Feedback Survey for Transnational Social Change Networks

COMPARATIVE SURVEY REPORT

Introduction

In 2009, a group of 9 transnational social change networks worked with iScale and Keystone to conduct a comparative survey of all their constituents. The same survey instrument was simultaneously administered to their constituents all over the world.

This survey was not intended to be an evaluation. Rather, it was aimed at holding up a mirror to show the networks how their constituents see their performance. It provides the networks with information for further deliberation and dialogue with constituents, in order to identify specific opportunities for improvement.

The process provides two ways to help interpret the data:

- A comparative analysis, showing how each network performs relative to the other networks in the group. This makes it easier to identify areas of relatively strong and weak performance, and, pinpoint high-value areas for improvement.
- The networks may use the data to identify some priority areas where they want to see improvement over the next 12 to 18 months and measure progress by repeating the survey in the future.

> A network's constituents are defined as all the organisations and individuals that consider themselves to be part of the network.

Constituents' perceptions should be interpreted in light of each network's unique strategy and priorities.

- The survey covers many areas in which constituents' perceptions may be very important to a network.
- Ratings in an area that is not central to a network's strategy may not be a concern for a network.

We turn now to a short discussion of the methodology and rationale used for this survey, followed by a discussion of the key findings and recommendations for the 9 participating networks.

Further, we present the comparative survey findings organised by section of the questionnaire and provide a short conclusion.

We include the survey questionnaire as an annex to the main report.

Methodology

This survey collected data through an anonymous questionnaire independently administered by Keystone in October 2009.[1]

Email is the principal means of communications for all participating networks. Each participating network supplied the names and email addresses for all their current constituents, defined as organisations and individuals (i) that consider themselves to be part of the network; and (ii) for which email contact details are available.

Respondents included: members, partners, grantees, donors and members of advisory boards. For one of the participating networks, only implementing partners were surveyed.

The survey was conducted using a web-based tool. For respondents with an unreliable access to the world wide web, the questionnaire was made available in an interactive pdf format that could be completed offline and returned as an email attachment.

The survey questionnaire was designed in collaboration with an Advisory Group comprising one representative of each network's secretariat (or equivalent) and one representative of each network's constituency. It was also reviewed by a group of network evaluation experts.[2]

Each network was also provided with the opportunity to include 5 customised questions at the end of the survey, for which no comparisons were made between the networks.

Network	Nº of invites	Nº of invites delivered	Nº of partial responses	Nº of complete responses	Response rate
Mean	416	414	27	72	36%
All Networks	3748	3726	240	645	24%

The questionnaire was administered in 3 languages - English, French and Spanish - and it was delivered to a total of 3,726 networks' constituents. Of these, 885 returned either a completed or partially completed questionnaire, representing a response rate of 24% (the average response rate for all networks was 36%). On average for all the networks 74% of the responses were received in English, 20% in Spanish and 7% in French.

Answers to open ended questions were coded and quantified.

Each network was presented with their individual survey report, providing them with their absolute ratings by constituents and how they compare with the group of the 9 networks. They were also provided with the raw anonymised data that they can use, should they want to conduct further analysis.

Costs for the survey were met partly by the participating networks and partly by the International Development Research Centre and the Excelsior Fund.

Questionnaire rationale

In an increasingly globalised and interconnected world, a plethora of transnational social change networks have emerged to influence global economic, political and social structures. Inclusivity and participation are core to the value proposition for any social change network. It is widely accepted that the value of networks does not lie in the sum of their parts, but in the interaction between them.

The questionnaire used for the survey, was designed to address the value proposition of transnational social change networks and their constituents' satisfaction with the networks' performance.

The questionnaire covered 6 areas of constituent satisfaction:

1 STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE NETWORK

In this area, we enquired about what structure the network is perceived to have by its constituents. The idea here was to allow a comparison of the constituents' perceptions with the network's aspirations and strategy.

We also enquired about the extent to which the network's function is to support its constituents in performing certain activities or to be an active agent on behalf of its constituents[3], and be able to see if constituents' perceptions and expectations coincide.

