

Cover Note – SCUUK Partnership Survey

In late summer 2010, Save the Children UK joined a group of 24 other NGOs, including Save US, from Europe and North America to conduct a partnership survey designed and administered by Keystone Accountability. The survey involved 2,733 southern partners. Save the Children UK asked 106 partners to complete the survey and 32 responded. Respondents were fairly well represented across all regions. This was the first coordinated survey of its kind for the participating organisations and is considered a pilot initiative. There are plans to repeat the survey periodically in the future.

We welcome the findings from this report and the initiative taken by Keystone Accountability, to produce a benchmark across the sector. Whilst some of the responses from our partners have highlighted some weaknesses in our approach, there was little that came as a complete surprise to us and we welcome these challenges as a way to improve our partnerships in future. While the results from this pilot are important, we should note they are not from a statistically representative sample of our local partners. The real value is the opportunity it provides us with to have conversations with our local partners about the aspects of partnership the survey measures, and to help guide and inform development of our partnership strategies in the future.

The issue of partnership is central to our Theory of Change, and a key aspect of that is our partnerships at Country Level, and as such we are committed to taking forward the findings from the survey and the recommendations made by our partners, where appropriate and feasible to improve our partnership strategies and approaches in the future.

Below are some of the findings from the report:

- ⇒ Staff and Relationships – Communication and staff approachability and respectfulness were highlighted as positives.
- ⇒ Understanding and learning – we are seen as understanding the sector in which we work, but not viewed as a leaders in the sectors.
- ⇒ Capacity building – generally we provided capacity building to a smaller number of respondents than other organisations in the cohort. But for those that did receive it they generally valued it.
- ⇒ Length of grants – the majority of our grants are given for 12-18 months. Save UK tended to have shorter relationships with respondents than other members of the cohort, 30 months versus 50 months for the cohort average.

Respondents identified a number of areas where they would like us to do better:

- ⇒ Engage more in their long term planning and financial viability
- ⇒ Support them to strengthen their presence at national and international levels
- ⇒ Share lessons and experiences among other organisations
- ⇒ Involve them more in deciding how to monitor and report progress
- ⇒ Develop joint strategies
- ⇒ Promote their work more

We intend to work with other Members of the Save the Children family to put in place policies and practices to address many of these issues.

KEYSTONE PERFORMANCE SURVEYS
NGO Partner Survey 2010

**Partner Feedback Report:
Save the Children UK**



www.KeystoneAccountability.org

In association with Bond, NIDOS and InterAction



Contents

Introduction 3

Survey process 3

Cohort 4

Benchmarks 5

Respondents 5

Reading the charts 6

Next steps 7

Performance summary 8

Section 1: Partnership profile 10

Section 2: Financial support 13

Section 3: Non-financial support 15

Section 4: Administration 21

Section 5: Relationship & communications 27

Section 6: Understanding & learning 31

Section 7: Overall satisfaction 33

Save the Children UK Tailored questions 35

Illustrative comments from respondents 38

Introduction

In August and September 2010, Keystone surveyed 2,733 southern partners of 25 northern NGOs. Partners were asked to rate and comment on different aspects of the northern NGOs' performance. The survey was carried out by Keystone as an independent third party on an anonymous basis: the partners knew that the northern NGOs would not be able to identify who said what about them.

This report presents what Save the Children UK's partners said about Save the Children UK compared to benchmarks from across the whole group of 25 northern NGOs. It provides credible data on how well Save the Children UK carries out the core functions of partnership, as seen from the bottom up.

SURVEY PROCESS

The survey process was managed by Keystone throughout 2010, building on its previous experience of feedback surveys and work with NGOs¹. It was carried out in association with Bond², NIDOS and InterAction, NGO umbrella organisations in the UK, Scotland and USA respectively.

The process included the following major steps:

Recruit cohort of northern NGOs in Europe	March – May 2010
Recruit cohort of northern NGOs in USA	July
Develop first draft questionnaire	May – June
Review two drafts of questionnaire with northern NGOs	June - July
Pilot questionnaire with southern partners	July
Translate questionnaire into French, Latin American Spanish and Portuguese	August
Administer questionnaire to partners	August – September
Statistical analysis	October
Report writing	November 2010

The northern NGOs were involved in all major stages of design and implementation. They gave substantial input into the questionnaire through two rounds of reviews, leading to significant changes in structure and content. They provided practical assistance in checking translations, piloting the questionnaire and providing Keystone with contact details for all partners involved in the process. They also introduced the process to their southern partners and encouraged them to respond. In addition to the 36 common questions, each northern NGO provided Keystone with up to four tailored questions which were administered only to their partners.

The US and European surveys were initiated independently. During the process it became clear that it would be possible and desirable to combine the cohorts and develop a bigger benchmarking study for both groups.

The questionnaire was administered as an interactive pdf form. It was distributed by Keystone directly to partners by email. Partners completed it off-line (they did not need stable internet access to complete it) and then emailed their responses back to Keystone. Approximately 2% of partners printed it out and sent their responses by fax. The survey was limited to partners who had a basic level of internet access. We believe this did not exclude a significant proportion of southern partners. Keystone emphasised to partners that their participation was voluntary and anonymous.

1 Keystone gratefully acknowledges the precedent provided by the Center for Effective Philanthropy and their support for our 2008 benchmarking survey for East African grantmakers.

2 This initiative builds on Keystone's previous work with Bond, including the 2006 report on quality standards: "Putting Beneficiaries First".

Introduction

In addition to the individual reports for each northern NGO, Keystone will produce a report for the whole cohort. That report will only set out benchmarks. It will not identify Save the Children UK or any other NGO's specific performance. The report will be publicly available before the end of the year.

The process was funded by fees paid to Keystone by the participating NGOs. Bond and NIDOS provided financial support to smaller UK NGOs through their effectiveness programmes. Keystone is a UK registered charity, no. 1118999. This report is the sole responsibility of Keystone Accountability.

COHORT

The 25 northern NGOs whose results are used as benchmarks in this report are:

European NGOs	US NGOs
CARE UK	CARE USA
Christian Aid	Catholic Relief Services
Concern	Church World Service
Helvetas	International Rescue Committee
International Service	Lutheran World Relief
Minority Rights Group	Mennonite Central Committee
Methodist Relief and Development Fund	Mercy Corps US
Peace Direct	Save the Children US
Practical Action	UMCOR US
Progressio UK	
Save the Children UK	
Schorer	
Self Help Africa	
Skillshare International	
Tearfund	
Trocaire	

Four other European NGOs asked Keystone to survey six or fewer partners. Because the number of partners was small, Keystone could not guarantee the anonymity of individual respondents. The questionnaire was administered on a non-anonymous basis. This may have influenced partners' responses. As a result, these four NGOs are not included in the cohort benchmarks in this report. They are:

AbleChildAfrica
Build Africa
Signpost International
Village Aid

Introduction

BENCHMARKS AND INDICES

Throughout the report, Save the Children UK's results are compared to the cohort of 25 northern NGOs identified above.

The northern NGOs operate in different ways and places, providing a variety of support including funding, training, moral support, joint advocacy and volunteers. While the NGOs have different goals and structures, they all share a common operating model: they aim to tackle poverty and suffering in developing countries by working in partnership with southern organisations. This commonality provides the basis for useful comparison through benchmarks.

Benchmarks show the range of performance achieved by NGOs in the cohort. They help readers interpret data and identify what performance levels are possible. The data need to be interpreted with care, in the light of Save the Children UK's specific context, goals and activities. It is unlikely that any NGO would aim to be 'best in class' across all performance areas.

The benchmarks are calculated as the averages of the 25 NGOs' results, not the averages of all survey respondents. This reduces the chance that data is skewed by the different numbers of responses received by each NGO. It ensures that data is like-for-like, comparing one NGO's results to others across the cohort. No benchmarks are available for Save the Children UK's tailored questions.

The performance summary consists of seven indices. Each index was calculated by combining the results from 4 – 10 specific questions in the survey. The indices mostly correspond to the questions in each section of the report. Where questions from one section are more relevant to another index they have been moved to increase accuracy.

RESPONDENTS

	Save the Children UK	Cohort
No. of partners invited to respond	106	2,733
No. of responses received	32	1,067
Response rate	30%	39%

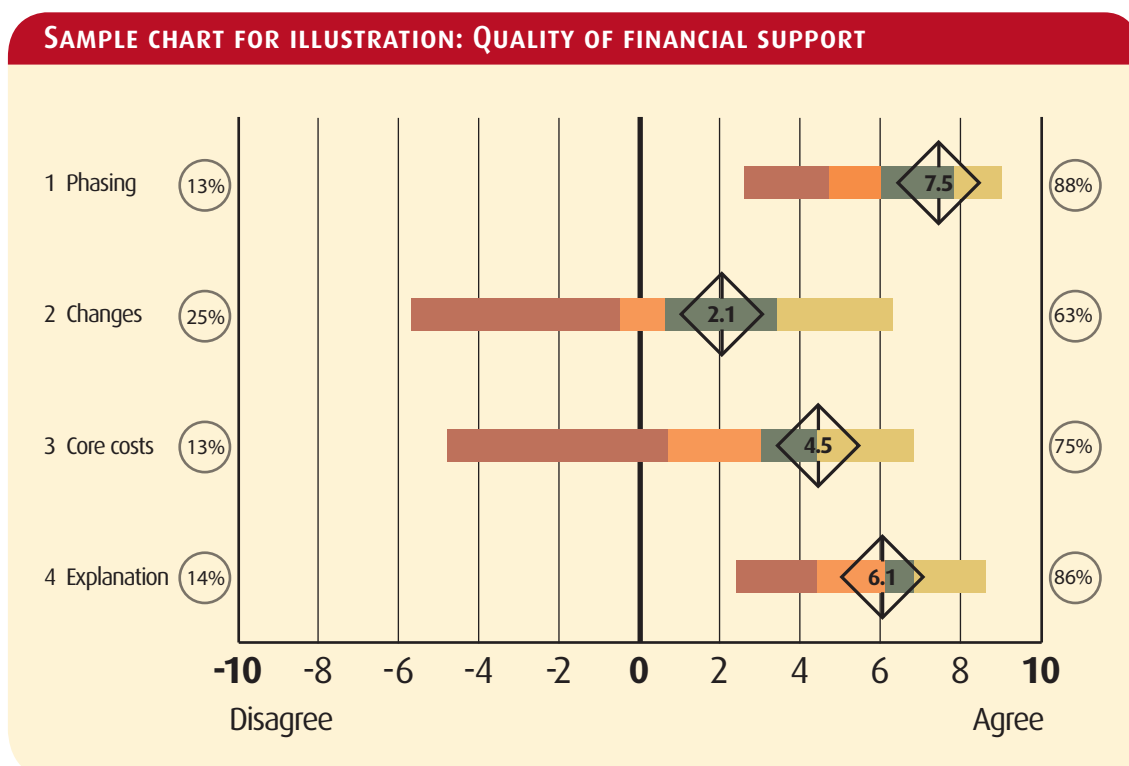
The figures in the table above show the total number of complete and partial responses. Some respondents did not answer all questions. The response rate varies between questions. This report does not include a breakdown of responses by language as this risks compromising the anonymity of respondents where the numbers involved are low.

The following people were involved in completing the questionnaire:

	SC UK (%)	Benchmark (%)
Head of the organisation	69	71
Other senior leadership	56	68
Manager	31	41
Operational staff / field staff	44	48
Others	9	14

The figures sum to more than 100% as several members of staff were often involved in completing each questionnaire.

- 45% of Save the Children UK's respondents declared themselves as female and 52% male (benchmarks: 33% and 59%). The others preferred not to say.
- 87% of Save the Children UK's respondents rated the survey process as useful or very useful (benchmark: 84%).



STATEMENTS

- 1 'The payments are made in appropriate phases so we can easily manage our cash flow.'
- 2 'Specific NGO allows us to make any changes that we need to about how we spend funds.'
- 3 'Specific NGO makes an appropriate contribution to general / core costs.'
- 4 'Specific NGO clearly explains any conditions imposed by the original donors who provide the funds.'

READING THE CHARTS

The chart above shows how a specific NGO is rated across four areas: phasing, changes, core costs and explanation. The chart has three elements:

- 1 The average of the specific NGO's responses is shown in a diamond. This is the specific NGO's rating. In this case, the specific NGO's respondents give the NGO a rating of 7.5 on a scale of -10 to +10 for how much they agree that the NGO provides grants in appropriate phases.
- 2 The bar that the diamond sits on shows the range of responses received by all 25 NGOs in the cohort. In this case, the responses range from 2.6 to 9.0 for 'phasing'.
 - The bar is split into four sections. Each one corresponds to a quarter of the cohort. This means that the specific NGO can see is their score is in the top quarter, the second quarter, the third quarter or the bottom quarter of the whole cohort.

Introduction

- In this case, the rating of 7.5 is at the top end of the second quarter of the whole cohort. The NGO is rated quite high compared to its peers.
 - The length of the quarters shows how closely different NGOs' ratings are grouped together.
- 3 The percentages in circles on either side of the chart show the total percentage of the specific NGO's respondents that rated the NGO above zero on the right (i.e. agreed with the statement) and below zero on the left (i.e. disagreed with the statement). The chart does not show benchmarks for these figures. Where relevant, benchmarks are added in the text below the chart.

Underneath each chart, bullet points pick out some of the main features of the data. The bullet points do not describe all of the specific NGO's ratings, in order to keep the report to a manageable length. We encourage readers to pick out the numbers from the charts and consider what they mean compared to the cohort. Sometimes additional points are made in the bullet points, which do not flow directly from the chart.

The report shows data on scales of 0 to 10 and -10 to +10. They have been converted from scales of 1 to 7 used throughout the questionnaire to make it easier to present and understand the findings.

NEXT STEPS

Some next steps are suggested below, which may be useful for Save the Children UK to consider.

