

ANNUAL PARTNER FEEDBACK 2015

SAVE THE CHILDREN IN BANGLADESH



Save the Children



Annual Partner Feedback Survey

The successes, opportunities and challenges of the Bangladesh Country Office are based to a large extent on how we collaborate with partners. Partners implement over 70% of the program budget. Partnership issues cut across program and support sectors, and require a high level of coordination if we are to ensure quality relationships.

The Partnership Framework provides overall guidance, but regular feedback from our partners is crucial to monitoring how well we are implementing Save the Children's approach to partnerships. The feedback mechanism ensure quality and learning in our collaboration, but they also ensures that we live up to our principles in the relationships we have with our partners and with the children and communities we are working together to support.

Our partners are asked to complete a Partner Feedback Survey once a year. The survey provides quantifiable scores over time to allow the Country Office to track how our partners rate our partnership practices. The questions encompass areas around financial support, non-financial support (i.e. capacity strengthening), relationship and communication and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning. Here is the link to the survey results: <https://goo.gl/Ykjw09>.

Objectives of the annual survey

The partner feedback survey is conducted to:

- ❑ To strengthen Save the Children's accountability to our partners
- ❑ To help Save the Children improve our performance

Survey Process

The survey process managed by the Partnership team and the questionnaire administered to all partners through online link. Regular follow up were made by our program and partnership team to inspire to participate a high response rate.

This survey was not anonymous; partners are asked to provide their name on their responses. The reason for this is that we would like to be able to follow up meetings with the respondents. However, the feedback provided in the survey will not affect funding or grant decisions. It is solely for the purposes of learning and improving our own performance.

Partners Involved

Forty five partners in total participated in this online survey and gave their feedback in four aspects of their partnership with Save the Children including Funding, Organizational Capacity Building, Partnership Design and Communication, and MEAL activities. The table below summarizes partners' involvement with different sectors in Save the children.

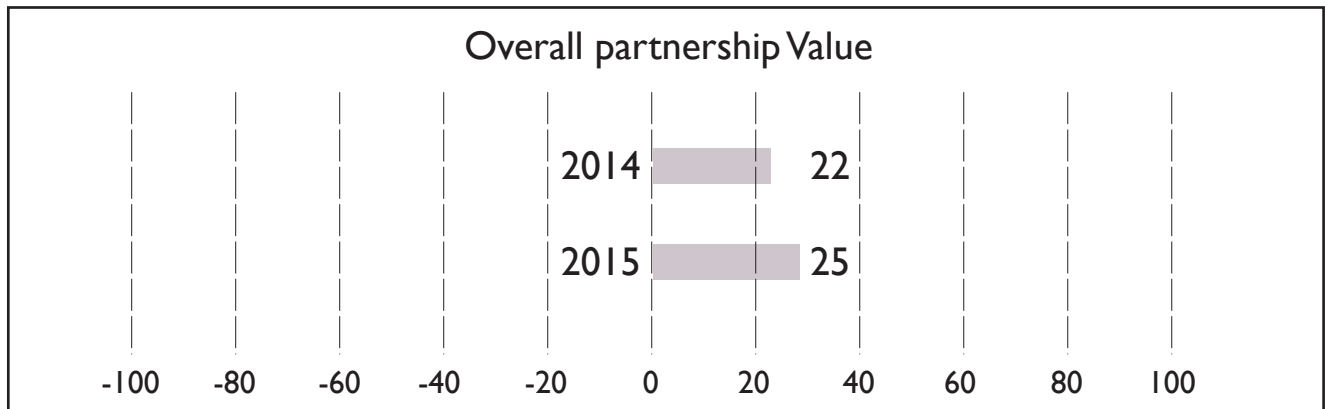
SECTOR	No. of Partners ¹
Child Protection	28
Humanitarian	5
HIV/AIDS	5
Health	9
Education	16
CRG	11
Food Security and Livelihood	7
TOTAL	(45 partners responded)



¹ The number indicates the number of respondents who answered that they cooperate with this sector. Some partners work with more than one sector, so the total is higher than the total number of respondents.