2 QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE NETWORK'S BODIES

The rationale in this section is to examine the quality of relationships between the constituents and the different bodies in the network (Secretariat or equivalent, governance boards / councils / committees, task / theme related workgroups or committees).

Keystone's work on impact planning, assessment and learning systems suggests that the quality of relationships between the different actors of a social change initiative is a very good indicator of performance and potential success.

For this survey, we have focused on the quality of relationships in looking at how the performance of the Secretariat (or equivalent) is meeting constituents' needs, the quality of communications with the different bodies of the network (in terms of timeliness, openness, relevance and accuracy) and the level of responsiveness of those bodies to the feedback received by constituents. This last measure is at the very heart of this survey, which is based on the premise that networks will be able to generate more value for their constituents if managers and coordinators listen and respond to the feedback given by constituents through the vehicle of this survey.

3 NETWORK VIBRANCY

In this section the intention is to gather feedback from respondents on how vibrant the network is in terms of the value of and opportunities for 'networking' and the extent of the participation of respondents.

First, we ask participants about what type of actors they create relationships with as a result of being part of the network and the value that they attach to these relationships. The intention here is to assess the value of networking and to see if networking tends to remain within one sector or is cross-sectorial.

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3   See Ramalingam, B.;Mendizabal, E. and Schenkenberg van Mierop, E. Strengthening humanitarian networks: Applying the network functions approach, ODI, Background note, April 2008

Questionnaire rationale

Network managers and coordinators can then compare and contrast this information with the network's strategy and aspirations.

Second, we ask about the type of opportunities that constituents have for interacting with each other: events, online platforms, introductions made by the Secretariat or other constituents. We can therefore identify those opportunities that best serve the purposes of networking in a particular network as well as areas where there needs to be more focused effort.

To help identify potential areas for improving the quality of networking, we also ask about how adequate constituents think the network's diversity and size are.

Finally, we ask respondents to self-assess their level of participation in the network on a scale that ranges from being a peripheral observer to being a very active member that initiated and leads discussions, collaborations and activities. This question helps identify the different segments in the network's constituency and pinpoint areas where more attention is needed for incentivising participation.

4 LEVEL OF SYNERGY WITHIN THE NETWORK

in this section the questionnaire inquires about how connected respondents feel to the network and other constituents and the extent of their participation in decision-making processes. The level of synergy is assessed in terms of how much the constituents feel that they share common interests with the network, participate in its strategy, and prioritize similar issues and concerns with other participants. Again, here it is not so much a question of high and low performance, but rather of having a measure to compare current network aspirations and strategies against.

The question about how key decisions affecting constituents are made within the network is intended to bring out the level of democratic participation that exists in the network.4

5 VALUE ADDED FOR CONSTITUENTS

Here the questionnaire examines constituents' satisfaction about the value they get from participating in the network. Nine areas of value adding functions are listed, ranging from facilitating networking to enhancing constituents' capacity to mobilise resources and respondents are asked to rate the effectiveness of the network on a scale from 1 to 5. The functions derive from the different missions and strategies transnational social change networks have and do not all always apply to all networks.

Respondents are also asked about the extent to which their participation in the network has met their expectations - a factor that networks need to understand to raise constituency satisfaction.

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4   This specific question is inspired by Ricardo Wilson-Grau and Marta Nunez, "Evaluating international social-change networks: a conceptual framework for a participatory approach", in Development in Practice, Volume 17, Number 2, April 2007

Questionnaire rationale

6 NETWORK'S IMPACT

impact here is assessed as the impact of the network on its constituents' work. Again a series of areas of potential impact on constituents' work have been identified, ranging from impacting on their capacity to impacting on their values and the way they apply them. Impact can be negative or positive, or simply non-existing. Respondents are asked to give their opinion on a scale ranging from "0-Negative impact" and "1-No positive or negative impact at all" to "5-Massive positive impact".

We also asked about how much the network is seen as a major influencer in its area of work. This question is grounded on the fact that most of the networks aim to influence particular policy fields.

