and delivery of global education within the classroom, school and the wider learning community*” (Wood Foundation n.d. a). The programme include a 4 week placement in Uganda and Rwanda, where Scottish teachers exchange experiences with Ugandan and Rwandan teachers. This experience, including the training sessions in Scotland, aims to prepare the teachers to deliver global learning education in their school.

The volunteering fund provides funding for young people and schools to “*make a difference, developing their global citizenship by supporting communities while developing their own skillsets*” (Wood Foundation n.d. b). It has strict rules on which projects are funded, with the main principles that the volunteering should not include activities that displaces local employment/businesses and have to have an educational, Learning for Sustainability, focus.

The GLP programme is open to all post-probation classroom teachers in Scotland, while the volunteering funding is restricted to young people and schools from the North-East of Scotland.

### **Signpost International**

Signpost International is an organisation based in Dundee, working with projects in Uganda, Tanzania and the Philippines. Their aim is tackling poverty in these countries and they focus on four areas: hunger and nutrition; sustainable livelihoods; water, sanitation and hygiene; and global citizenship (Signpost International n.d.). As part of their global citizenship work they support a school in Dundee with organising trips (every two years) to Uganda. This school trip includes 15 pupils visiting

Ugandan projects and schools. It also include an 18 months preparation process in which these fifteen pupils receive workshops on poverty, inequality and stereotypes, as well as (digital) media literacy – for example on when and how to take selfies. These workshops are provided by Signpost International. After the trip, there are also evaluation sessions to enable the pupils to discuss their experiences. In the past the organisation supported several schools to visit developing countries, often including activities such as building classrooms or houses. However, the organisation decided to move away from these activities and focus on global learning. The pupils of the school they are supporting now therefore do not engage in this type of activities, but instead are engaged in school lessons and live in a household where they help the family with their day to day chores.

The organisation is developing a learning centre in Dundee, where global citizenship education can be taught. The idea is to make this an interactive and tactile learning environment. The garden for example consist of a poly-tunnel and vegetable patch where students can become involved in food-production and learn about food security. The centre is still in under development, but local schools have already expressed an interest in taking part in workshops.

### **Twende Pamoja Trust**

The goal of the Twende Pamoja Trust is “*to promote the development of a global vision in the context of relationship between communities, schools and places of learning in Tanzania and the United Kingdom*” (Twende Pamoja 2019a). Part of the trust therefore focuses on linking secondary schools in Scotland with schools in Tanzania. So far, it facilitated partnership between twenty-two primary schools and eight secondary schools in Tanzania and Scotland. The trust has also facilitated teacher exchanges for the connecting classrooms programme.

The organisation links the building of school partnerships to global citizenship education and states that “*within the context of well-planned education for global citizenship, partnerships with schools in other parts of the world can make a significant contribution to children’s understanding of cultures, customs and lifestyles of different nations*” (Twende Pamoja 2019b). They follow that the greatest benefit

comes from shared curricular activity, to put learning “at the centre of the partnership”. School visits can be part of enriching the partnership and the trust therefore offers support to teachers and pupils who would like to organise a visit.

### **STEKA skills**

STEKA skills is a Scottish charity partnered with STEKA and support the development of a centre for vocational skills and community enterprise (STEKA skills 2017). The STEKA skills is a project linked to the STEKA, which is a family home for vulnerable children from 0 up to 23 years old. The STEKA home has had Scottish school groups visiting, yet did not always feel it encouraged global learning. STEKA skills is therefore developing “youth dialogues” in the centre. These dialogue workshops will be run by local teenagers for pupils of visiting schools from Scotland or other “global north” countries. The goal of this project is to counteract the effect volunteer tourism projects can have on reinforcing stereotypes. Instead the visiting pupils will learn about resilience, family values, community and the UN sustainability goals, with the aim to reflect on how they see themselves in relation to people in developing countries.

The project is currently running a feasibility study on what the development of the centre the youth dialogues, and its potential impact.

### **Classrooms for Malawi**

The aim for Classrooms for Malawi is to build and renovate classrooms in Malawi, to help “*people to overcome poverty through education*” (Classrooms for Malawi 2019). They identify priority schools in Malawi through the education ministry in Malawi, and link these to a Scottish school who will fundraise for the classrooms. A school can then decide to also take pupils to Malawi to help in the construction work. This construction work is tendered to a local contractor who hires builders. If a school group is interested in visiting the local builders usually start building a couple of months before the pupils visit. During the visit they will help with the construction for a week, and afterwards the local builders will finish the building. At time of writing they have constructed or refurbished 207 classrooms.