Overall partnership Value

The overall value partners received from partnership with SCI in 2015 has increased to 25 net promoter score² from 22 in 2014.



a. Financial Support

In every dimension of funding, partners' opinions in 2015 show a negative trend in comparison with their opinions in 2014. That means the number of promoters has been decreased in 2015 than that of 2014.

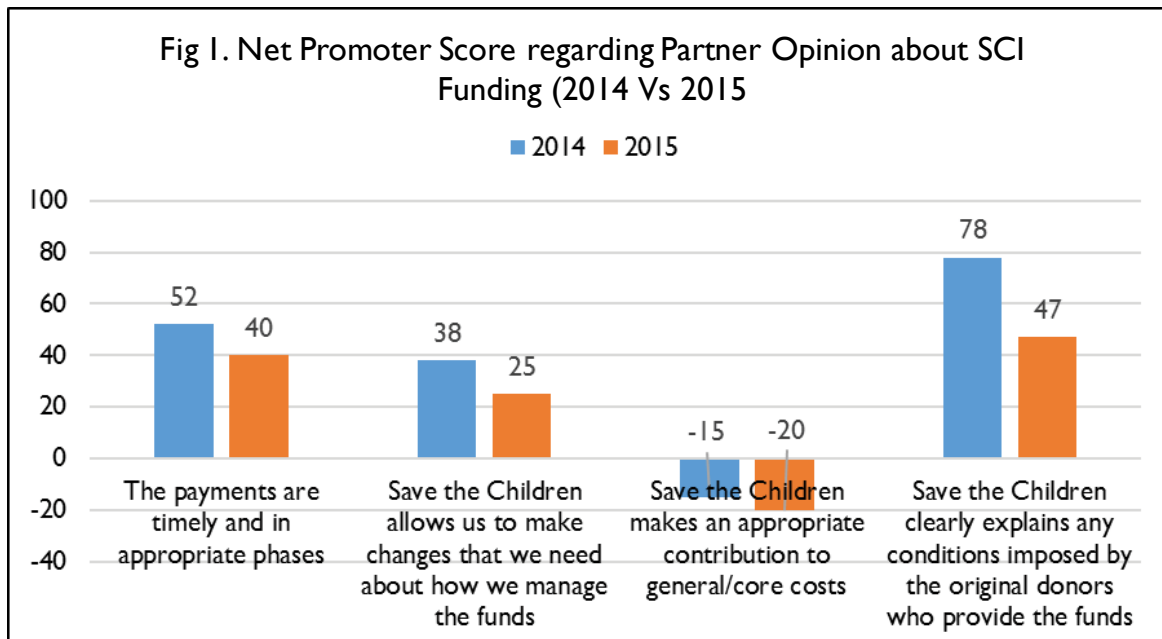


Figure: I depicts that Save the Children is explaining less to its partners (than previous year) about any conditions imposed by the original donors who provide funds. However, partners expressed their interest about more involvement in budgeting.

² The Net Promoter Score is an index ranging from -100 to 100 that measures the willingness of customers/ partners to recommend a company's products or services to others. Any score above 0 is considered good, and above 50 is considered very well.

“It will be better if SCI involve partners at the initial stage of budget preparation and shows more flexibility on need basis”

“Save the Children supports us to maintain financial procedure properly, and their regular monitoring about financial management is very good one. -About Vat and TAX, their follow up is nice. We are happy with our relationships”

“10% of agreed fund is kept to be paid later. It's difficult for non-profit organizations to bear this amount. Save the Children can make an assessment of non-profit organizations to make exceptions in appropriate cases”.

“Sometimes agreement is delayed for that reason fund disbursement is also delayed. As a result, activity implementation is hampered. It is our earnest request to complete the agreement in time so that the funds are available on time and activity implementation can be done smoothly”.

“Fund disbursement has to be ensured timely and leave the provision of re-agreement as agreement is signed prior to beginning any new project”

b. Strengthening Organizational Capacity

In most dimensions of capacity building, partners' opinions in 2015 show a positive trend in comparison with their opinions in 2014. This reflects an appreciation of the new initiatives annual partnership meetings, comprehensive review meetings, organizational capacity assessment and trainings.