The next table summarises the different sections of the survey and the areas covered in it:

Section	Feedback areas
Structure and function of the network	Network model, support or active agent function
Quality of relationships with the network's bodies	Meeting constituents' needs, quality of communications, responsiveness to feedback
Network vibrancy	New relationships established, their value, adequacy of network's size and diversity, extent of participation in the network
Level of synergy within the network	Sharing of common interests and concerns, participation in network's strategy and decision making
Value added for constituents	Network effectiveness, meeting of expectations
Network's impact	Impact on constituents' work, influence in the field

Participating networks

Nine transnational social change networks participated in this comparative survey. They are all international, involving actors from different countries; pursue goals within the broad social and environmental justice field; and they share the premise that by adopting a networked structure they will generate greater benefits for their field of work and their constituents. Yet, they all have different and unique characteristics. Not all aspects of the individual networks are comparable across all of them. However, we believe that comparisons across the different networks generate insights and highlight aspects that absolute data for each network are unable to show by themselves.

The following table summarises the characteristics of the networks that took part in this survey. [5] The 'size' column refers to the number of organisations and individuals[6] that consider themselves to be part of the network.

Name	Thematic focus	Area of work	Size	Sectors	Countries
Aflatoun	Children's rights, financial education	Programme replication, Technical assistance/ Capacity building, knowledge sharing, advocacy	92	CSOs, Government	22
CIVICUS	Civil society strengthening, human rights	Knowledge sharing, advocacy, research	450	CSOs, Private grantmaking organisations, Individuals	110
Countdown 2010	Environment	Advocacy, knowledge sharing	861	CSOs, Government, Corporate, Academia	61
Gender at Work	Gender	Capacity building, knowledge sharing	27	CSOs, International Organisations, Individuals	3
Health Care Without Harm	Health, Environment	Advocacy, knowledge sharing, research, capacity building	1050	CSOs, International Organisations, Hospitals and health care systems, Medical professionals, Government, Academia	52
International Land Coalition	People-centred development/ poverty alleviation, Human rights	Policy dialogue and advocacy, knowledge management and capacity building	84	CSOs, Inter-govern-mental organisations, research institutes	36
Red Mercosur	Development	Research, knowledge sharing	12	Academia	4
Poverty and Economic Policy (PEP) Research Network	Development/ poverty alleviation, gender, health, education	Research, capacity building, grantmaking, advocacy	105	Academia, Government	40
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP)	Energy & Environment	Advocacy, knowledge sharing, grantmaking	309	CSOs, Corporate, Government, Academia	49

5   Information for this table was contributed by the participating networks in June 2009
6   Only when associated to the network in their individual (not institutional) capacity.

Key findings and recommendations

In summary, the constituents of the participating networks express good levels of satisfaction with the value they get from them. The level of variation between the ratings received by the different networks tends to be quite small, suggesting that they face similar challenges when it comes to how their performance is perceived by their constituents. There are however a couple of clear very high (and low) performers within the group of networks, demonstrating the levels of satisfaction that are achievable in a network context. The survey identifies key drivers of constituents' satisfaction, thereby enabling network managers to see where and how to improve.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Some general recommendations coming out of this survey for all the participating networks are:
- Report this survey's findings back to its constituents, along with initial responses to the feedback received. This could be done via their website, newsletter and/or at the next general meeting.
- Identify specific actions for improvements, guided by the highest priority findings in this report.
- Monitor progress in the areas requiring improvement and check that current high service levels are maintained. This could be done by repeating this survey in a years' time. A public commitment to repeating the survey would create strong incentives for improvement and maintaining performance and could increase credibility that the networks are committed to improving.
- Consider other ways for collecting feedback, triggered by specific events or interactions with constituents that would be useful for monitoring performance. For instance, the networks could ask constituents a few short questions at the end of a meeting or through their newsletter. This sort of data collection - using a carefully designed mechanism ensuring independence and anonymity - would provide the networks with actionable, real time data. Where the questions are identical to those on the Keystone survey, they provide a transaction-based reference point against the Keystone survey findings.