## **VineTrust**

The VineTrust is an organisation that supports volunteer work in Tanzania. They aim “to empower communities; connecting enthusiastic volunteers with in-country partners and local people to create significant, sustainable development for vulnerable children and families” (VineTrust n.d. a). They organise trips for adults (specifically medical personnel) and schools. The school expeditions they organise include two weeks in Tanzania, where the pupils will “support the constructions of orphanages and small family homes” (VineTrust n.d. b). The trust works with an in-country partner and the Scottish schools pay both for the construction of the home and for their own trip. The construction is managed by local contractors and builders. The programme aims to let students learn about other peoples and cultures and develop “personal skills”. Some of these skills that are mentioned on the website are: becoming an active global citizen, developing leadership skills, engage with global issues and teamwork to discuss solutions and improvements, “become ambassadors for change representing those living in poverty” (VineTrust n.d. b). Vinetrust is also developing sessions to talk about stereotypes and for example social media use. This year 158 pupils volunteered with the Vinetrust and for 2020 eight schools have planned a trip.

## **Orbis Expeditions/Responsible Safari Company**

This travel organisation offers, through the Malawian based organisation “Responsible Safari Company”, school trip packages. The aim is to offer “global citizenship experiences” (Responsible Safari Company 2017a). They work together with Classrooms for Malawi and are part of the SMP. They offer several different ‘packages’ including a 2 week trip to the partner school of the Scottish school, where students can get involved in ‘school based activities’ (Responsible Safari Company 2017b). They provide a local guide/driver and support during the trip, while schools can fill in the programme with their partner school, or with the Classrooms for Malawi activities. Apart from schools they also cater for other groups such as church groups, entrepreneurial groups, village cooperative. At the moment they are working on a project in Scotland to send youth sport ambassadors to Malawi to train young Malawian women and empower them through sports.

STA is a second travel organisation that offers trips for schools. Most of these trips seems about history and culture or language learning. Their website brings up three countries in Africa they offer trips to: Tanzania, South Africa and Morocco (STA n.d.). Teachers can connect these trips to their subjects. Global learning or volunteering is not specifically mentioned on the website of STA. Experience from a teachers interviewed for this research was that STA contracts Orbis for school-partnership trips.

Another organisation that is closely linked to many schools in Scotland is *Mary's Meals*. Many schools in Scotland fundraise for the organisation and some school visits to Malawi also visit Mary's Meals centre. On these occasions pupils can get involved in handing out the meals.

There are organisations that work with school partnerships and global learning in the UK, but which are currently not active in Scotland, such as the *Global School Network*, or where it is unclear whether they work with schools in Scotland, such as *Build Africa* and *Link Ethiopia*.

Next to the programmes and organisations that are linked to school partnerships and global learning, there are also organisations in Scotland that focus on young people, often between 17-25 years old, who want to volunteer abroad. These organisations include *Project Trust*, *VSO*, *Raleigh International*, *Restless Development* and *Latitude Global Volunteering*, but there are many others. These organisations can have links with primary and secondary schools as well, mainly to connect their volunteers to these schools to tell something about their volunteering work, the projects they were involved in and global citizenship in general.

The McConnell International Foundation runs a programme, the *Livingstone Volunteers Scheme*, which focuses on providing a fund for young people in Scotland that would like to volunteer, but struggle to meet the cost. These organisations are not included in this research, although for further studies and discussions on global education and young people going overseas, they are a valuable group to take into

account. The VSO recently produced “The Global Standard for Volunteering for Development”, which will be taken into account in the next chapter.

## Appendix II – Global learning classroom materials

**British council:** On their website the British council provide a page where teachers can browse teaching resources for global learning. These resources are supposed to “give your class a glimpse into other cultures and provide a base to develop international partnerships”. They include a wide variety of topics, from international conflicts, to homelessness, infectious diseases, sea level rise and food security. They are aimed at different age groups, with most targeted the 7-11 and 11-14 year olds, and consist of background information, lesson plans and activities to do in the classroom. Some are linked to a specific subject, but most offer cross-curriculum activities. These resources are developed by the British council, together with other organisations.

**Education Scotland:** On the National Improvement Hub of the Education Scotland website teachers can find case studies of how other schools have brought global learning into their classrooms. These are resources to reflect on Learning for Sustainability<sup>2</sup>, case studies on project and activities and a few lesson packs<sup>3</sup> on global citizenship, as well as case studies of school partnerships with countries all over the world<sup>4</sup>. For specific teaching materials the hub refers to the British council website.