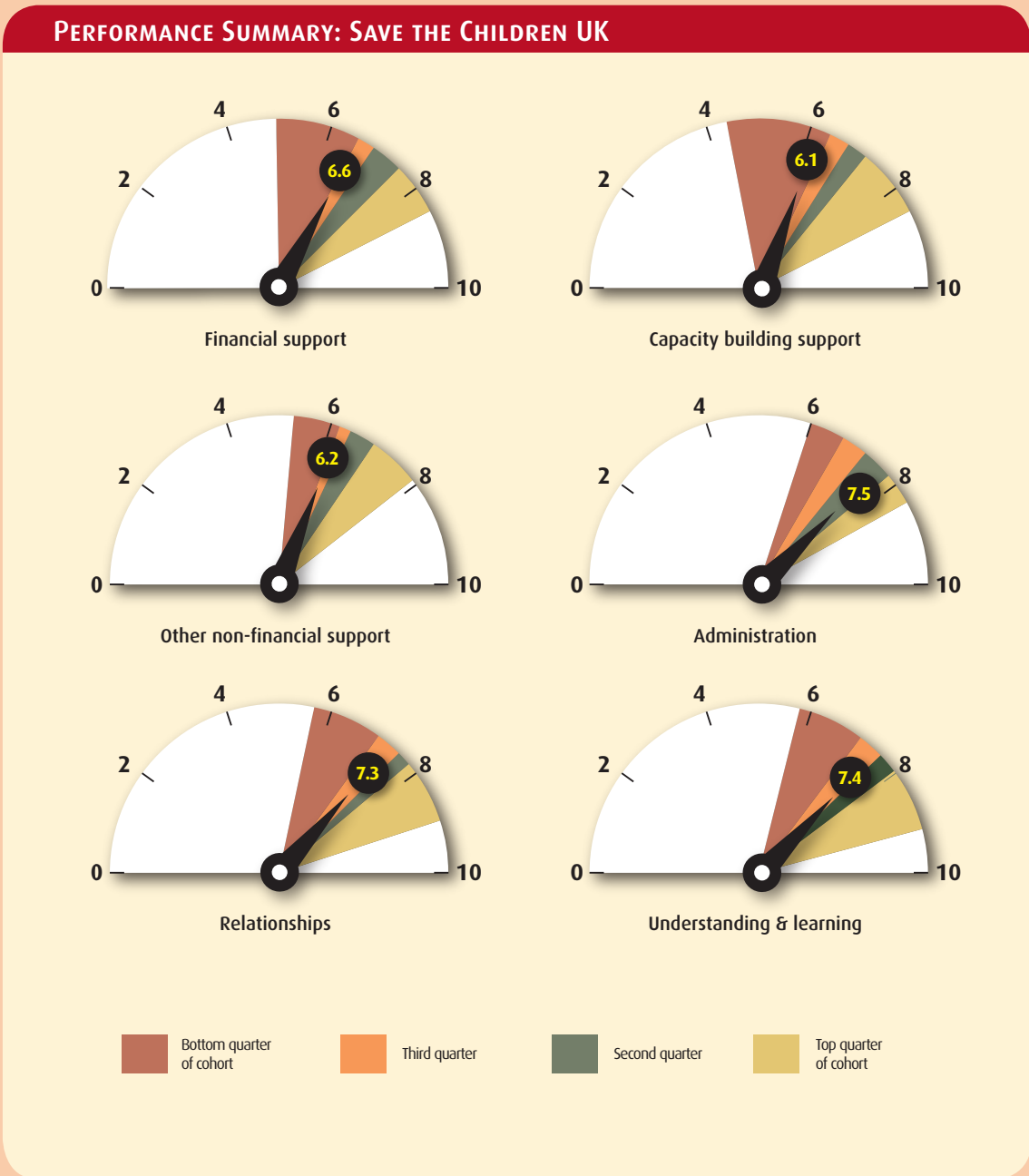
- a Discuss the report at board level.
- b Discuss the main findings with your own staff and southern partners to verify and deepen the analysis and demonstrate that feedback is taken seriously.
- c Identify opportunities, constraints and specific actions for making improvements, in dialogue with partners.
- d Identify ways of ensuring that your partnership processes are carried out consistently to a high standard and that the quality of key processes is checked.
- e Strengthen a culture of continual improvement, mutual respect and open dialogue with southern partners.
- f Discuss whether southern partners could collect similar benchmarked feedback from their constituents and use it to report performance. Partners may be able to develop internal benchmarks within their work. Consider developing some common approaches and facilitating learning between partners.
- g Collaborate with other northern NGOs that are tackling similar issues, including those in this cohort, to share best practice and drive up standards in the sector.
- h Repeat the survey in 12 to 24 months to monitor progress.
- i Consider publishing similar feedback reports in the future, potentially coordinated with other northern NGOs.

Step (i) could develop a new norm in NGO reporting, similar to the new norm among US foundations of publishing grantee feedback reports³. It could strengthen the links between performance, reporting and funding decisions, creating powerful incentives for improvement. For instance, a target could be set to publish all new partner feedback reports from January 2013 onwards.

97% of Save the Children UK's respondents asked Keystone to send them a copy of the cohort report (benchmark: 94%). We expect to send it to them by the end of the year.

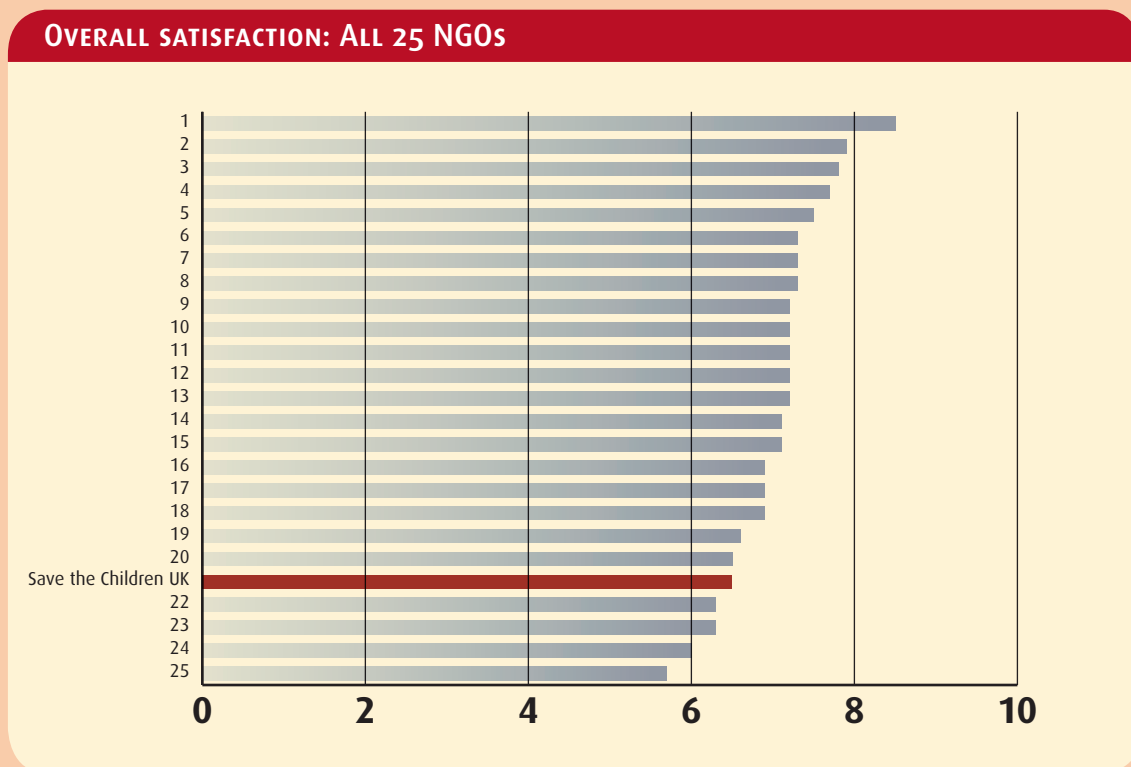
3 For example, see the Surdna Foundation's approach: <http://www.surdna.org/publications-resources/102.html>.

Performance summary



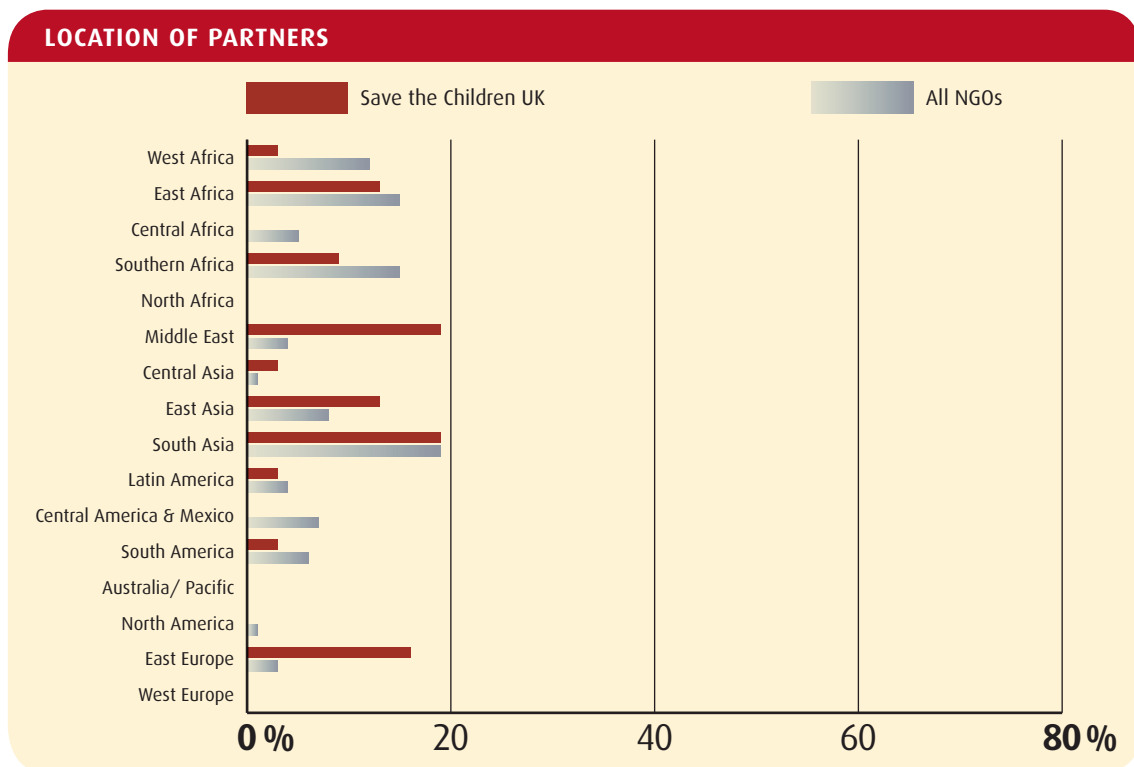
PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE: SAVE THE CHILDREN UK RESPONDENTS

Non-financial support	Monitoring and reporting	Relationships
1. Accessing other sources of funds	1. Share lessons and experiences among organisations working on the same issues	1. Develop joint strategies with respondents
2. Strengthening our presence at national / international levels	2. Involve respondents in deciding how to monitor and report progress	2. Promote respondents' work



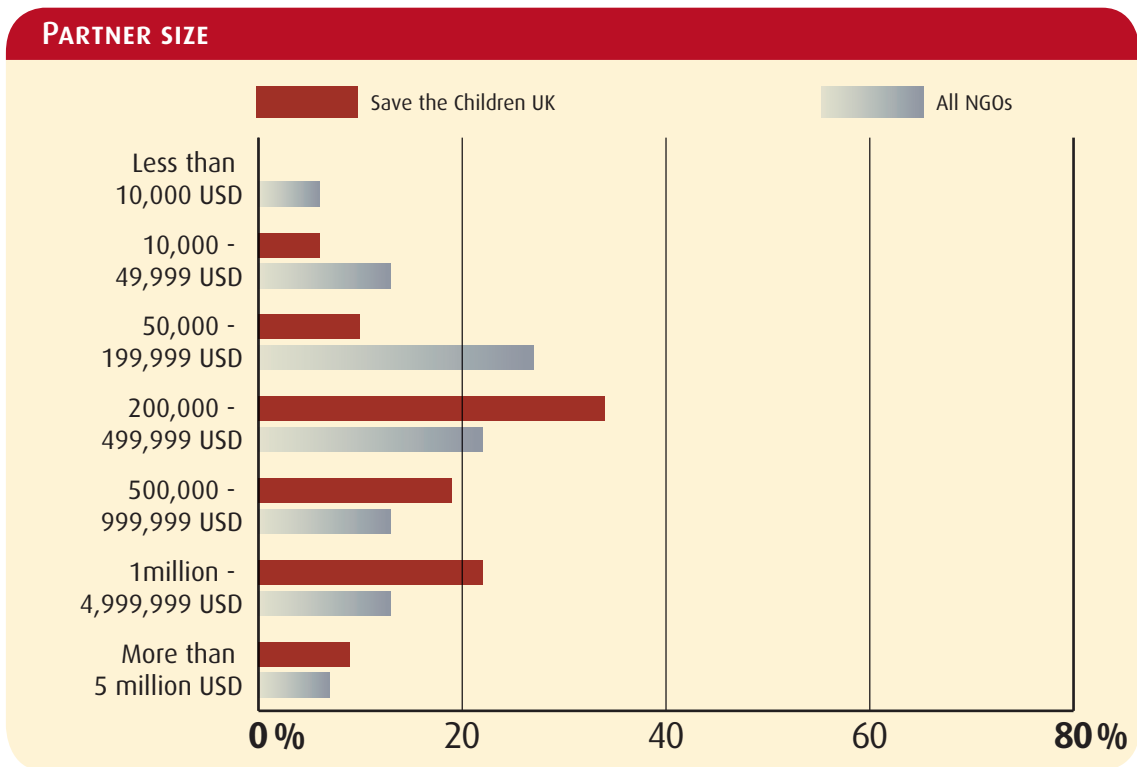
- Respondents' overall satisfaction places Save the Children UK 21st out of 25 NGOs.
- Save the Children UK is rated in the top 50% of the cohort for one index: administration, including finalising partnership agreements and monitoring & reporting. Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom half of the cohort for the other five indices.
- Respondents appreciate the speed with which Save the Children UK provides support. Your reporting formats are seen as easy to understand. But respondents do not find it quick and easy to collect information for reporting.
- Save the Children UK receives low ratings for capacity building and other non-financial support, particularly in management skills and insight about respondents' work.
- Respondents rate Save the Children low for involving them in shaping strategy, promoting their work and for providing support on time. Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom half of the cohort for listening and responding to respondents' concerns.
- Looking ahead, respondents would like Save the Children UK's help in becoming more independent and influential organisations, for instance by accessing other sources of funds and raising their profile.
- Respondents' experiences vary. Some give very positive ratings. But, as one respondent puts it, there is a persistent theme that "The overall attitude needs to be more inclined towards partnership relation rather than donor and recipient relation."

Section 1: Partnership profile



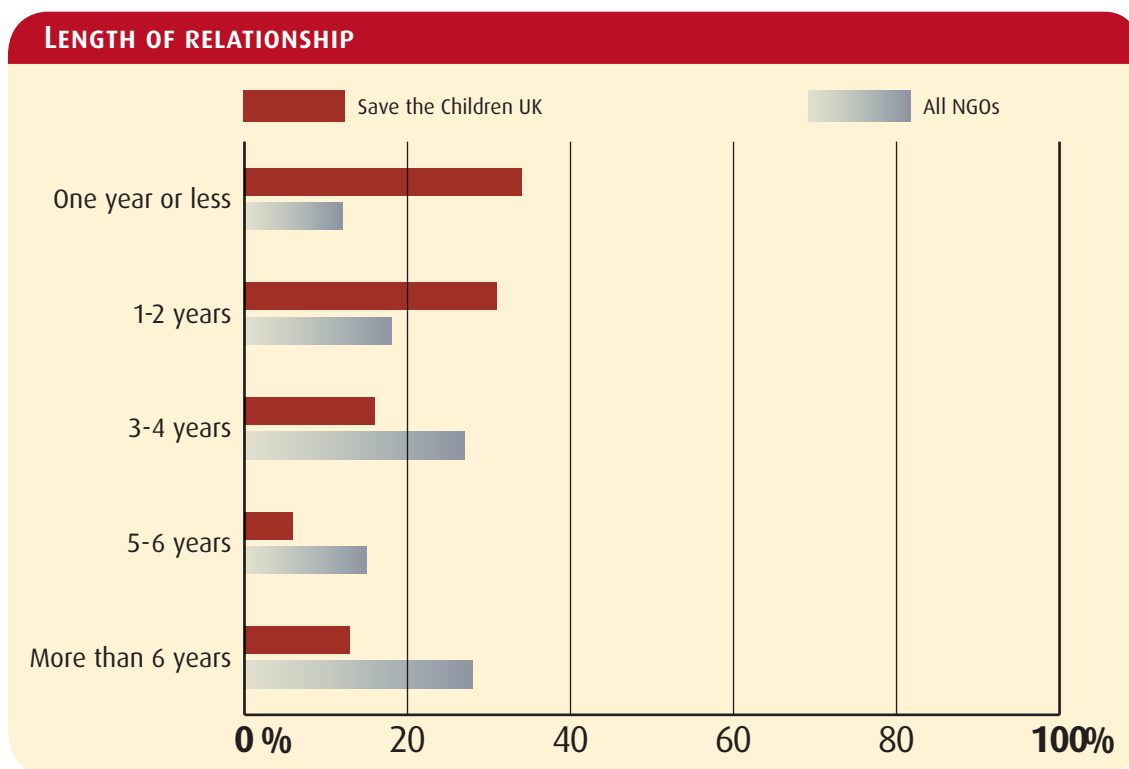
- Save the Children UK's respondents are located around the world. 25% are based in Africa (benchmark: 47%) and 19% in the Middle East (benchmark: 4%).
- 77% of Save the Children UK's respondents describe themselves as 'non-governmental organisations' (benchmark: 75%). None describe themselves as 'faith based organisations' (benchmark: 13%).
- Save the Children UK's respondents describe themselves as predominantly working by: 'providing services directly to poor people and communities' and 'helping people claim their human rights'. The two most commonly selected options for the whole cohort are 'providing services directly to poor people and communities' and 'supporting collective action by our members'.