The survey suggests the need for more inquiry into the role of constituency expectations as an element of network effectiveness.
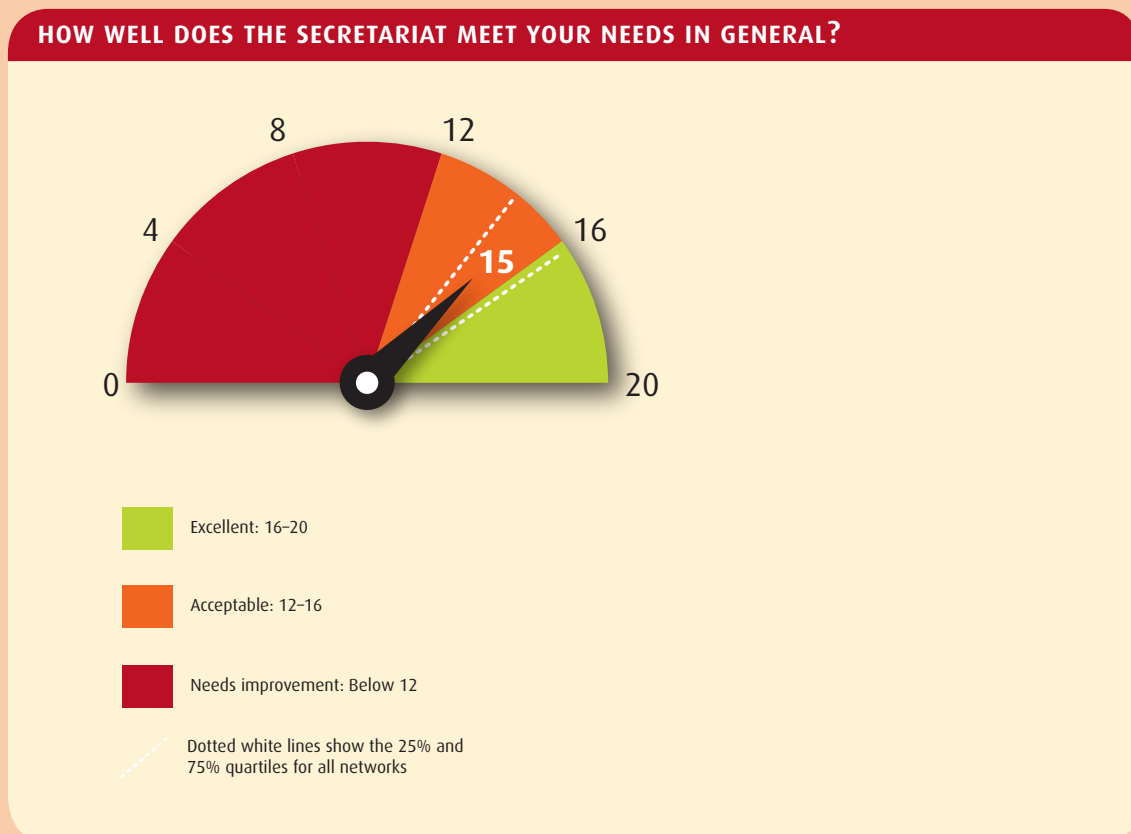
STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF THE NETWORK

In general, there is wide variety in respondents' perception about the structure of the networks they participate in. The networks are seen to be meeting constituents' expectations in their role of being an active agent that undertakes activities on behalf of them, but not as much when it comes to their role of supporting them to perform activities.

Some common suggestions for participating networks are:
- Explore further with constituents if changes in their structure are needed. Options could include supporting regional or thematic sub-networks.
- Explore constituents' expectations regarding their role in supporting their actions. Where is the overlap between the secretariat's view of the network's role and members' expectations? How can this be strengthened – for instance through targeted communication / dialogue?