**Learning for Sustainability Scotland:** As with the Education Scotland National Improvement Hub the website of Learning for Sustainability Scotland mainly show case studies as inspiration. Part of the resources teachers can also find notes and presentations of previous workshops, as well as subscribe to a monthly bulletin

**IDEAS:** The website of IDEAS provide brief information on what global citizenship and school partnerships are, and then provide links to several other organisations that provide more specific information: the DEC's, Signposts and Stride (IDEAS

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/practice-exemplars/learning-for-sustainability-in-action/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/a-summary-of-learning-for-sustainability-resources/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/learners-international-international-learning-opportunities/>

online magazine) for teaching resources, the British council for school partnerships and Bridge 47 on global networks and connections.

**DECs:** There are five Development Education Centres in Scotland. Each DEC has its own website, with their own lay-out offering different types of CPD courses. However, when it comes to learning resources for teachers they all refer to Signpost, the IDEAS global citizenship teaching resources website. One World Centre Dundee and Scotdec also provide some lesson material on their own website.

**Scotland-Malawi Partnership:** The SMP provides some lesson ideas to incorporate Malawi into secondary school lessons. Their booklet<sup>5</sup> focuses on Malawian food and fair trade and includes some information and personal stories of farmers on the coffee making process.

**Signposts:** A website specifically for providing resources to teachers on global learning. It includes material on a whole range of topics, such as racism, slavery, trade, human rights, climate change, food and health and for a range of ages.. It also provides information on useful illustrations and stories and novels as well as links to guides to better understand what global learning is and aims for. These resources are made by several different organisations, such as the DECs but also Oxfam, ActionAid and the SMP.

**Stride:** a magazine, managed by the DECs that aims to “be a source of inspiration and support for teachers delivering education for Global Citizenship in Scotland.”<sup>6</sup> It provides articles on global issues, school partnerships, news from NGOs and overview of training courses and events. It also has resources for teachers on critical analysis of news and media (images) in the context of global citizenship.

**Oxfam:** Next to more general guides and activities on global citizenship education and the sustainable development goals, Oxfam also provides resources on specific issues, such as the crisis in Yemen and Cyclone Idai as well as lesson material

---

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/files/3314/3946/3365/Secondary\\_School\\_Lesson\\_Ideas.pdf](https://www.scotland-malawipartnership.org/files/3314/3946/3365/Secondary_School_Lesson_Ideas.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.stridemagazine.org.uk/about>

linked to specific Oxfam campaigns. Their guide to school partnerships will be discussed in the next subsection.

**Global dimension – Reboot the Future:** The global dimensions website it set up by Reboot the Future, a charity that promotes “a more compassionate and sustainable world”<sup>7</sup>. The website aims to bring together resources, case studies and background information for teachers on global citizenship. They give some suggestion to teachers how to include global learning: exploring local, topical issues from a global perspective, look for the global dimension in how your school operates, consider the impact of your school’s buying on other countries, include professional development and reflection and promote optimism and action. The materials for in the classroom include specific topics and subjects but also cross-curricular activities. The materials are from a wide variety of different organisations. It is the website with by far the most lesson materials pooled together.

---

<sup>7</sup> <https://globaldimension.org.uk/about/>

## Appendix III – Methodology

This research included several elements:

- Literature Review
- Document Analysis
- School-list
- Interviews

The methodology of each element will be discussed below.

### **Literature Review**

For the literature review, presented in chapter 2, the starting point has been Wearnig and McGehee's (2013) comprehensive review on volunteer tourism. Moreover a Google Scholar search on "Volunteer Tourism", "Voluntourism" and "Educational Tourism" was conducted. For more specific case studies on Scottish and UK school partnership programmes the database of the Development Education Research Centre was used as a starting point. In total 25 articles and research reports were reviewed, of which the literature gives an overview of the most relevant ones, answering the first research question: "*What potential benefits and disadvantages are linked to school partnership according to current academic literature?*"

### **Document analysis**

To answer the second research question, "*Which organisations and resources do Scottish secondary school have available to them, and what kind of activities are they promoting?*", organisations linked to Scottish school partnerships and school exchanges were identified and contacted for a provide information on their activities and ideas on partnerships. The websites of each organisation was browsed through and documents linked to school partnerships were downloaded and analysed, of which the results are presented in chapter 4. The documents were analysed on their descriptions of a partnership, what the aims should be, and on their advice for teachers how to start and maintain one. Moreover, specific mentions of school trips or exchanges were highlighted and compared.