Figure: 2 depicts that Save the Children is doing more for its partners (than previous year) capacity strengthening. According to the partners, the top priorities for support to organizational capacity strengthening in the future are:

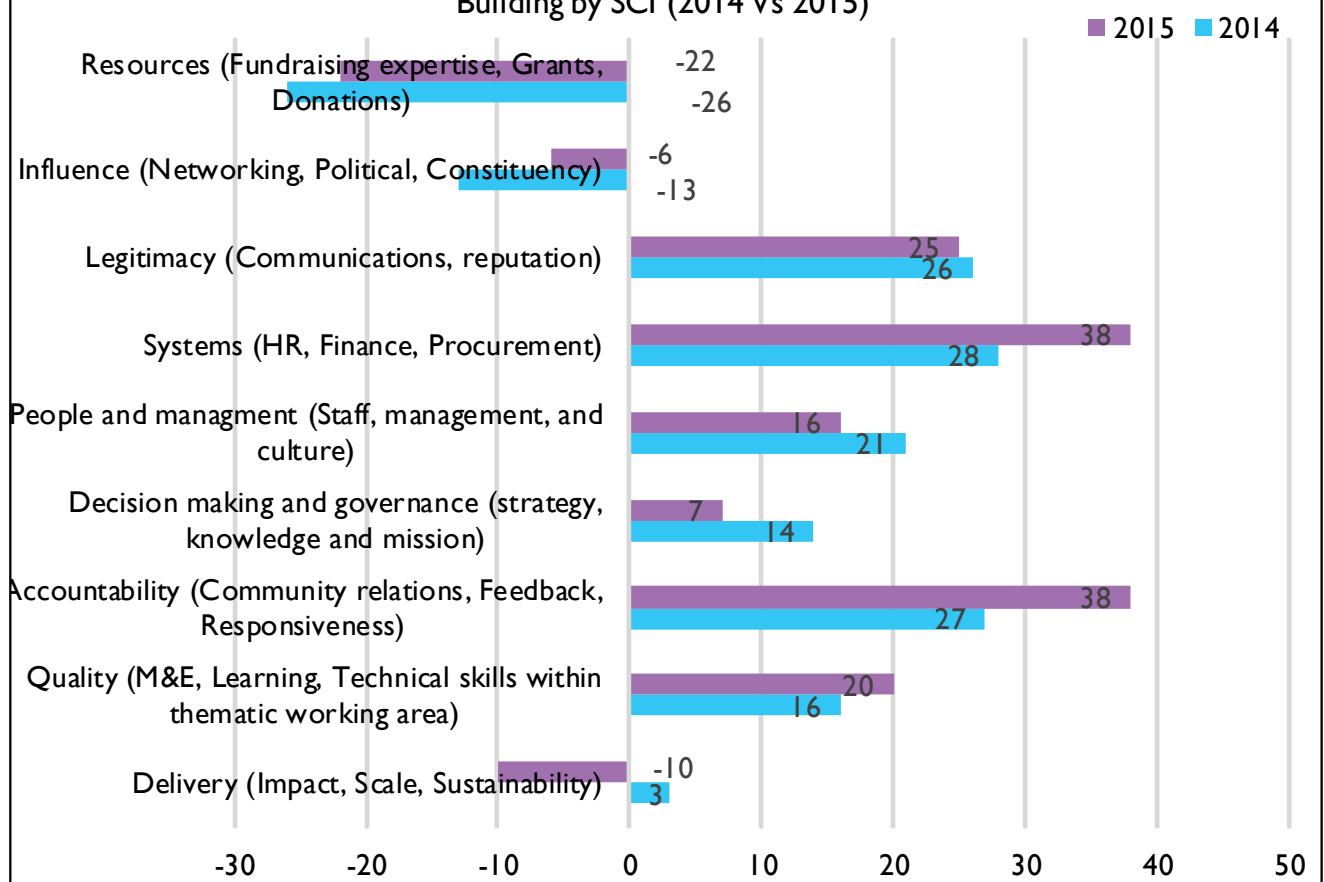
- Resources (Fundraising expertise, Grants, Donations)
- System / More effective system Systems on HR, Finance, Procurement
- Influence (Networking, Political, Constituency)

Overall the partners indicate an appreciation of the capacity strengthening activities, but also an interest in having more support to these types of activities and more coordination with program goals.