Quality of relationships with the network's bodies

8   12

4   16

15

0   20

Excellent: 16–20

Acceptable: 12–16

Needs improvement: Below 12

Dotted white lines show the 25% and
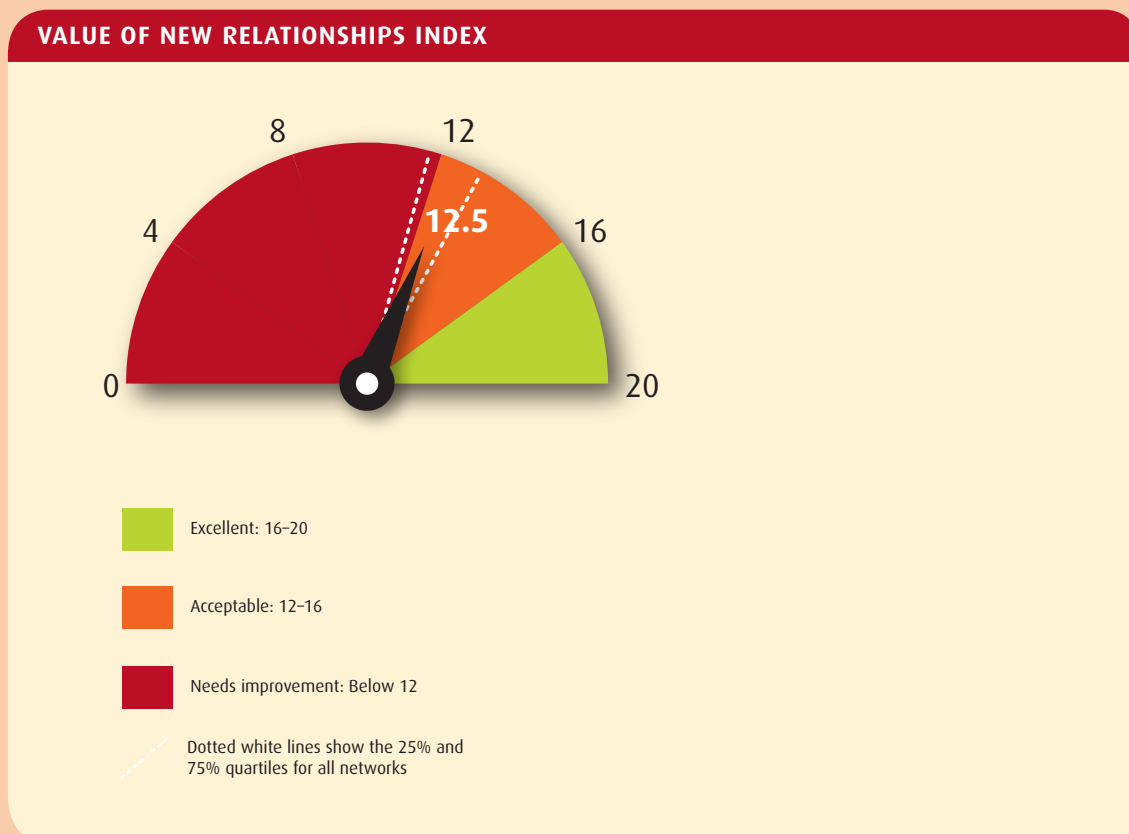75% quartiles for all networks

On average, respondents give the networks relatively high ratings (15 out of 20) on how well the Secretariat (or equivalent) meets their needs in general. The lowest performer in this area receives a rating of 12 and the highest a rated of 17 out of 20. A typical comment was: "Exchanges are direct and are generally channelled through a secretariat that is efficient and [operates] with great transparency".

Constituents also give relatively high ratings to the quality of communications with and responsiveness by the Secretariat. This suggests that good practice is taking place in many of the networks. Across the 9 networks, space for improvement exists particularly in the Secretariat's role of facilitating contacts between constituents and with key policy makers. More than half of constituents are unaware of the relationships with any other bodies in the network that they participate in.

Some common suggestions for participating networks are:

● Review the services provided to constituents by the Secretariat and identify improvements that need to take place (e.g. facilitating networking and key contacts).
● Review their communications strategy with their constituents.
● See whether staff can improve on the way they communicate with constituents - especially by being more proactive. Would more training for staff be useful here?
● Establish processes for staff and board to effectively respond to feedback they receive from constituents.
● Disseminate further among their constituents the role of other bodies than the Secretariat (e.g. board).