Section 1: Partnership profile



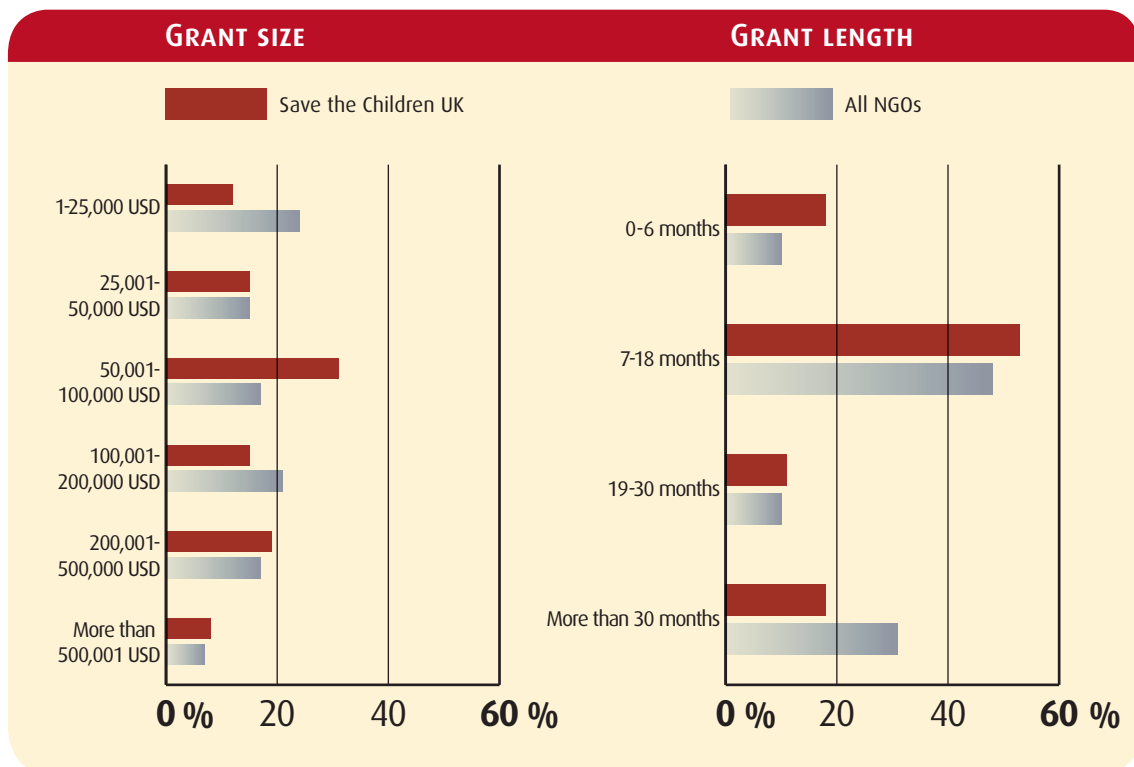
- The median annual budget of Save the Children UK's respondents is US\$500,000 (benchmark: US\$260,000). 50% of respondents have an annual budget higher than this figure and 50% lower than it.
- On average, Save the Children UK's respondents received funds and other support from 5.7 different organisations (benchmark: 5.3).

Section 1: Partnership profile



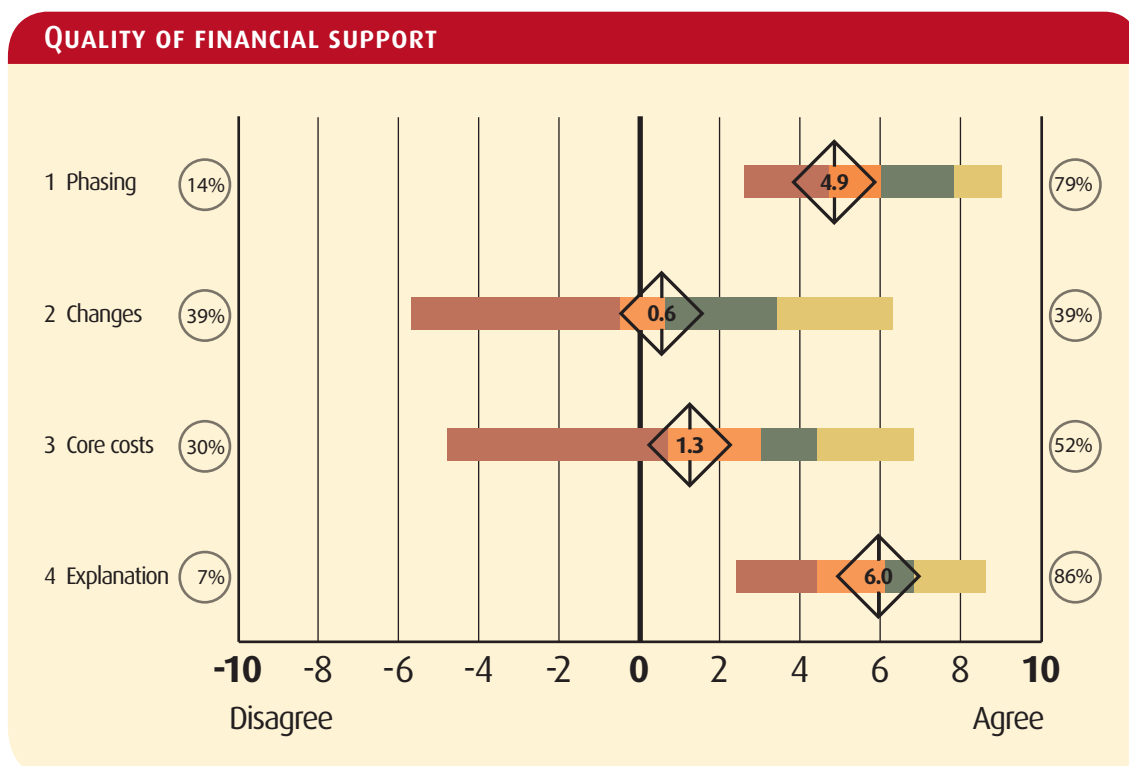
- Respondents report that, on average, they have received support from Save the Children UK for much shorter than most NGOs in the cohort. They have received support from Save the Children UK for 30 months (benchmark: 50 months).
- 65% of respondents have received support from Save the Children UK for less than 2 years (benchmark: 30%).
- The most important reasons why respondents choose to work with Save the Children UK are: 'achieve shared goals' and 'joint learning and understanding'. These are the same as the two most important reasons chosen across the cohort.

Section 2: Financial support



- 90% of Save the Children UK's respondents said that they are currently or have recently received funds from Save the Children UK (benchmark: 88%).
- Save the Children UK's grants are more grouped in the US\$50,000 to US\$100,000 range than the cohort as a whole. The average size of grant received from Save the Children UK is US\$170,000 (benchmark: US\$160,000).
- 71% of Save the Children UK's grants are for less than 18 months long (benchmark: 58%). Only 18% of Save the Children UK's grants are for more than 30 months long (benchmark: 31%). The average length of grant received from Save the Children UK is 17 months (benchmark: 23 months).

Section 2: Financial support



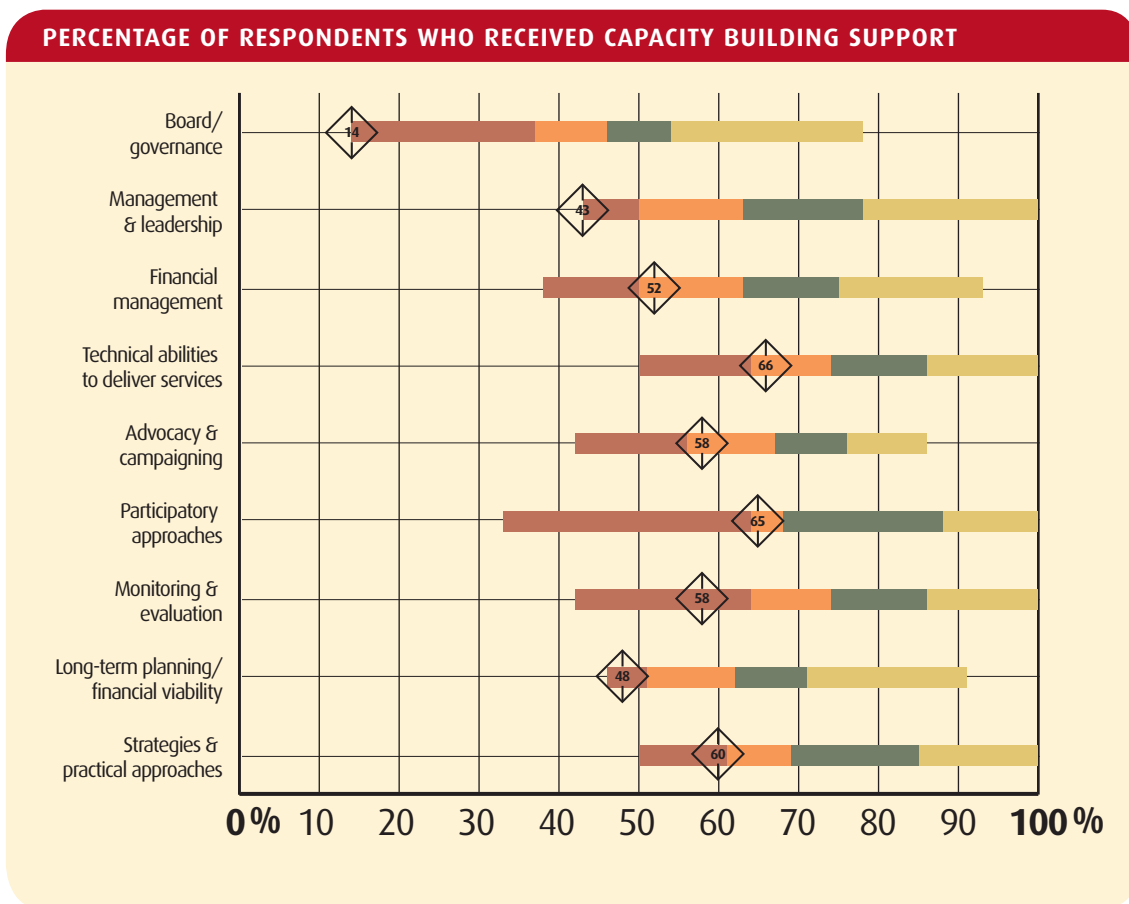
The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

- 1 'The payments are made in appropriate phases so we can easily manage our cash flow.'
- 2 'Save the Children UK allows us to make any changes that we need to about how we spend funds.'
- 3 'Save the Children UK makes an appropriate contribution to general / core costs.'
- 4 'Save the Children UK clearly explains any conditions imposed by the original donors who provide the funds.'

- Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom half of the cohort of NGOs for three of the four aspects of the quality of its financial support listed above.
- The highest rating Save the Children UK receives is for explaining conditions imposed by original donors. This is a mid level compared to the cohort.
- Save the Children UK is rated relatively low for contributing to respondents' core costs and making payments in appropriate phases.
- The lowest rating received by Save the Children UK is for allowing respondents to make changes about how they spend funds. 39% of respondents disagree that Save the Children allows them to make changes they need to (benchmark: 28%). All NGOs in the cohort are rated low in this area.
- Comments included:

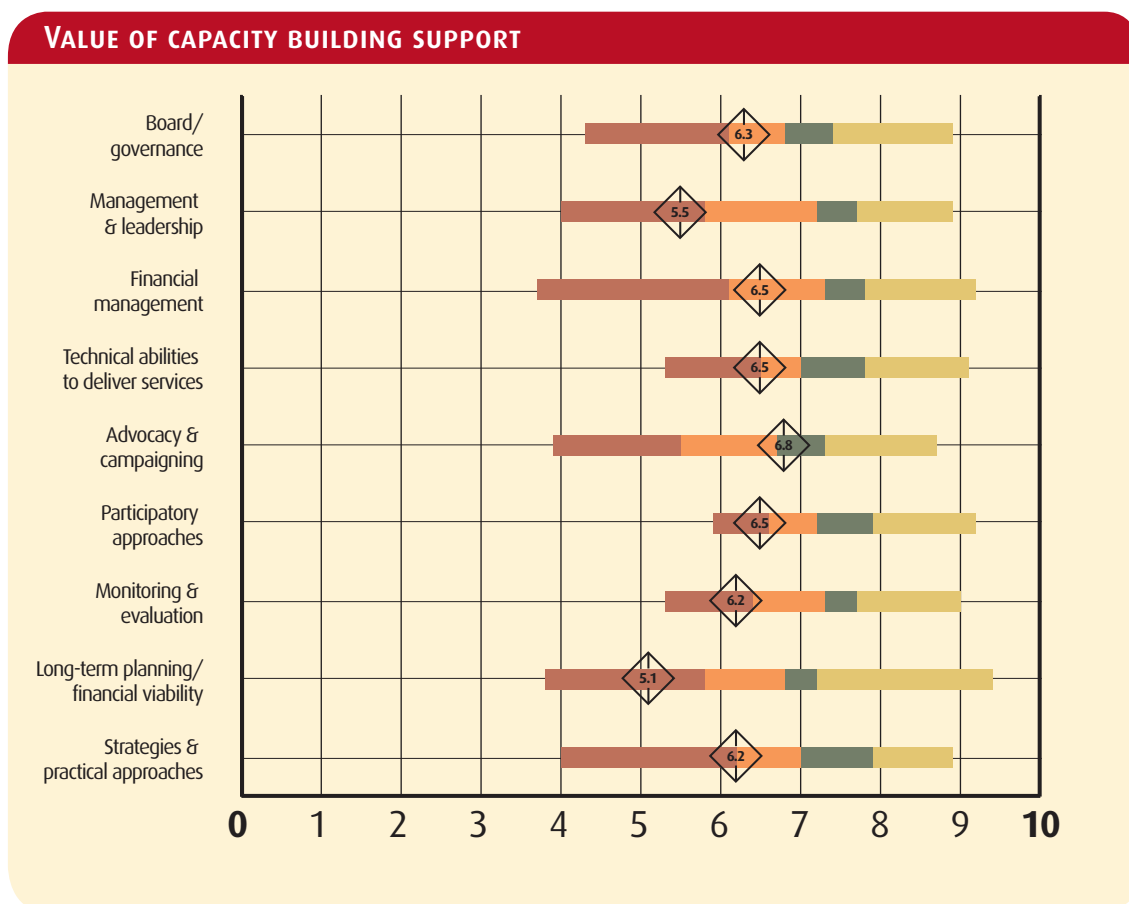
"Any variation on budget is allowed upon agreement with Save the Children UK."