Save the Children Identified BITA as valuable partners & started the process of organizational capacity assessment.

Save the Children has supported to conduct a capacity assessment of BTS and a capacity strengthening plan has been developed. Organization will work in compliance with that plan.

Fig 2. Net Promoter Score regarding Partner Organizations Capacity Building by SCI (2014 Vs 2015)



1. *The way the funding is organized, it does not help us to raise/build our capacity. The way the partnership is designed now, only leads to short term deliverable and leaves no scope for capacity to be built into the organization as a long term outcome. Also multiple demands on staff time and too much formality regarding reporting, attending workshops etc. means that sufficient focus cannot be put into the main objective of the project.*
2. *Save the Children can link us with corporate houses through CSR funds, help us build capacity of documentations on fund raising and develop alternative IGA who has no micro finance program for organizational sustainability.*
3. *Within short span of time understanding with Save the Children and support each other for developing capacities in the non-financial resources. However, partners' capacities will be developed through qualitative feedback and timely support as well as training on HR development.*

c. Partnership Design and Communication

In some dimension of partnership design, partners' opinions in 2015 show a negative trend while in some other dimensions positive trend comes out in comparison with partners' opinion in 2014.

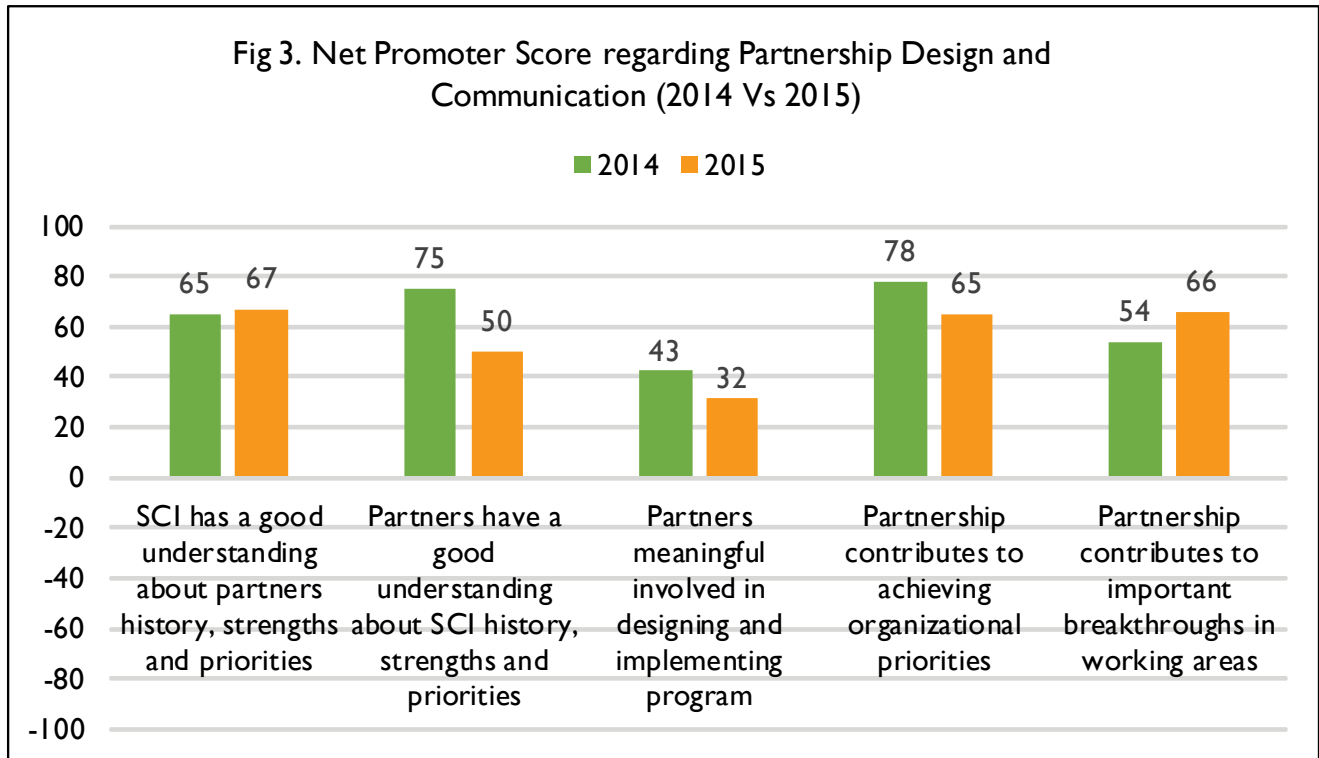


Figure:3 depicts that partners perceive that Save the Children is doing less to help partners understand SCI strength and priorities whereas SCI's understanding about partners' strengths and priorities have increased than previous year. Some partners are happy with existing partnership while some other suggested more "frequent visit by SC employees".

Major suggestions by the partners were for improving the relationship was:

- Develop programs jointly
- Be more flexible about the support SCI provide
- Discuss Save the Children's own strategy and plans with partners

We feel that there is room for improvement in understanding on the part of SCI regarding our priorities and capacity as a legal aid organization and certain limitations that we may have. For example our organizational priority may prevent us from undertaking wide scale field level implementation/monitoring.

Promote our work through website, face book, twitter and printing media and introducing us with other back donors will be a nice support for us in future with SCI

Linkage with other donor, develop programs jointly & promote our work

d. MEAL Activities

In every dimension of MEAL activities, partners' opinions in 2015 show an improvement, though a small one, in comparison with their opinions in 2014.



Fig 4. Net Promoter Score regarding MEAL Activities (2014 Vs 2015)