Network vibrancy

VALUE OF NEW RELATIONSHIPS INDEX

8
12
4
12.5
16
0
20

Excellent: 16–20

Acceptable: 12–16

Needs improvement: Below 12

Dotted white lines show the 25% and
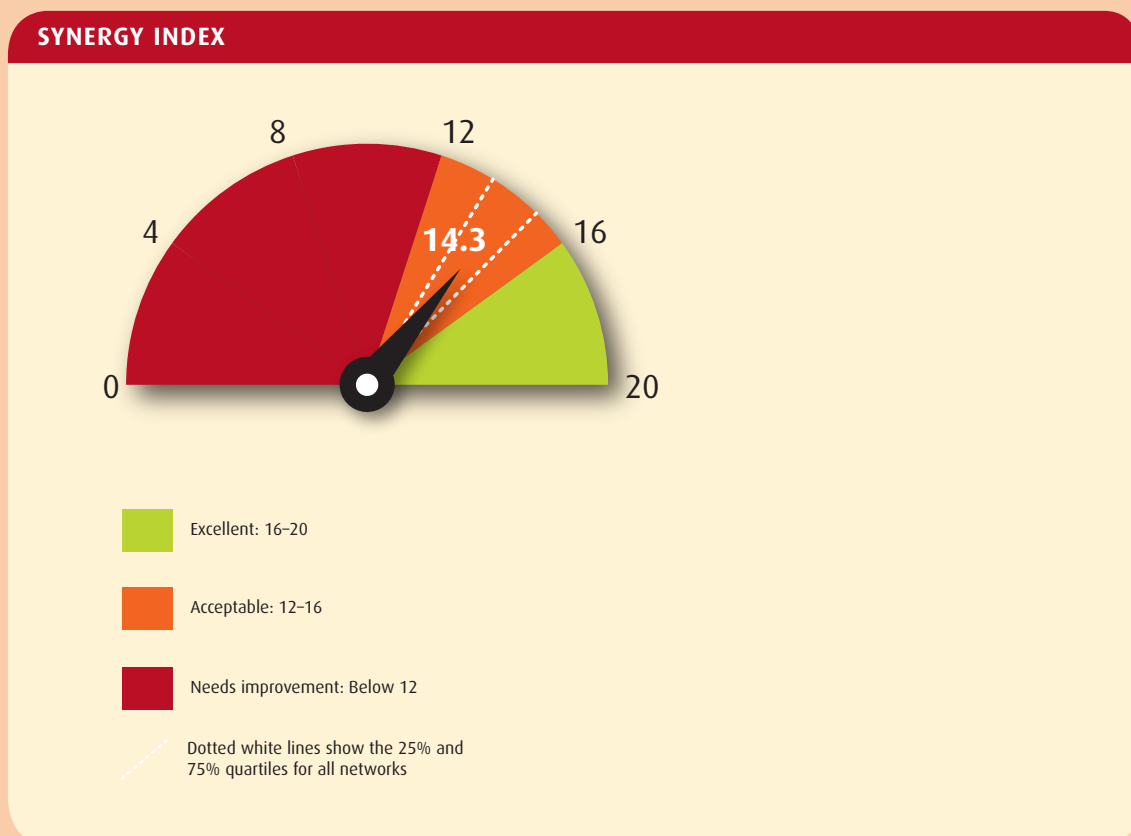75% quartiles for all networks

The overall value of relationships established as a result of participating in the networks is rated quite low with 12 out of 20. The lowest rating in the Value of new relationships Index is 10 and the highest is 14 out of 20. A typical comment was: "There is a need to further define strategies in relation to networking and linking to various institutions".

Respondents are generally satisfied with the networks' diversity and size, however they tend to show medium levels of active participation in the network. Many of the comments received urged the networks to consider holding more events, either at distance or online.

Some common suggestions for participating networks are:

- Foster more inter-sectorial relationships within the network.
- Consider holding more events, especially at the regional level, or other types of opportunities for constituents to network with each other. Events may be held at a distance, on-line, or together in person.
- Consider other approaches to generate more 'buzz' and vibrancy across the networks, such as providing incentives to constituents for participating more actively in the network, or generating engagement around members' key concerns and hot topics.