Section 3: Non-financial support



- This chart shows the percentage of Save the Children UK's respondents who said they received capacity building support in each area.
- Save the Children UK provides capacity building support to far fewer respondents than most other northern NGOs, particularly in management areas.
- Save the Children UK provides most capacity building support in the areas of 'technical abilities to deliver services' and 'participatory approaches'.

Section 3: Non-financial support



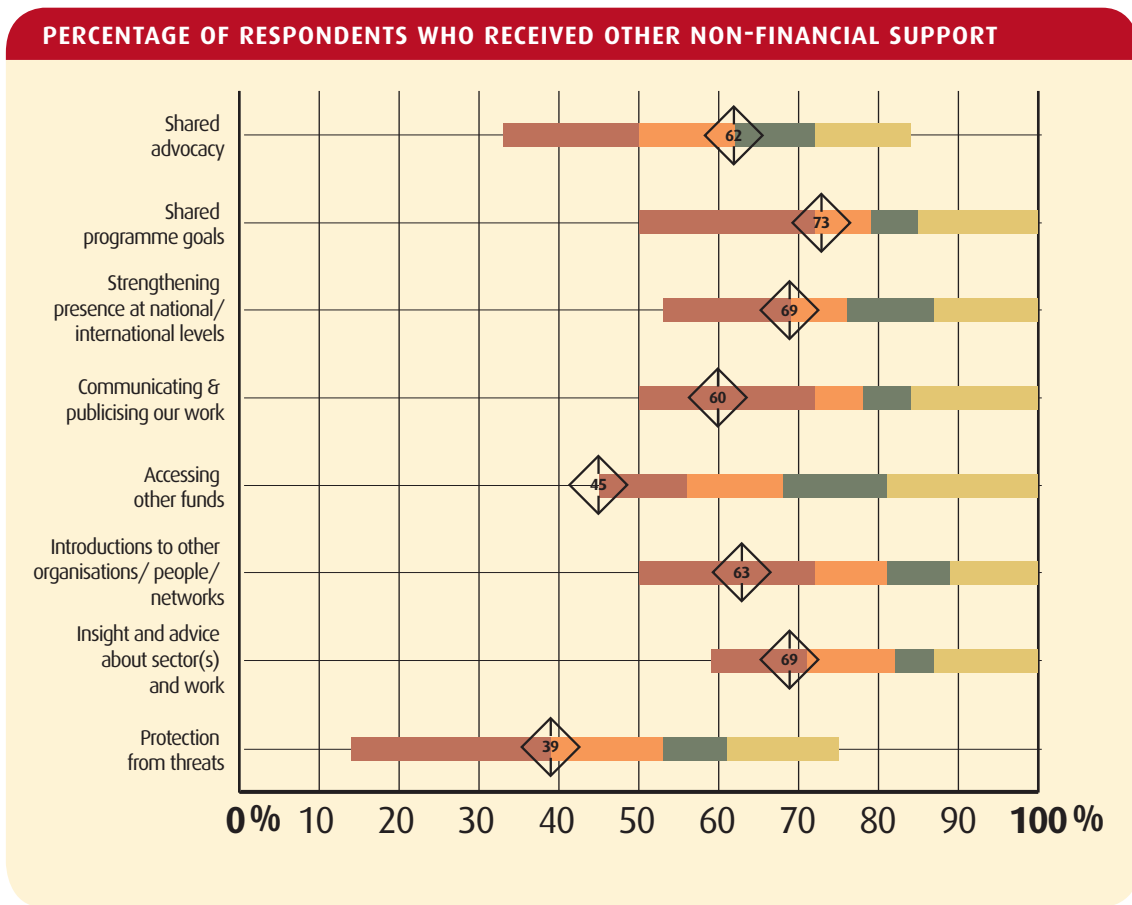
- This chart shows how useful the respondents who received capacity building support found it. The average of Save the Children UK's respondents' assessments is shown.
- Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom 50% of NGOs in the cohort for capacity building support in eight of the nine areas listed above.
- Save the Children UK receives the highest ratings for support in 'advocacy & campaigning'.
- Save the Children UK receives ratings in the bottom 25% of NGOs for support in 'long-term planning / financial viability', 'management & leadership' and 'monitoring and evaluation'.
- Comments included:

"So far we appreciate the various supports provided by [Save the Children UK] particularly the capacity building support on grant management perspective by assigning advisor for 11 months."

"Our experience with Save the Children UK is still new; we would welcome benefiting from Save the Children UK systems and experience (whether through their own personnel or consultants) in developing our own."

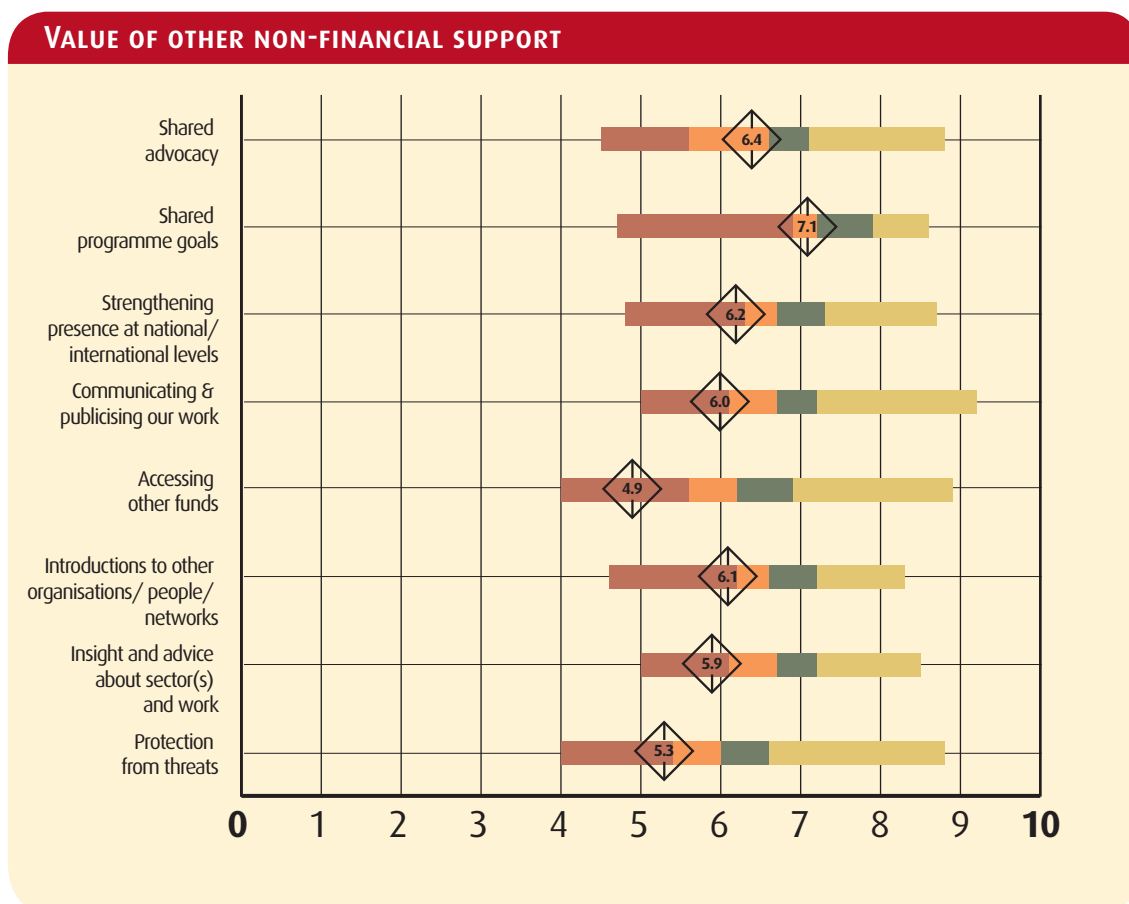
"I would suggest if [Save the Children UK] take its partner for long term with clear institutional development plan and extend support with focus programming. As of to day this is the gray area or bad practice which is more leading to ad hoc approach."

Section 3: Non-financial support



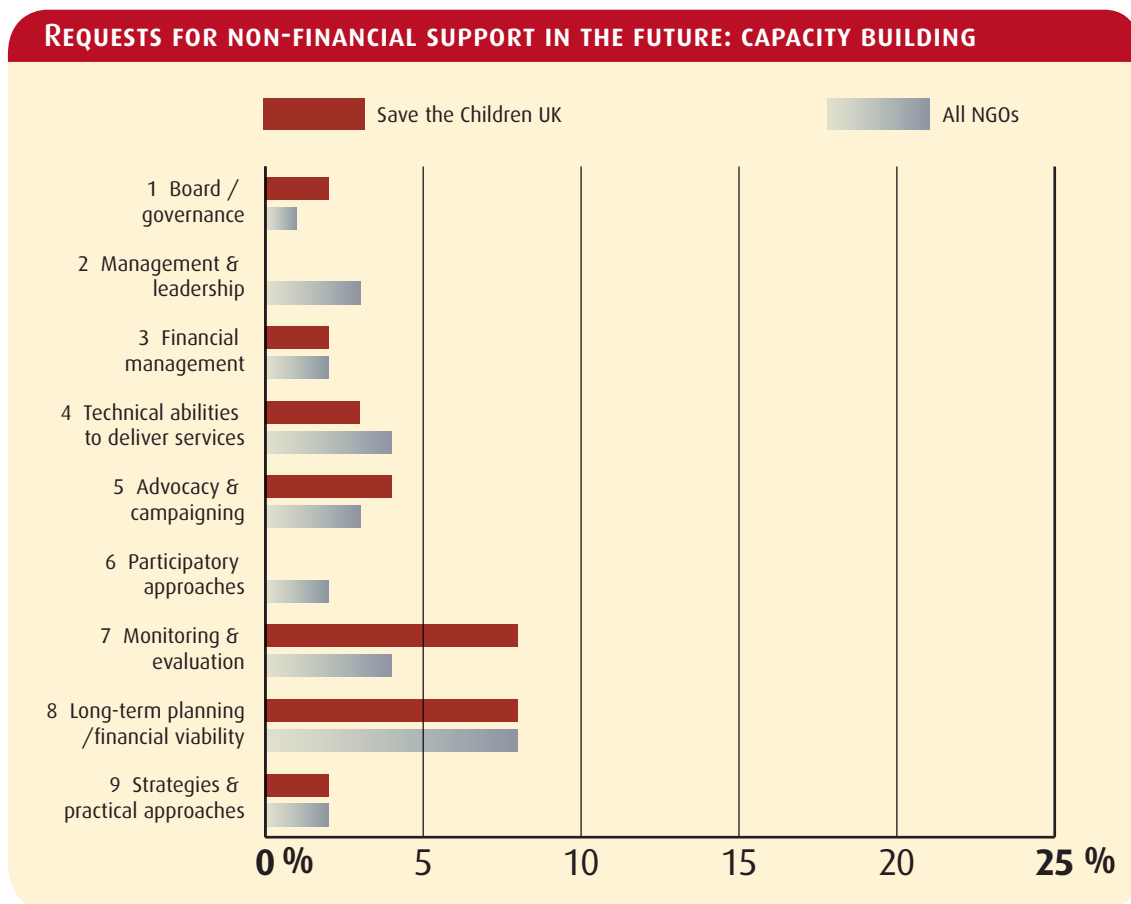
- This chart shows the percentage of Save the Children UK's respondents who said they received support in each area.
- Save the Children UK is in the bottom 50% of NGOs for the amount of capacity building support they provide partners in seven out of the eight areas listed above.
- Save the Children UK provides support to the smallest proportion of respondents in the cohort in the area of 'accessing other sources of funds'.

Section 3: Non-financial support



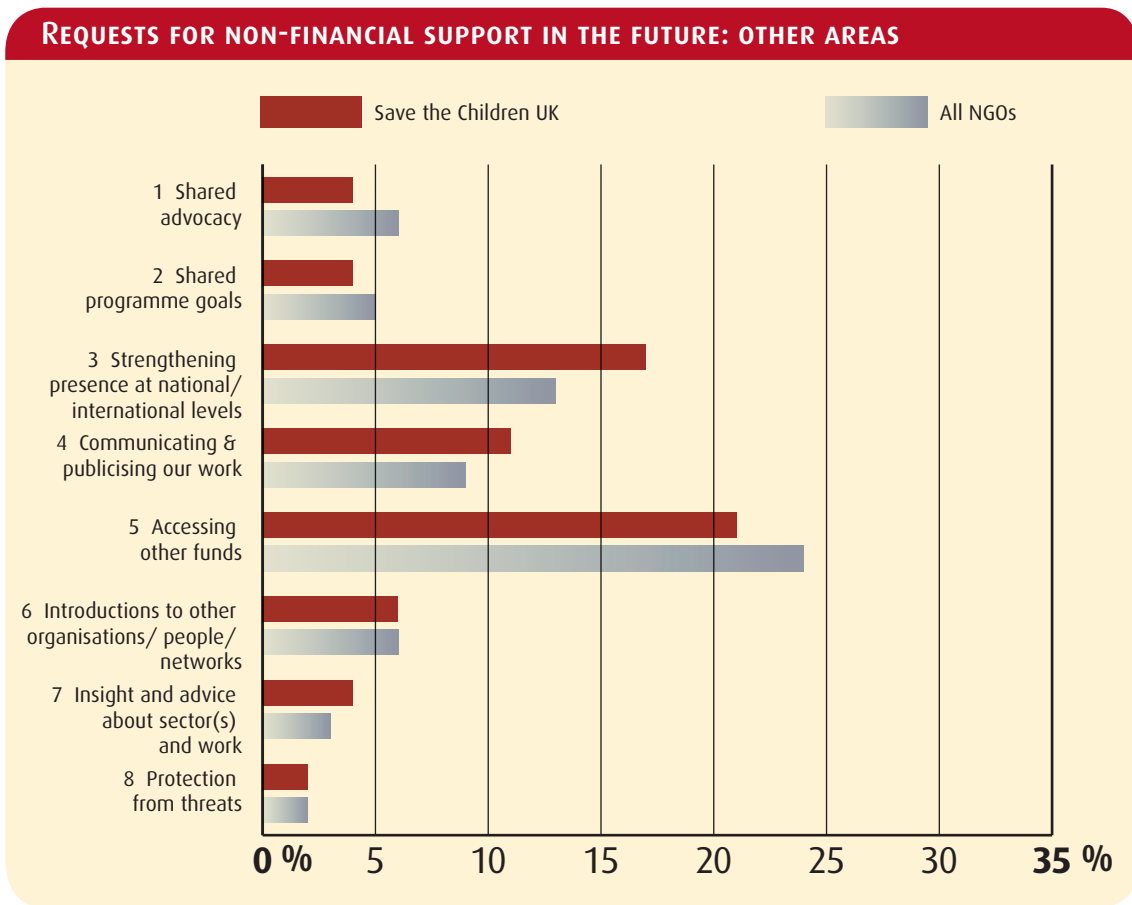
- This chart shows how useful the respondents who received other forms of non-financial support found it. The average of Save the Children UK's respondents' assessments is shown.
- Save the Children UK's support is rated in the bottom 50% of NGOs across all eight areas listed above and in the bottom 25% of NGOs for six of them.
- Save the Children UK receives its highest ratings for support in 'achieving shared programme goals' and 'achieving shared advocacy goals'.
- Save the Children UK receives its lowest ratings for support in 'accessing other sources of funds', 'protection from threats' and 'insight and advice about respondents' sectors and work'.