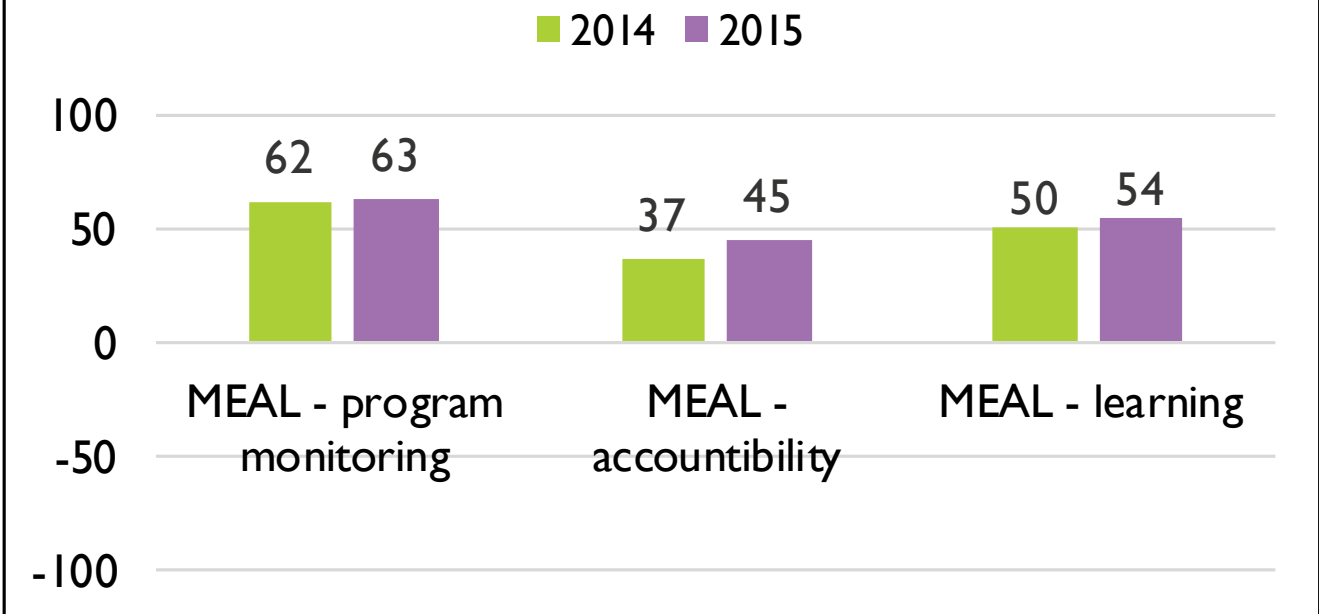


Figure: 4 depicts that partners have the impression that Save the Children is doing more (than previous year) in monitoring and making its program accountable.

Improving MEAL

- Simplify MEAL tools and process,
- Involving partners to decide how to monitor and report progress
- Focus more attention on impact/long term social changes, Involve our core organization more in MEAL activities
- Share lessons and experiences among other partners/organizations working on the same issues
- Provide more resources to monitor and report.



SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES FOR FOLLOW UP

Issue	Response	Responsible department/person
a. Financial support		
The payments are timely and in appropriate phases	SCI will pay more attention for timely disbursement to partners as per payment schedule. Moreover, Partnership unit has been created a computerized system to track flow on payments through OnDesk to monitor process and better identify bottlenecks.	Kashif (Shantanu)
Support to Core Cost	<p>Currently SCI support to partners to support some of core cost but Inclusion of overhead costs may not be possible, some support areas like capacity strengthening, HR, MIS and other systems may be allowable.</p> <p>However, convene a team of key partners and SCI program and support staff to discuss possibilities and make guidance note on budgeting partners' core costs. Message need to be clear during the kick-off meeting regarding cost structure of overhead and support mechanism to core cost.</p>	Aliza
Budget flexibility and Partner Involvement during budget preparation	A budget preparation guideline has been developed and it will be shared with wider stakeholders. Partnership unit will adhere the guideline and ensure that ensure that partners must approve final version of budget before it is submitted. However Further steps could be taken to ensure that partners are genuinely consulted in developing budgets.	Kashif, Rahmat and PDQ
Waive of 10% contract amount retention	Partnership unit will facilitate to take initiatives to waive of 10% of contract amount during the agreement and payment schedule. SMT will take decision on the amount retention process.	Kashif, Faruque and Shantanu