## **School-list**

The literature review revealed that there was little empirical data on Scottish schools and their partnerships with developing countries, both quantitative and qualitative. To gather some qualitative insights interviews were conducted, which are discussed in the next section. To gain more quantitative insight a list was compiled of Scottish secondary schools with a link to a developing country. As a questionnaire was advised against, the list was compiled of several different sources. The Scotland-Malawi partnership (SMP) provided a list with all the secondary schools that had established a partnership with a school in Malawi, with the help of SMP. The British Council provided a list with all secondary schools involved in the current Connecting Classrooms programme, as well as schools participating in the previous two programmes. Glasgow council and Malawi Leaders of Learning (MLOL) provided a list of schools connected to the MLOL programme and of schools that had been on a trip in 2019. Signpost International, ScotDEC, McConnell International Foundation, Orbis, One World centre Dundee and Highland One world Centre all also provided names of schools of which they were aware that had a partnership with, or made trips to developing countries.

The researcher subsequently visited the websites, Facebook pages and twitter accounts of all of these schools to get a confirmation of the partnership. While not all schools mention their partnership on their website, some schools did, and other had blogs on the trips that they had made. This led to a list of 82 secondary schools that have a partnership with a school in a developing country or have made a trip there. Chapter four gives an overview of the numbers.

While this number of 82 schools cannot be said to be representative, and does not include all Scottish schools, it does show that partnerships are a substantial activity in the Scottish secondary school programme. The 82 schools are likely to be an underestimation, as the research has shown that schools often come in contact with partner schools through personal channels, and not necessarily link to the organisations which provided the information for the list.

## **Interviews**

The three remaining research questions focus on the experiences of teachers, their motivation to start a partnership, the opportunities and difficulties they encounter and the way they link it to global citizenship learning. To gather this information, six teachers and one council officer were interviewed on the practices in seven different secondary schools.

Initially a selection of schools from the school-partnership list was made. This selection included schools across the country, with different types of strategies to the partnership, different organisations involved and different lengths of the partnership. Ten schools were contacted, either through their own website, or through the SMP. Of these initial ten schools, six responded and five were able to participate in the interview. Through the Highland One World centre four more schools were contacted, of which one participated in the interview. Through Scotdec the seventh school was contacted.

The limited time-frame did not allow for another round of recruitment, and reviewing the seven schools that took part some limitations should be made clear. Even though initially the ten schools that were contacted were diverse in the kind of partnership and approach to school trips, the seven that were interviewed did not cover the whole spectrum. Four of the seven schools were very active schools, either through the SMP or connecting classrooms and were strongly involved in activities linked to these programmes. This might be an overrepresentation, although two of the other interviews do include a school partnership that were less active.

Only one of the schools interviewed was linked to the Vinetrust, and no schools that were interviewed were linked to Classrooms for Malawi, both of which are important players in organising secondary school trips.

Lastly, no school from the Glasgow area was included. This is a shortcoming as the council support and the Malawi Leaders for Learning programme would have provided a slightly different context for the schools in Glasgow, compared to other areas. Although Glasgow is not included, the seven selected schools do spread

across the country, with three from the Edinburgh area, two from the Highlands, one on Shetland and one from the North-East.

Overall, the interviews give a first overview of the different approaches schools can take to partnerships, trips and global learning, but cannot generalise on overall pathways or outputs of school partnerships.

The interviews conducted with the seven schools were semi-structured, following four themes:

1. Process of establishing a partnership;
2. The activities involved in the partnership – specifically school trips;
3. The integration in the school and community; and
4. The future of the partnership (see appendix III for the full interview guide).

The first three interviews were recorded and then summarized. However, as transcription proved to be rather time consuming, the other four interviews were not recorded, but notes were taken, which were summarized afterwards.

The summarized interviews were firstly analysed by addressing two research questions:

- what activities are the schools involved in
- what was the motivation of the school/teacher to enter the partnership (and organise the activities)

This was followed by a narrative analysis to understand how teachers spoke about partnership cooperation, development project and global citizenship. Finally the data was coded on the topics that arose from the literature and partnership guides review: communication and co-development and integration in the curriculum and wider community.