Section 3: Non-financial support

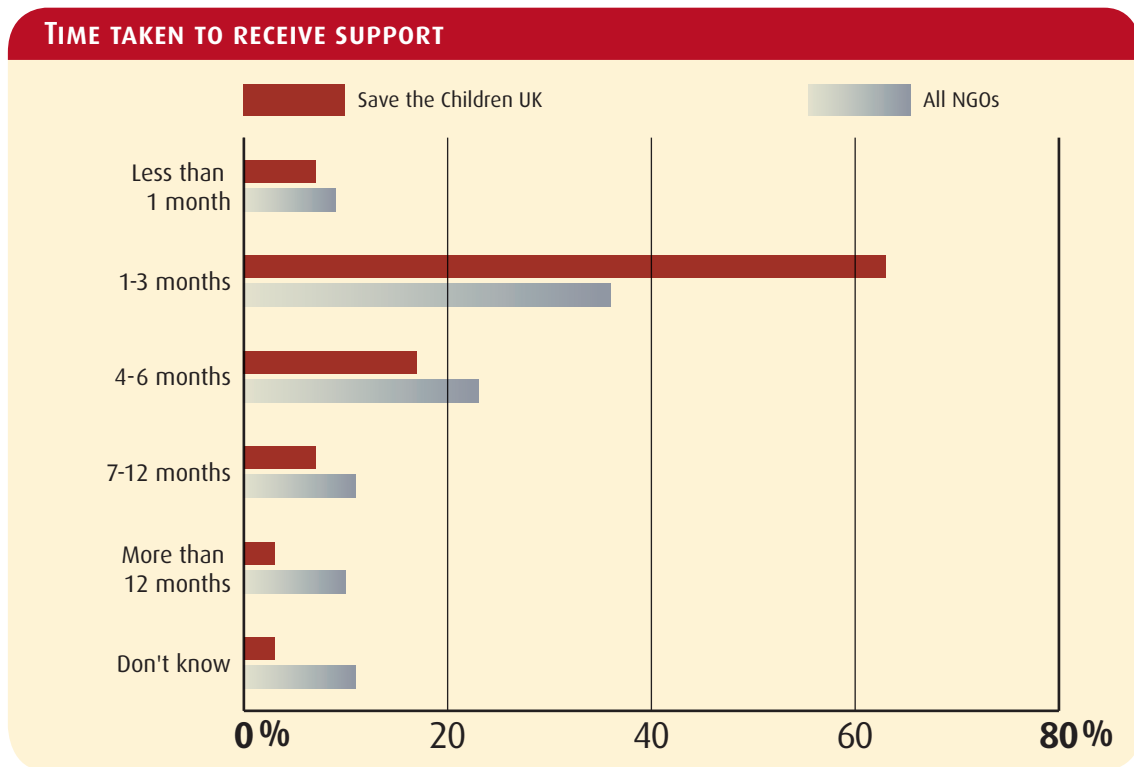


- Respondents were each asked to identify up to two areas where they would most like to receive support from Save the Children UK in the future.
- In the future, Save the Children UK's respondents would most like to receive non-financial support in: 'accessing other sources of funds' and 'strengthening their presence at national / international levels'.
- Capacity building assistance is selected as a priority by more than 5% of respondents in the areas of 'monitoring and evaluation' and 'long term planning / financial viability'.
- These preferences are similar to those expressed to other northern NGOs by their southern partners.

Section 3: Non-financial support

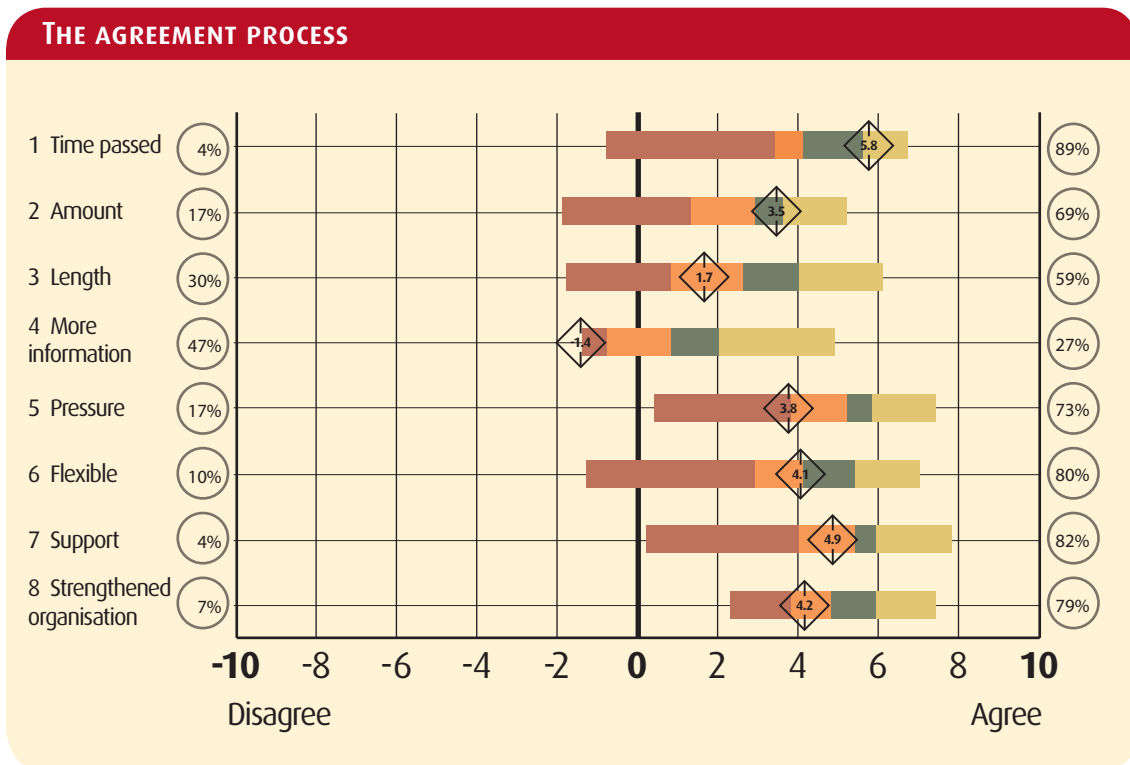


Section 4: Administration



- On average, respondents report that 3.5 months pass from the date that they first discussed support with Save the Children UK and the date when they first received support (benchmark: 5.4 months).
- 70% of respondents reported that it took less than 3 months to receive support (benchmark: 45%).

Section 4: Administration

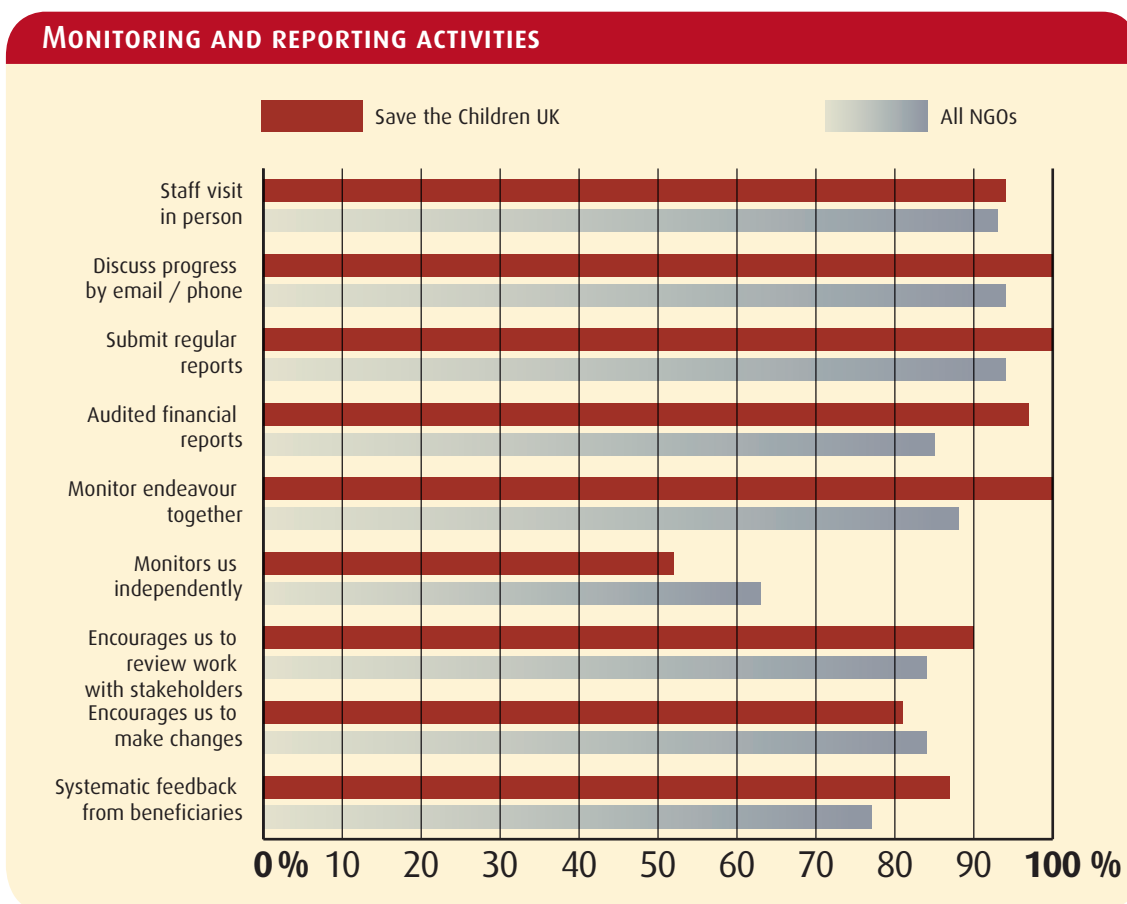


The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

- 1 'The time that passed from starting discussions to receiving support was reasonable.'
- 2 'The amount of support from Save the Children UK is well matched to our needs.'
- 3 'The length of support from Save the Children UK is well matched to our needs.'
- 4 'Save the Children UK asks for more information during the agreement process than other NGOs/funders.'
- 5 'During the agreement process, we did not feel pressured by Save the Children UK to change our priorities.'
- 6 'Save the Children UK is flexible and is willing to adapt the terms of its support to meet our needs.'
- 7 'Save the Children UK gave us enough support to help us finalise the agreement.'
- 8 'The process of finalising the agreement helped strengthen our organisation.'

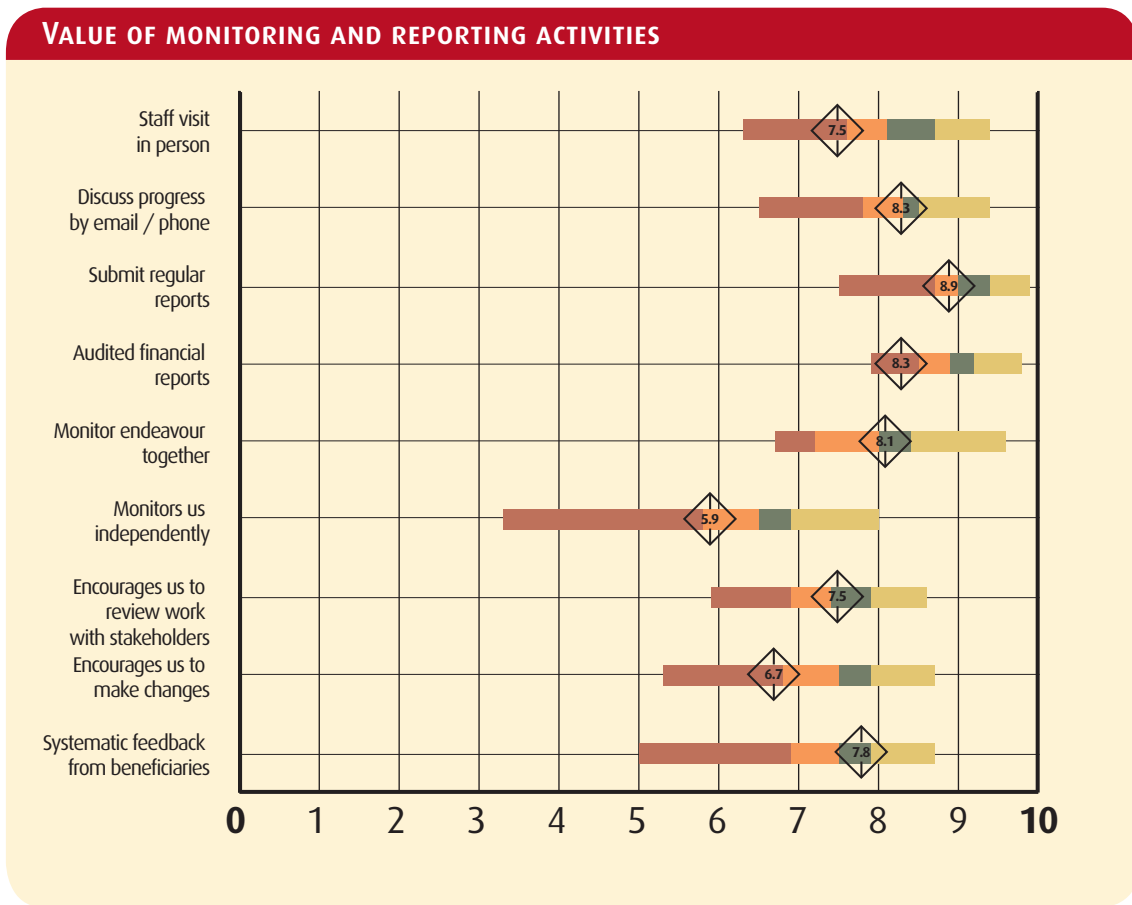
- Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom half of the cohort for five aspects of the agreement process listed above, and in the top half for three.
- Save the Children UK receives a very high rating from respondents for the time taken to receive support, among the top 25% of NGOs. You also receive a high rating for not asking for more information than other NGOs / funders. (NB this last aspect is scored negatively, so a low score is associated with high performance.)
- Save the Children UK receives mid to low ratings for providing respondents with enough support to finalise agreements, how much finalising the agreement helped strengthen respondents' organisations and for being flexible about support.