b. Strengthening Organizational Capacity (Non-financial support)		
More capacity strengthening – especially in core management areas	<p>SCI need to ensure that there are funds for capacity strengthening funds in programs</p> <p>Program and Award to ensure that capacity strengthening that a recommended certain range is included in all proposal budgets.</p> <p>For 2016 Partnership will develop training plan based on needs that includes targeted support to individual partners and general trainings.</p>	Kashif and Rahmat

Support organizations within resource mobilization	SCI will plan 2 training batches on resource mobilization for partners in 2016. SCI will take initiatives development of data base on potential funding agencies and INGOs covering their thematic, geographic and demographic preference in Bangladesh and shared with its partners	Rahmat and PDQ
Support organizations with systems strengthening	SCI will plan capacity strengthening initiatives on strengthening core partner systems including HR, Computerized financial management, Knowledge management (central monitoring systems) and Procurement.	Shantanu and Rahmat
Support organizations within influence	Programs can do more to showcase partners work and contributions. SCI will supports (virtual) to the OD teams in identifying and documenting (half-yearly) case studies on relevant experiences (both success and failure) and share with peer network	Tim and Rahmat
c. Partnership Design and Communication (Relationship and communication)		
Involvement in designing the program	Improve prepositioning for proposal development through regular partner meetings in each sector.	Tim
d. MEAL		
Involve partners' core organizations	Provide training for partners on improving core MEAL/knowledge management capabilities. SCI Meal team will take initiatives to simplify MEAL tools and process.	Hasan
Share lessons among other partners/ stakeholders	More documentation and sharing of learning with partners planned by MEAL section Sector/project specific events to share learning	Tim, Hasan and Rahmat
e. Overall		
Net Promoter score	25 (score in previous year was 22)	



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