## **Questionnaire**

Following the literature review and conversations with organisations involved in partnership and volunteer activities, a gap in our empirical knowledge was identified. While there is some information on what Scottish schools are doing, and the partnerships they establish, there is actually very little known about the partner

school's perspective. In consultation with the International Development team a questionnaire was established, to be sent to the Malawian schools that partner with a Scottish secondary school.

The aim of the questionnaire was to cover similar questions as asked in the interviews, specifically those questions focused on the process of developing the partnership, and whether expectations are met. Moreover, some of the questions focus on the motivation and rationale of the Malawian partner schools to establish a partnership. This will give us insight on the reciprocity of the project from the partner school's perspective and can test whether partner schools have a similar idea of a partnerships as the Scottish schools. The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix V.

To reach as many schools as possible, a list of all Malawian schools known to the researcher to have a link with a Scottish secondary school was generated. This list was sent to the Malawi-Scotland Partnership (MaSP), as well as the questionnaire. MaSP distributed the questionnaire by mail and in some cases in person to the schools. In total 33 schools were asked to fill in the questionnaire. The completed questionnaires were returned by the schools to MaSP, who send it back to the International Development Team. Twenty questionnaires were returned.

A descriptive analysis of the data followed, using Microsoft excel, which are described in the Results section of chapter 5. As the number of returned questionnaires is too low to use statistical analysis this sample should not be read as a representative sample for Malawian schools or schools in developing countries. Instead, the aim was to highlight some initial themes that are important to take into account and develop further when discussing the impact of partnerships and the development of global learning.

## Appendix IV – Interview Guide

Global citizenship, part of Learning for Sustainability, is an important aspect of Scottish education. The International Development Team of the Scottish Government is interested in the kind of activities school undertake when it comes to global learning. They are particularly keen to learn more about school links with developing countries and trips made to these countries.

This research will provide a first exploration of school partnerships, in a secondary school context and this information will be used to guide and support further discussions on global learning, school partnerships and good practice within SG as well as with external partners and schools.

In this interview I would like to ask you some questions about your school link with a developing country. The questions are divided into 4 themes: the Partnership process; Partnership activities; Integration in school and community and the future of the partnership.

### **General information**

- What school do you have a link with, and in what country?
- When was this link established?

### **Partnership – Process**

To describe the process of setting up the partnership:

- What was the motivation of your school to establish a partnership?
- How and why did you choose this country and partner school?
- How was the first contact made?
- What is your role in this partnership?
- What resources did you use to help set up the partnership?
- Did you visit the partner school before setting up the partnership?
- What type of formal arrangements did you make (eg partnership agreement)?
- How did the communication go?
  - What kind of problems did you face? (eg. With technology, language, time)
- How were expectations about the partnership on both sides explored? Did they match and if no, how were they discussed?

### **Partnership – Activities**

- What activities are covered in the partnership?
- Which activities do you feel are most important, and why?
- What are the difficulties in organising (shared) activities?
  
- If educational projects are shared, how are they set up? And what is the value of them for pupils and teachers?

- If fundraising is involved, what is the goal of the fundraising and how is it organised?
- How is fundraising linked to other global learning activities and partnership work?
- If visits are involved, how are they arranged and what activities are involved?
- How do pupils get involved in visits?
- What kind of fundraising is involved? And how important are these funds?
- What is the value of these visit for the pupils and teachers?

### **Integration in the school and community**

- How does the partnership link to the wider global citizenship programme in your school?
- What role does the partnership play in everyday school life of the pupils? And does it also play a role in the wider community? (and How?)
- Do you feel the partnership is beneficial for your school and students? Why (not)?

### **Future of the partnership**

- Has the partnership changed over time? How and why?
- How do you see the future of the partnership?
- Is there anything you would like to change about your partnership?

## Appendix V – Questionnaire

### **Questionnaire – School partnerships with Scottish schools**

This questionnaire aims to get a better understanding of the experience of Malawian schools who have a partnership with a Scottish school. This research has been commissioned by the International Development Team of the Scottish Government. At the moment there is very little information available on how schools in Malawi, or other Sub-Saharan countries, are engaged in school partnerships. This questionnaire will increase our understanding of school partnerships between Scotland and sub-Saharan countries and give more insight into different schools experiences.

The questionnaire will ask some questions on the partnerships that your school has with a Scottish school. We are interested in your personal experiences of that partnership, and ideas you have on school partnering; the benefits as well as the problems with such partnerships.

All data will be anonymised in any output and no school's response will be able to be attributed to their participation. Participation in this questionnaire is completely voluntary and you may decide to stop at any point during the questionnaire. You have the right to withdraw the data from the research at any time.