Section 4: Administration



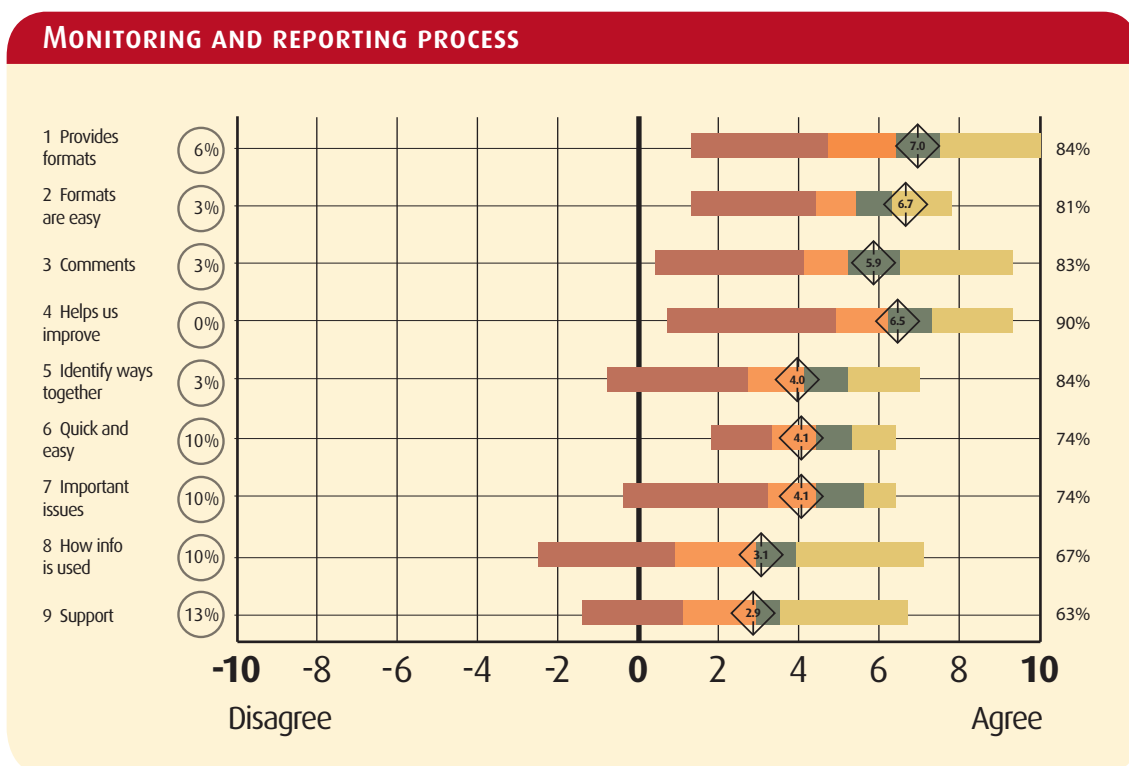
- Save the Children UK visits 94% of respondents in person (benchmark: 93%) and discusses progress by phone or email with 100% (benchmark: 94%). 100% of respondents submit regular narrative and financial reports to Save the Children UK (benchmark: 94%).

Section 4: Administration



- This chart shows the mean response from respondents who said that each activity applies to them. It excludes those who said that the activity does not apply.
- Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom half of the cohort for the value of five of the nine monitoring and reporting activities listed above, and in the top half for two of them.
- Save the Children UK receives a high rating for the value respondents see in submitting regular narrative and financial reports.
- Save the Children receives low ratings for monitoring respondents independently and for encouraging respondents to make changes to their activities and budgets based on lessons learned.

Section 4: Administration

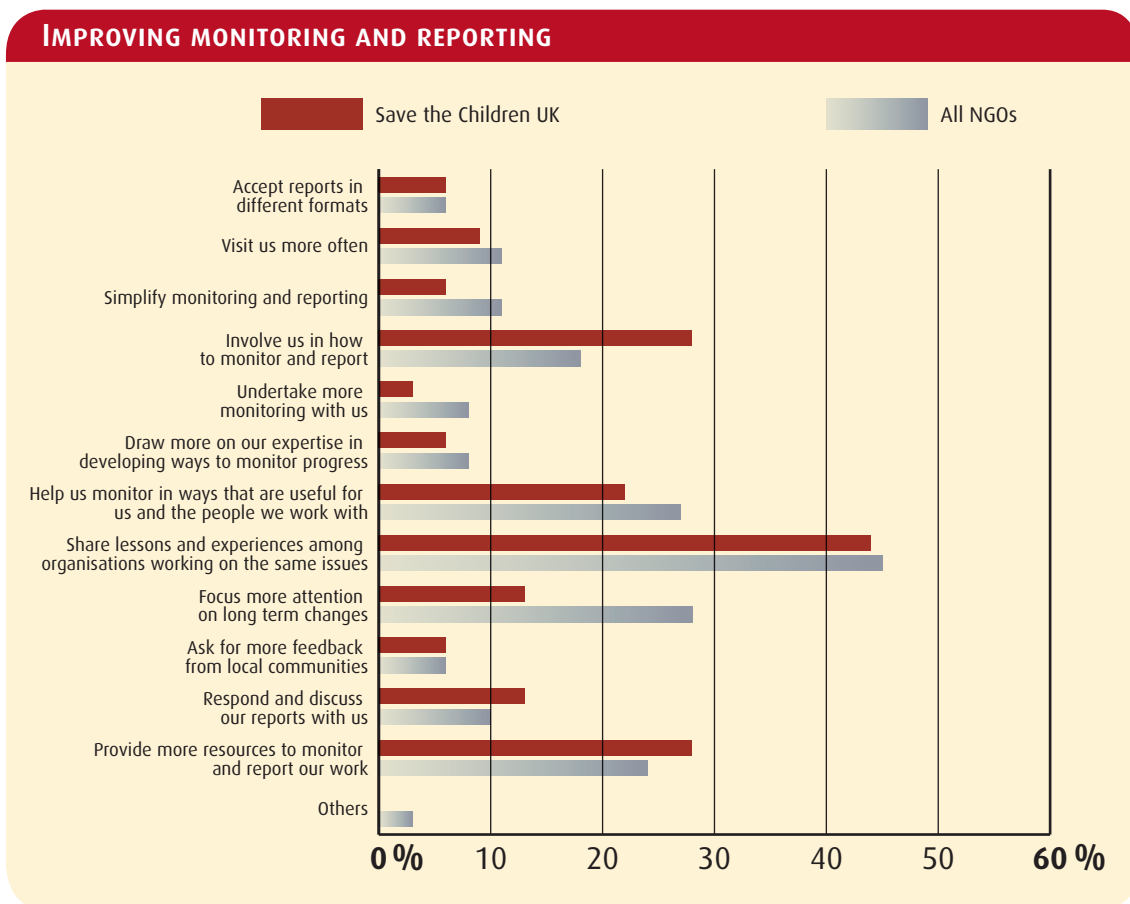


The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

- 1 'Save the Children UK provides us with reporting formats for us to use.'
- 2 'Reporting formats provided by Save the Children UK are easy to understand and use.'
- 3 'Save the Children UK gives us useful comments about the reports we send them.'
- 4 'The monitoring and reporting we do for/with Save the Children UK helps us improve what we do.'
- 5 'We work with Save the Children UK to identify useful and relevant ways of monitoring our impact.'
- 6 'It is quick and easy for us to collect information and write reports for Save the Children UK.'
- 7 'Save the Children UK makes us report on what is important, rather than details.'
- 8 'We understand how Save the Children UK uses the information we provide.'
- 9 'Save the Children UK provides enough funds and support for us to monitor and report on our work.'

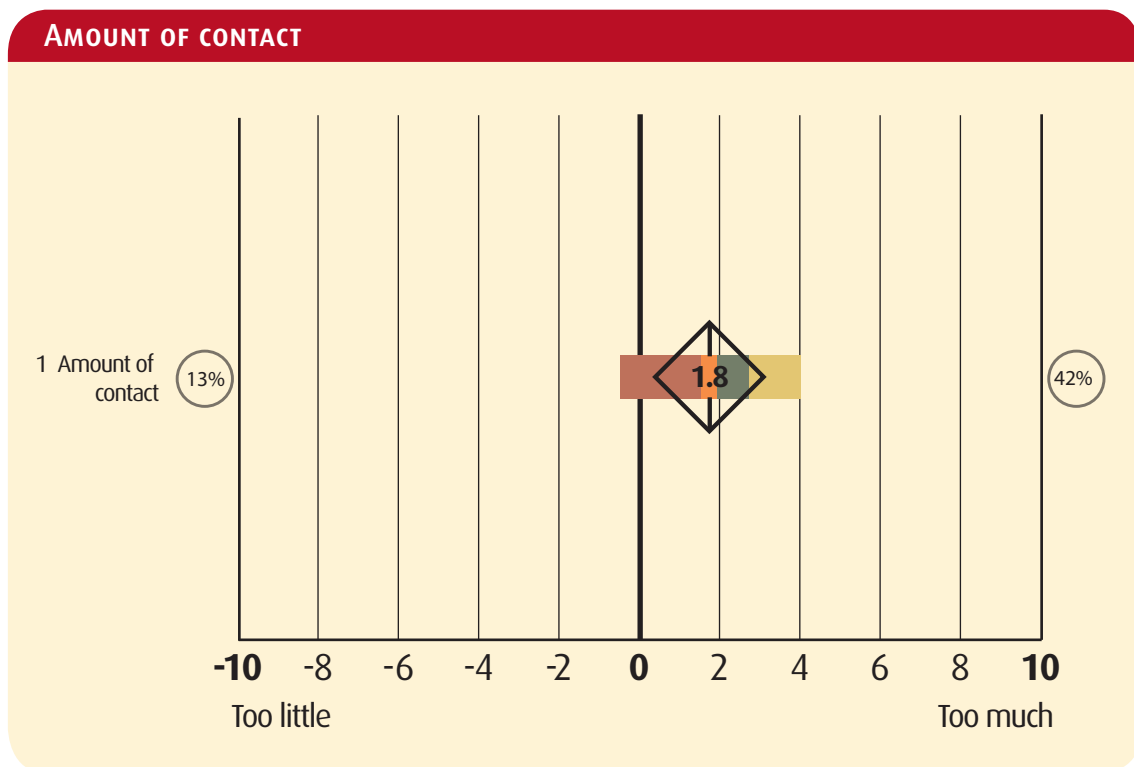
- Save the Children UK is rated in the top half of the cohort for five of the aspects of monitoring and reporting listed above, and in the bottom half for three of them.
- Save the Children UK provides reporting formats to a high proportion of respondents, which receive a high rating for being easy to understand and use.
- Save the Children UK also receives relatively high ratings for giving respondents useful comments on their reports and for reporting processes help respondents improve what they do.
- Respondents give Save the Children UK low ratings for how quick and easy it is for them to collect information and write reports and for how much Save the Children UK makes them report on what is important, rather than details.

Section 4: Administration



- Respondents were asked to identify two options from this list that they would most like Save the Children UK to do to improve its monitoring and reporting in the future.
- In the future, Save the Children UK's respondents would most like Save the Children UK to improve its monitoring and reporting by: (a) sharing lessons and experiences among organisations working on the same issues and (b) involving respondents in deciding how to monitor and report progress.
- Respondents would also like Save the Children to provide more resources for monitoring and reporting, and to help them monitor in ways that are useful for respondents and the people they work with.
- These are similar to the options most often selected by other NGOs' respondents.

Section 5: Relationship and communications

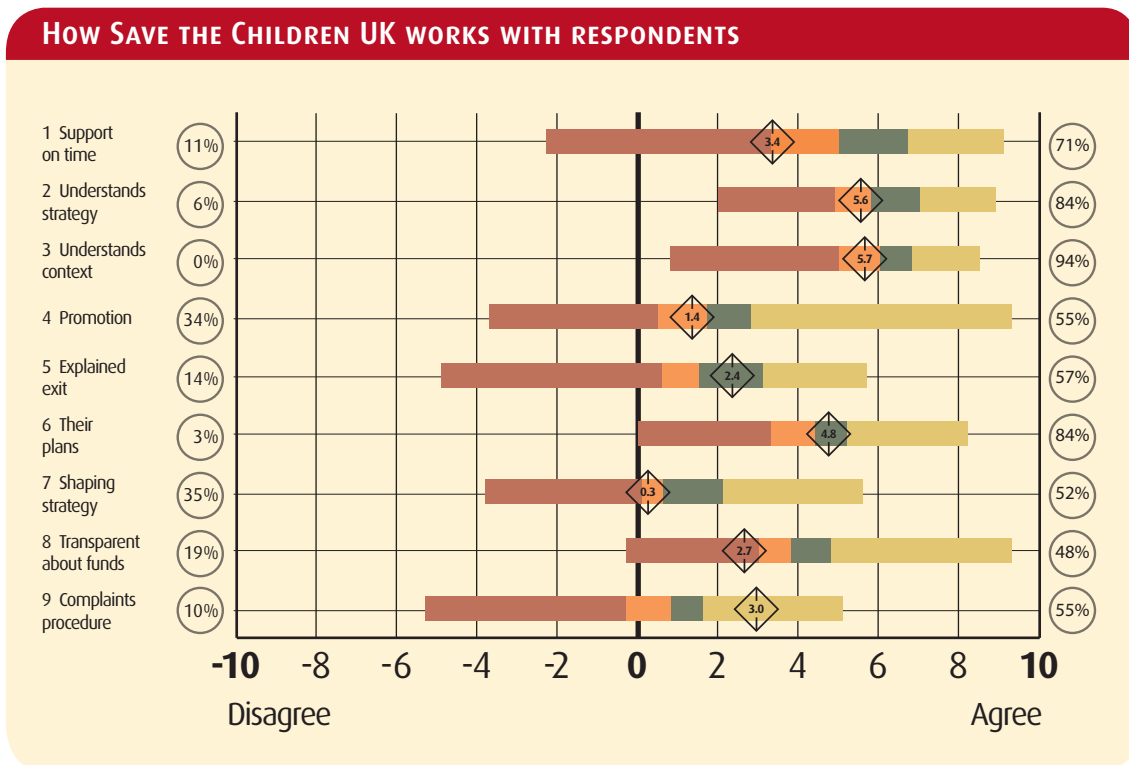


The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

1 'How would you rate the amount of contact you have had with Save the Children UK during your current or most recent agreement?'

- 42% of Save the Children UK's respondents would like to have less contact with Save the Children UK (benchmark: 45%).
- 13% of Save the Children UK's respondents said they had too little contact with Save the Children UK during their current or most recent agreement (benchmark: 12%).

Section 5: Relationship and communications

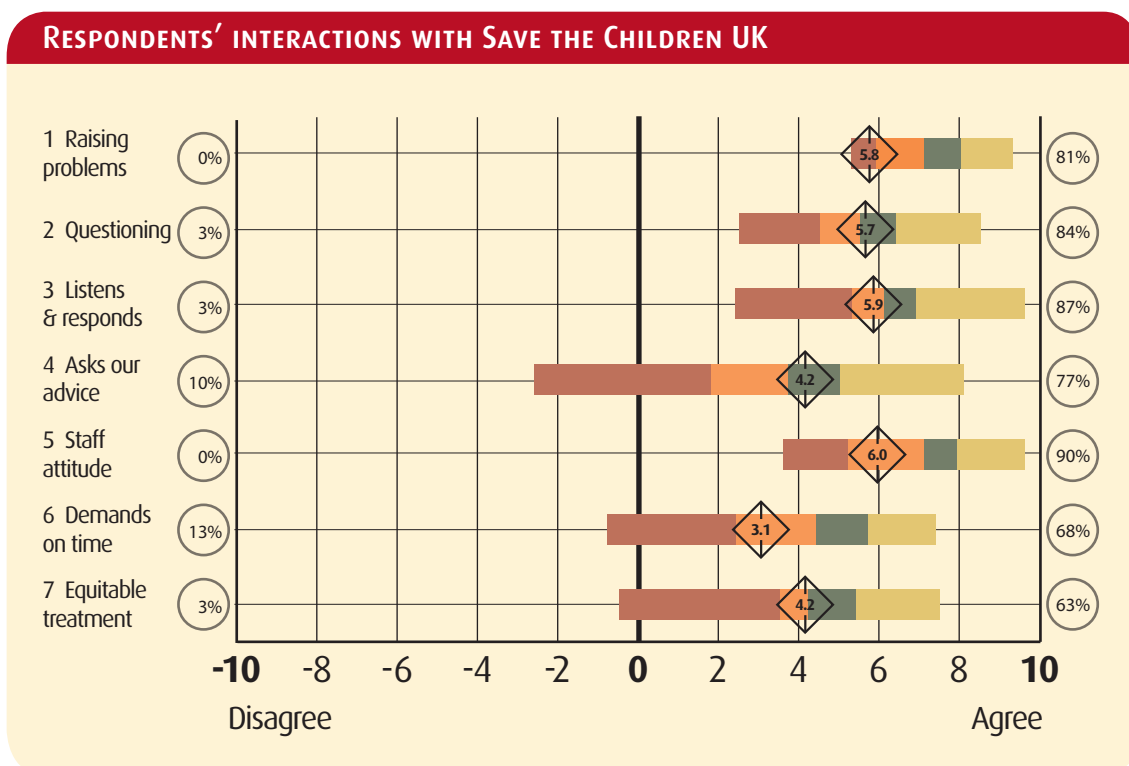


The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

- 1 'Support (including funding) arrives when Save the Children UK says it will.'
- 2 'Save the Children UK understands our strategy.'
- 3 'Save the Children UK understands our working environment and cultural context.'
- 4 'Save the Children UK promotes our organisation in the media and elsewhere.'
- 5 'Save the Children UK has explained when it expects to stop working with us.'
- 6 'We understand Save the Children UK's plans and strategies.'
- 7 'Save the Children UK involves us in shaping its strategy.'
- 8 'Save the Children UK is transparent about how it uses its funds.'
- 9 'Save the Children UK has a complaints procedure we could use if we had to.'

- Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom half of NGOs in the cohort for six of the areas listed above, and in the top half for three.
- Save the Children UK receives its highest ratings for understanding respondents' strategies, working environments and cultural contexts. All NGOs score highly in this area, and Save the Children receives a mid to low level rating compared to other NGOs.
- Save the Children UK receives its lowest ratings for involving respondents in shaping your strategy and for promoting respondents in the media and elsewhere.
- Save the Children UK also receives relatively low ratings for being transparent about how it uses funds and for providing support on time.

Section 5: Relationship and communications



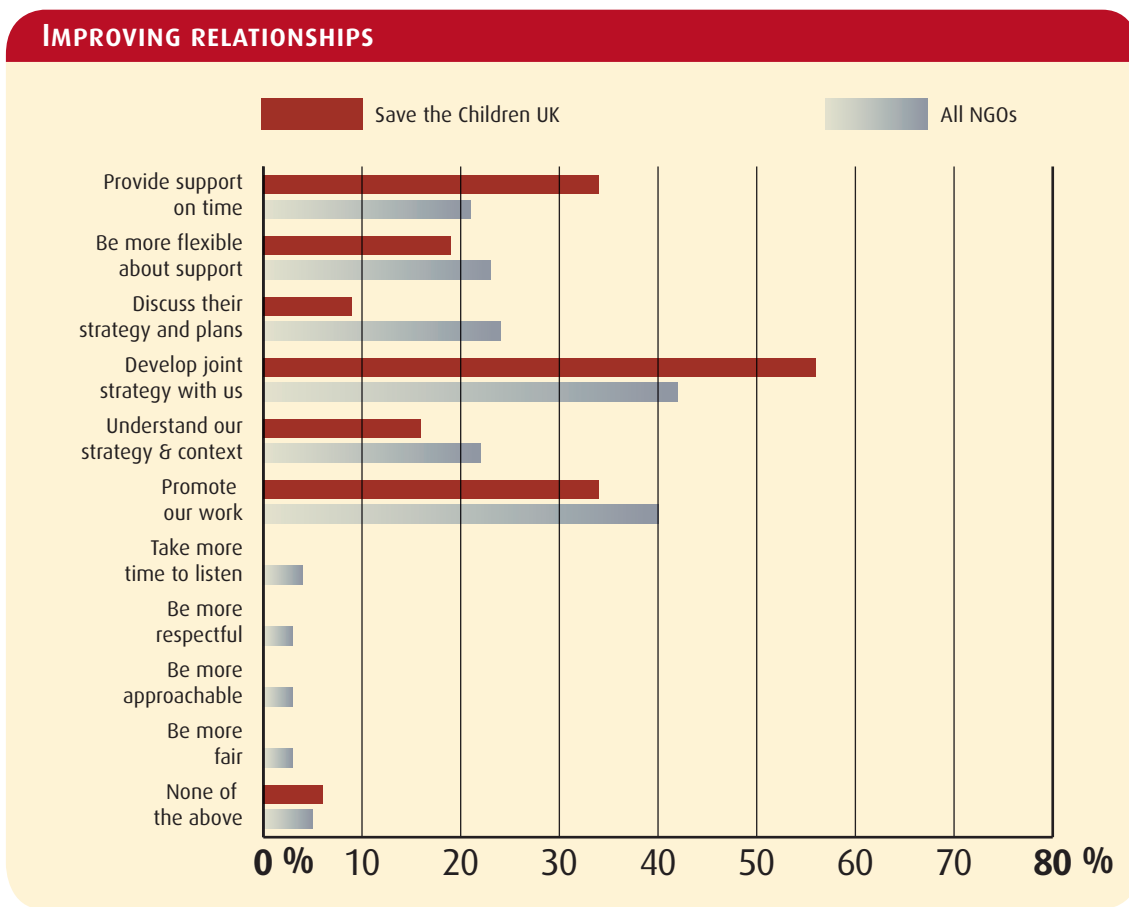
The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

- 1 'We feel comfortable approaching Save the Children UK to discuss any problems we are having.'
- 2 'We feel comfortable questioning Save the Children UK's understanding or actions if we disagree with them.'
- 3 'Save the Children UK listens and responds appropriately to our questions and concerns.'
- 4 'Staff from Save the Children UK ask us for our advice and guidance.'
- 5 'Save the Children UK's staff are respectful, helpful and capable.'
- 6 'Save the Children UK does not make demands on our time to support their work.'
- 7 'Save the Children UK treats all partners the same way.'

- In four of the seven areas listed above, Save the Children is rated in the bottom half of the cohort, and in two areas in the top half.
- Save the Children UK receives its highest ratings for your staff being respectful, helpful and capable and for listening and responding to respondents' concerns. All NGOs are rated highly in these areas, and over 50% of them higher than Save the Children UK.
- Respondents rate Save the Children UK low for 'not making demands on respondents time to support Save the Children UK's work', for asking respondents' advice and for treating all partners the same way.
- Comments included

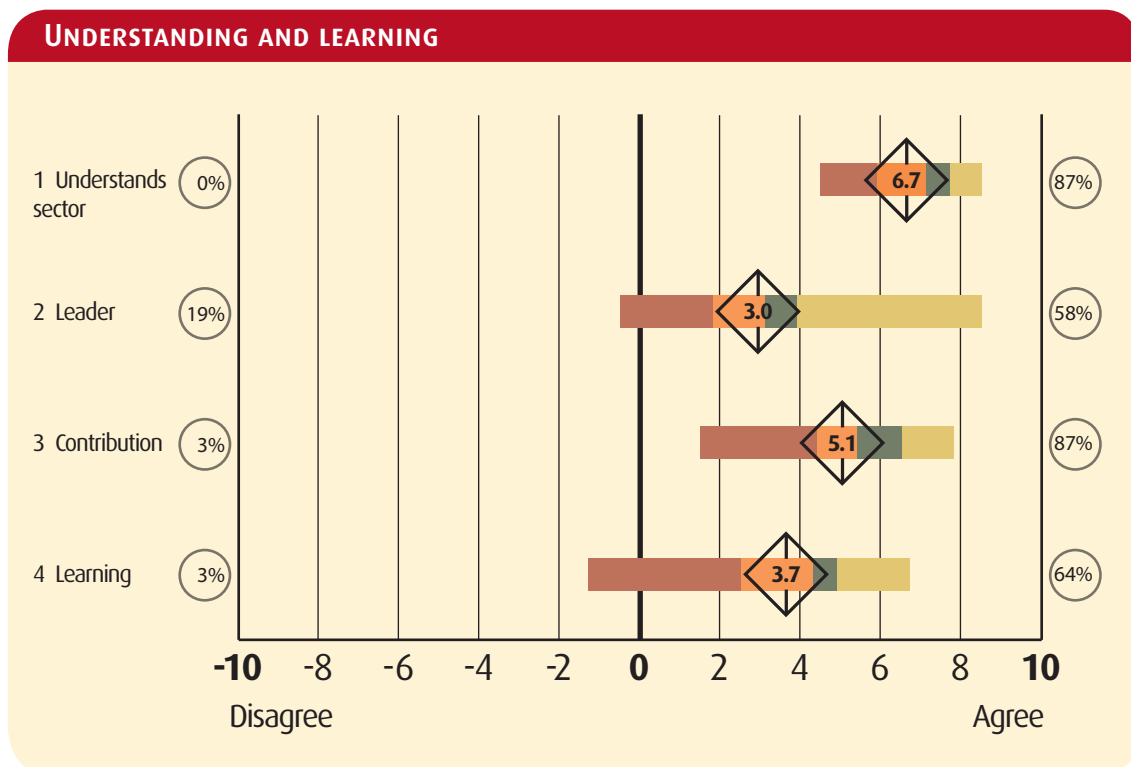
"It seems to us which way they communicate with us that is satisfactory."

Section 5: Relationship and communications



- Respondents were asked to select the two options they would most like Save the Children UK to do to improve your relationship with them.
- In the future, most respondents would like Save the Children UK to improve its relationships with them by: (a) developing joint strategies with respondents, (b) promoting their work and (c) providing support on time.
- These are similar to the preferences expressed to other NGOs in the cohort.

Section 6: Understanding and learning

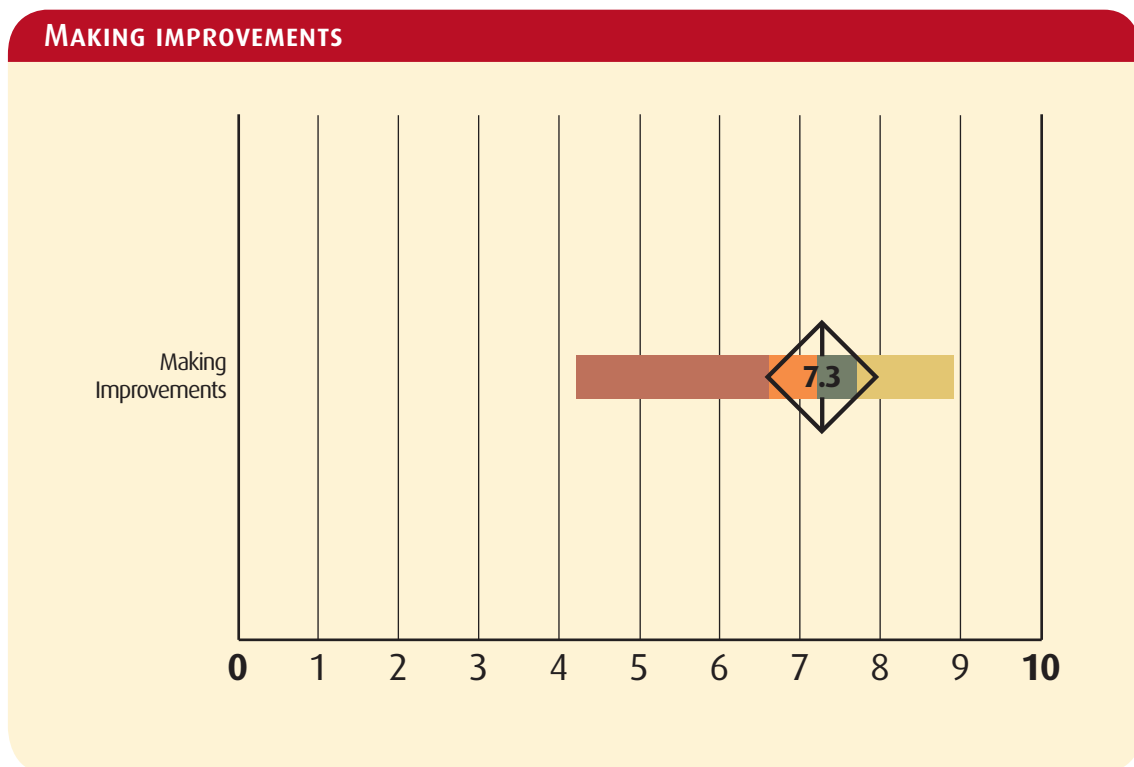


The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

- 1 'Save the Children UK understands the sector(s) we work in.'
- 2 'Save the Children UK is a leader in the sector(s) we work in.'
- 3 'Save the Children UK has made a major contribution to the sector(s) we work in.'
- 4 'Save the Children UK learns from its mistakes and makes improvements to how it works.'