If you have any questions about the research please contact the international development team at [internationaldevelopment@gov.scot](mailto:internationaldevelopment@gov.scot)

The questionnaire consists of 4 section: general questions on the partnership; communication and activities; benefits, difficulties and future of the partnership; and school trips. There are 16 questions and it will take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

When finished filling in the questionnaire, please send the questionnaire back to the Malawi-Scotland Partnership: Area 14, Scripture Union House, P.O.Box 1589, Lilongwe. Or via email: [info@malawiscotlandpartnership.org](mailto:info@malawiscotlandpartnership.org)

**Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire**

### Questions – Section 1: General questions on school partnerships

In this section we would like to ask you a couple of questions about how many partnerships you have, with which Scottish schools and what your motivation was to start the partnership.

1. Name of your school and district:

--

2. With which Scottish school(s) do you have a partnership and when was each partnership started?

If you had a partnership but it is no longer active, please fill in start and end date.

Name of Scottish School:	Year started:	Year ended: (if no longer active)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

If you have a partnership with more than one Scottish school, with which school do you have the most active partnerships?

--

*Please answer all **the following questions**, in each section, with regards to the school you have **the most active partnerships** with. If you no longer have a partnership we would still like to hear your views, so we ask you to fill in the following questions in relation to your past partnership.*

4. How did your school establish this partnership?

- Through personal contact with a teacher in Scotland
- Through Malawi-Scotland (MaSP) or Scotland-Malawi (SMP) Partnership
- Through another organisation, name

Other, namely:

5. What was your motivation for forming this partnership?

--

**Questions – Section 2: communication and activities of the partnership.**

In this section we would like to ask you about how you make contact with the Scottish School and what activities are part of the partnership.

6. How often do/did you have contact with your partner school?

- A couple of times a week
- Once a week
- A couple of times a month
- Once a month
- A couple of times in the year
- Once a year or less

7. How do/did you usually make contact with your partner school?  
(multiple answers possible)

- Via email
- Through WhatsApp
- Through Skype or FaceTime
- Through other organisations
- Other, namely:

8. What activities are/were you engaged in with your partner school?  
(multiple answers possible)

- Shared teaching projects
- Scottish teachers visiting Malawi
- Malawian teachers visiting Scotland
- Scottish pupils visiting Malawi
- Malawi pupils visiting Scotland
- Receiving resources from the Scottish school
- Receiving funds from the Scottish school
- Other, namely:

9a. Do/did these activities match the expectations that you had of the partnership?

- Yes
- No

9b. If No, what different expectations did you have?

**Questions – Section 3: benefits, difficulties and future of the partnership**

In this section we would like to ask you a couple of questions on how you feel the partnership is beneficial, but also on whether there are some difficulties that come with the partnership.

10a. Do/did you feel the needs and ideas of your school are/were well integrated in the partnership?

- Yes
- No

10b. If no, what would you feel needs/needed to change?

11. What do/did you feel is most beneficial of having the partnership?

12. What are/were the key challenges in sustaining the partnership?

13. How would you like to see the partnership develop in the future?  
If you no longer have an active partnership would you like to re-establish a partnership in the future, and why?

**Question – Section 4: School trips**

This section is about Scottish students, from your partner school(s) visiting Malawi.

14. Did your Scottish partner school ever visit Malawi with a group of students?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

If “No” or “I do not know” – questionnaire ends here. Thank you for filling in the questionnaire

If “Yes” – please go through to question 15

15. What activities did the Scottish students do on their visit?

(Multiple answers possible)

- Joint lessons
- Share activities with Malawian students
- Visit the country, seeing the sights
- Visit other schools
- Build or paint school buildings or houses
- Visit other organisations
- Other, namely:

16a. Were you, or your school, involved in organising (some of) these activities?

- Yes
- No

16b. If yes, in what way were you involved?

**This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for taking the time to fill it in.**

Please send the questionnaire back to the Malawi-Scotland Partnership: Area 14, Scripture Union House, P.O.Box 1589, Lilongwe. Or via email: [info@malawiscotlandpartnership.org](mailto:info@malawiscotlandpartnership.org)

If you have any questions about the questionnaire, or about the research, you can contact the International Development Team of the Scottish Government at [internationaldevelopment@gov.scot](mailto:internationaldevelopment@gov.scot)



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2020

**OGL**

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at  
The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80004-131-8 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, October 2020

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS771226 (10/20)

W W W . G O V . S C O T