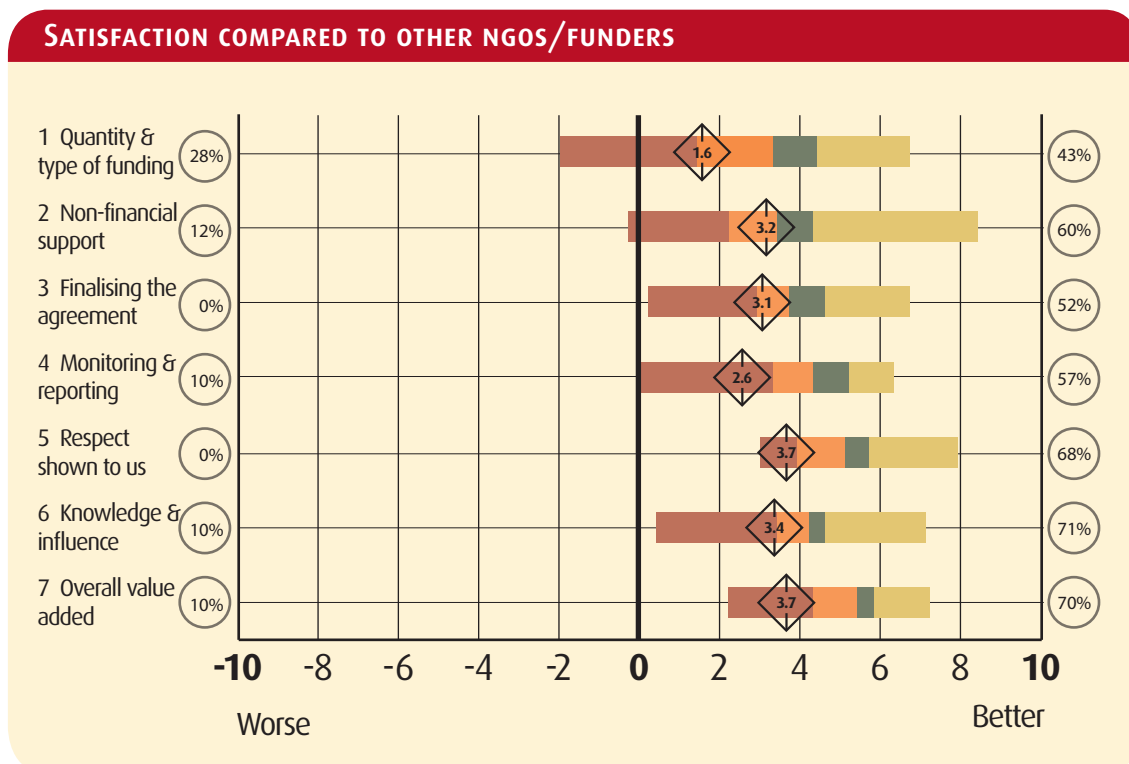
- In all four aspects listed above, Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom 50% of NGOs in the cohort.
- Save the Children UK receives its highest rating for understanding the sectors that respondents work in.
- Save the Children UK receives its lowest rating for being a leader in the sectors that respondents work in.

Section 6: Understanding and learning



- Respondents were asked to rate how likely they think it is that Save the Children UK will make changes as a result of their answers to this survey.
- The average rating of Save the Children UK's respondents was 7.3 on a scale of 0 – 10. This is mid level compared to the ratings received by other NGOs in the cohort.

Section 7: Overall satisfaction



- The chart shows how respondents compare Save the Children UK to other NGOs / funders they receive support from, across each of the areas listed.
- In all seven of the areas listed above, Save the Children UK is rated in the bottom half of the cohort.
- Save the Children UK receives its highest ratings for the respect shown to respondents and for overall value added. All NGOs score highly in these areas, and significantly more score higher than Save the Children UK.
- Save the Children UK receives its lowest ratings for respondents' satisfaction with the quantity and type of funding and monitoring & reporting.
- Save the Children UK receives a low rating of +3.7 for the overall value they add to respondents' work.
- 33% of Save the Children UK's respondents characterise Save the Children UK as a 'caring sister' (benchmark: 29%) and 20% as a 'management expert' (benchmark: 15%).
- Overall comments on the survey included:

"We expect that Save the Children UK dealing with us as cooperative partner."

"to give more attention to the gender, even in this survey I note that the gender is not well covered."

"Give strong consideration to the findings of the survey and review strengths and weaknesses in light of recommendations."

Save the Children UK's Tailored questions

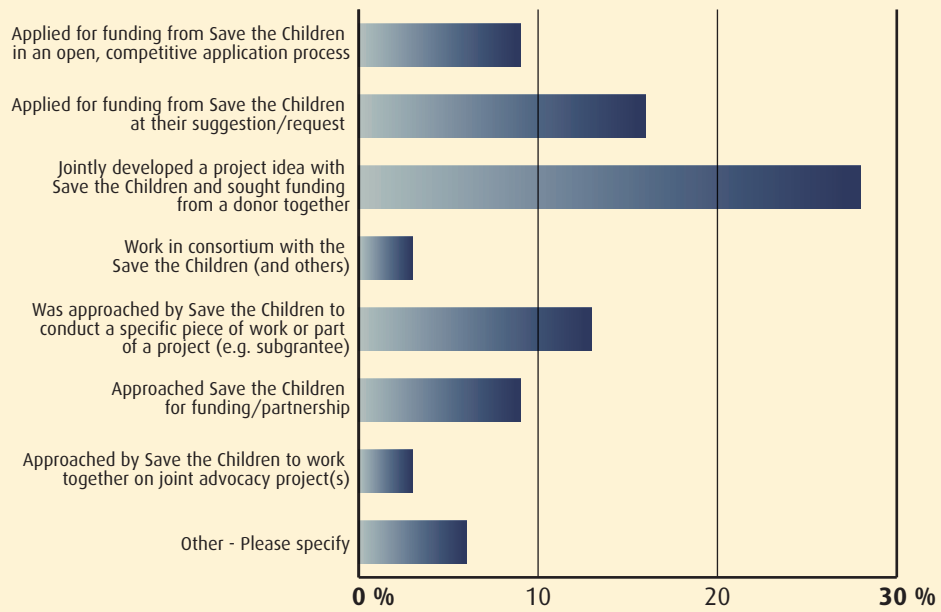
QUESTION 1. HOW MUCH OF YOUR WORK WITH SC IS IN THESE SECTORAL AREAS?

	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
Child Protection	31%	3%	13%	16%	38%
Child Rights Governance	38%	9%	9%	22%	22%
Education	34%	19%	19%	13%	16%
Emergency response	50%	25%	9%	9%	6%
Hunger reduction	66%	16%	13%	3%	3%
Health (Maternal, Newborn and Child Health or Adolescent health)	50%	6%	16%	19%	9%
HIV/ AIDS	63%	22%	13%	3%	0%
Other	78%	6%	3%	0%	13%

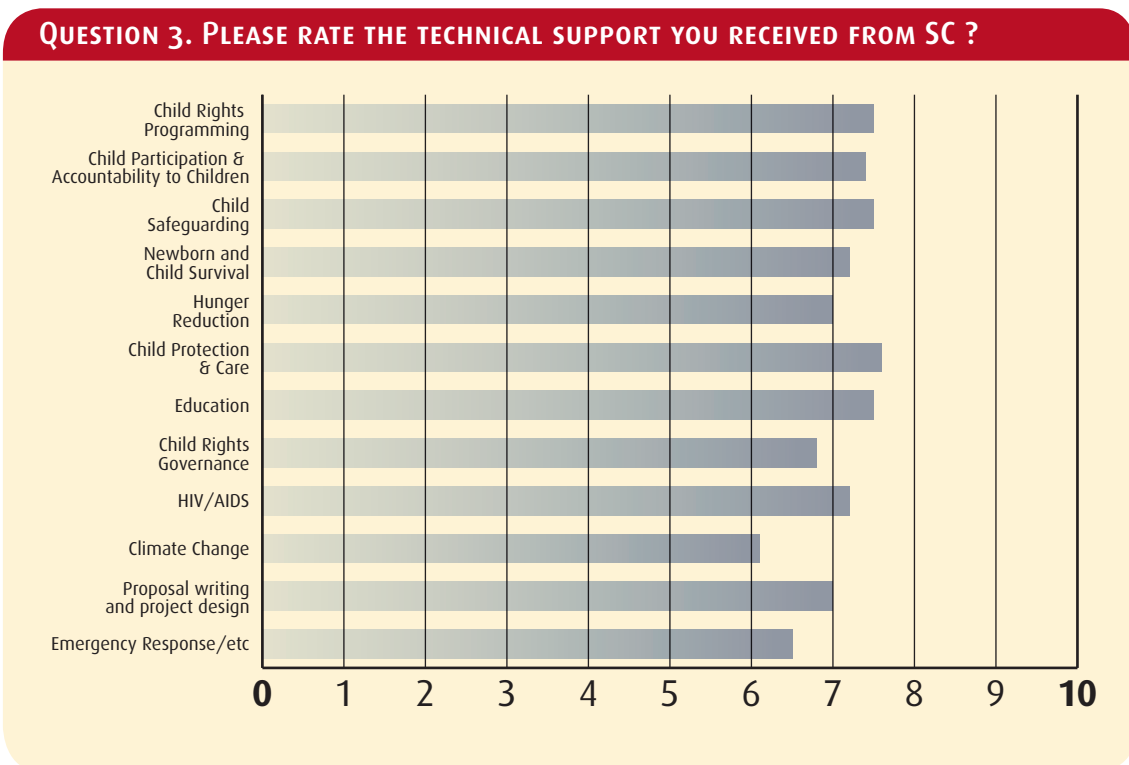
- This section presents findings from the tailored questions that Save the Children UK asked us to administer to their partners. The questions were not asked to any other northern NGOs' partners.

Save the Children UK's Tailored questions

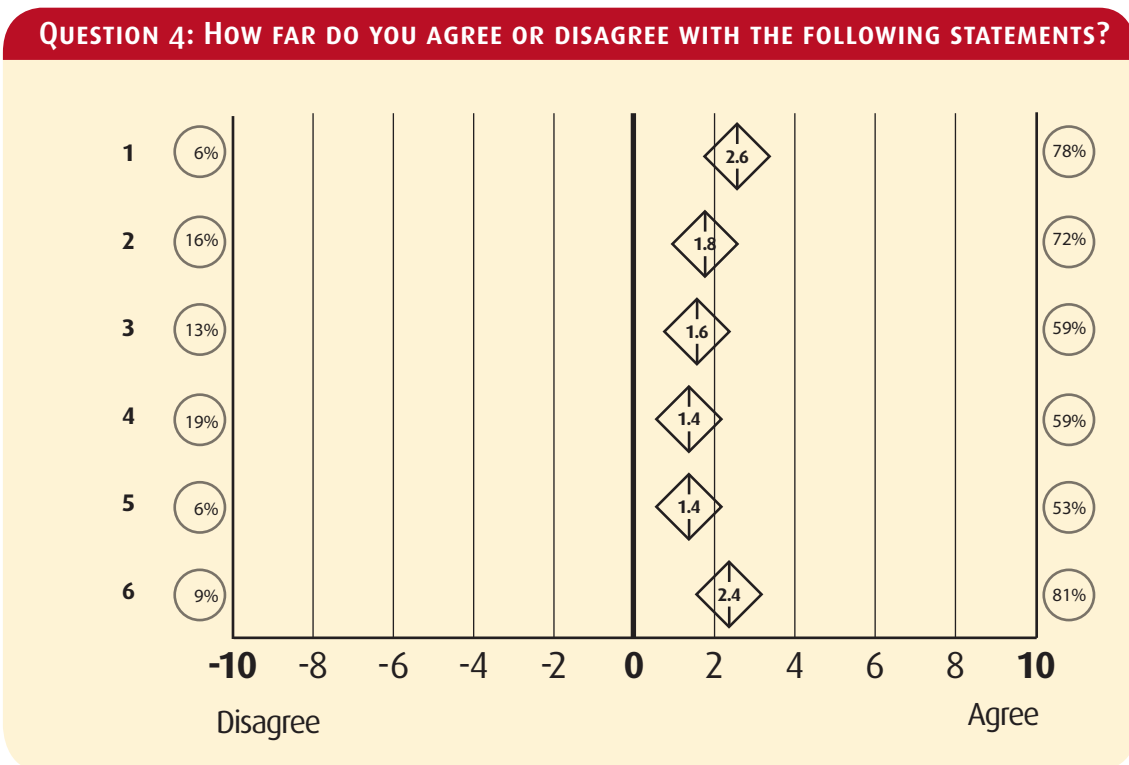
QUESTION 2. WHICH MOST CLOSELY DESCRIBES YOUR PARTNERSHIP WITH SC?



Save the Children UK's Tailored questions



Save the Children UK's Tailored questions



The chart shows how much respondents agree with the statements:

- 1 We are consulted on any changes made to the project/agreement
- 2 We are given plenty of notice if Save the Children needs information from us or is coming to visit
- 3 Save the Children ensures that children and other stakeholders are informed about the project outcomes, activities, and budget
- 4 Save the Children ensures that information or findings from evaluation or monitoring activities are feedback to the communities, and children we are working with
- 5 Save the Children ensures that there is an adequate and appropriate mechanism for receiving and responding to complaints/feedback from us and our stakeholders
- 6 Save the Children adequately responds to our concerns, in a timely and respectful way

Illustrative comments from respondents

SECTION 2: FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- "Any variation on budget is allowed upon agreement with Save the Children UK."
- "Save the Children UK funding was so good to meet our target group, but the payments take long time to be received specially the last payments. So it will be good if they can shortage this period, it will be more comfortable for our organization."
- "The project started and funds took several months to be received, therefore forcing ourselves to work on a reimbursement basis which was a challenge."
- "Save the Children provided orientation about original donor agency's rules and regulations. However, it was not enough in practice so we made a conduct which is against the donor's rules."

SECTION 3: NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- "So far we appreciate the various supports provided by [Save the Children UK] particularly the capacity building support on grant management perspective by assigning advisor for 11 months."
- "Our experience with Save the Children UK is still new; we would welcome benefiting from Save the Children UK systems and experience (whether through their own personnel or consultants) in developing our own."
- "I would suggest if [Save the Children UK] take its partner for long term with clear institutional development plan and extend support with focus programming. As of to day this is the gray area or bad practice which is more leading to ad hoc approach."
- "staff and volunteers worked serious overtime trying to meet the deadlines the [Save the Children UK] officers instituted when this was not one of the project activities we had responsibility for ... [and which are] not our policy or mandate. This has confused the community we serve and we have had to work very hard to undo the wrong messages that this activity resulted in at community level, now that the Save funded project activities are complete."

SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATION

- "More in depth understanding needs to be require before finalizing the agreement with partners. The overall attitude needs to be more inclined towards partnership relation rather than donor and recipient relation."
- "NGO is convinced that SC UK should put more attention on the previous problem analyses and NGO needs, before the agreement is approved."

MONITORING & REPORTING

- "Reporting is periodic and the feedback helps us in improving the progress towards the program objectives."
- "We would like to send reports to Save The Children UK every 6 months or every year instead of every 3 months."
- "The expectations for monitoring and reporting changed during the short project period and this was a challenge. There was no consultation on the reasons for this."
- "We did not receive a final overall project report as we were only one partner within a larger project that Save was primarily responsible for. This would be helpful to know the final outcome and overall results and impact of all partners involved."

Illustrative comments from respondents

SECTION 5: RELATIONSHIP & COMMUNICATIONS

- "It seems to us which way they communicate with us that is satisfactory."
- "I feel as of today the team of SCUK is not feeling that its partners are not the face of SCUK there is a clear dis link. In some cases they also consider local partners as competitors. This need to be changed that will further strengthen the standing of SCUK at grass roots level."
- "The relationship and communication depends on the personnel. ... The Child Protection Advisor has a great relationship with our organisation ... but her role is only limited to [advice] and there is no input on actual programme implementation processes. But are are appreciative of this support regardless of its limitations!"

SECTION 7: OVERALL SATISFACTION

- "We expect that Save the Children UK dealing with us as cooperative partner."
- "to give more attention to the gender, even in this survey I note that the gender is not well covered."
- "Give strong consideration to the findings of the survey and review strengths and weaknesses in light of recommendations."
- "This was a good thought provoking exercise and also provide opportunity to us about number of important areas which are directly related to institutional development and organizational development."

Keystone helps organisations develop new ways of planning, measuring and reporting social change. We focus on feedback and constituency voice.

Find out more: www.keystoneaccountability.org

CONTACT US

258 Belsize Rd
London
NW6 4BT
UK

info@keystoneaccountability.org

Keystone Accountability is a registered charity in England & Wales, no. 1118999.