Level of synergy within the network

SYNERGY INDEX

8 12

4 14.3 16

0 20

Excellent: 16–20

Acceptable: 12–16

Needs improvement: Below 12

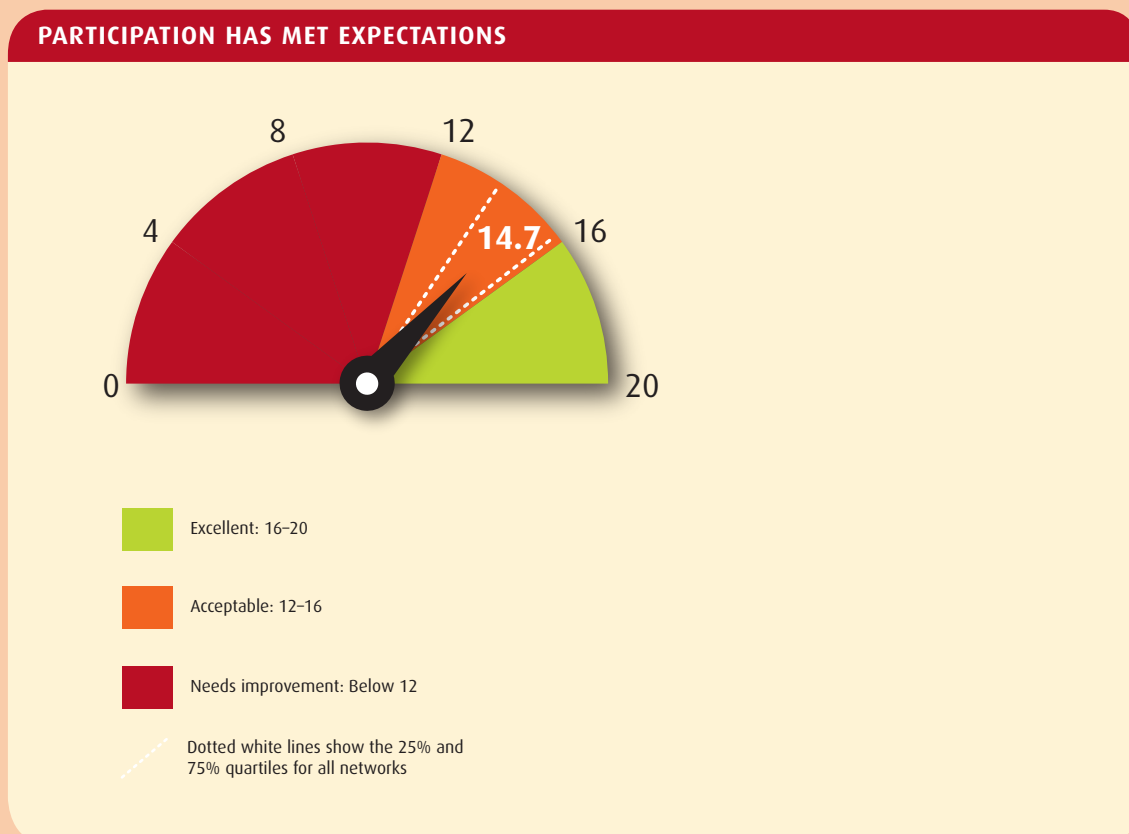Dotted white lines show the 25% and 75% quartiles for all networks

The level of synergy (sharing of common interests, similar concerns and participating in the network's strategy) within the participating networks is rated on average at 14 out of 20. There was not a lot of variation between the participating networks; the network with the lowest level of synergy receives a score of 13 and the highest a score of 16 out 20. It is up to each network to interpret what this means and gain clarity about the level of synergy that is desirable for its network. A typical comment was: "There is a need for more information that is relevant and personalised on the decisions that are being made and how they affect each participant [Network]".

A large portion of respondents across networks do not know how key decisions that affect them are made.

● Some common suggestions for participating networks are:
● Communicate more broadly to their constituencies the decision-making mechanisms within the networks.
● Create opportunities for constituents to debate the networks' strategies and have their points of view voiced.
● Review decision-making mechanisms to make sure that effective participation of those constituents that wish to be involved is enabled.

Value added for constituents

PARTICIPATION HAS MET EXPECTATIONS

8   12

4   16

0   20

14.7

Excellent: 16–20

Acceptable: 12–16

Needs improvement: Below 12

Dotted white lines show the 25% and
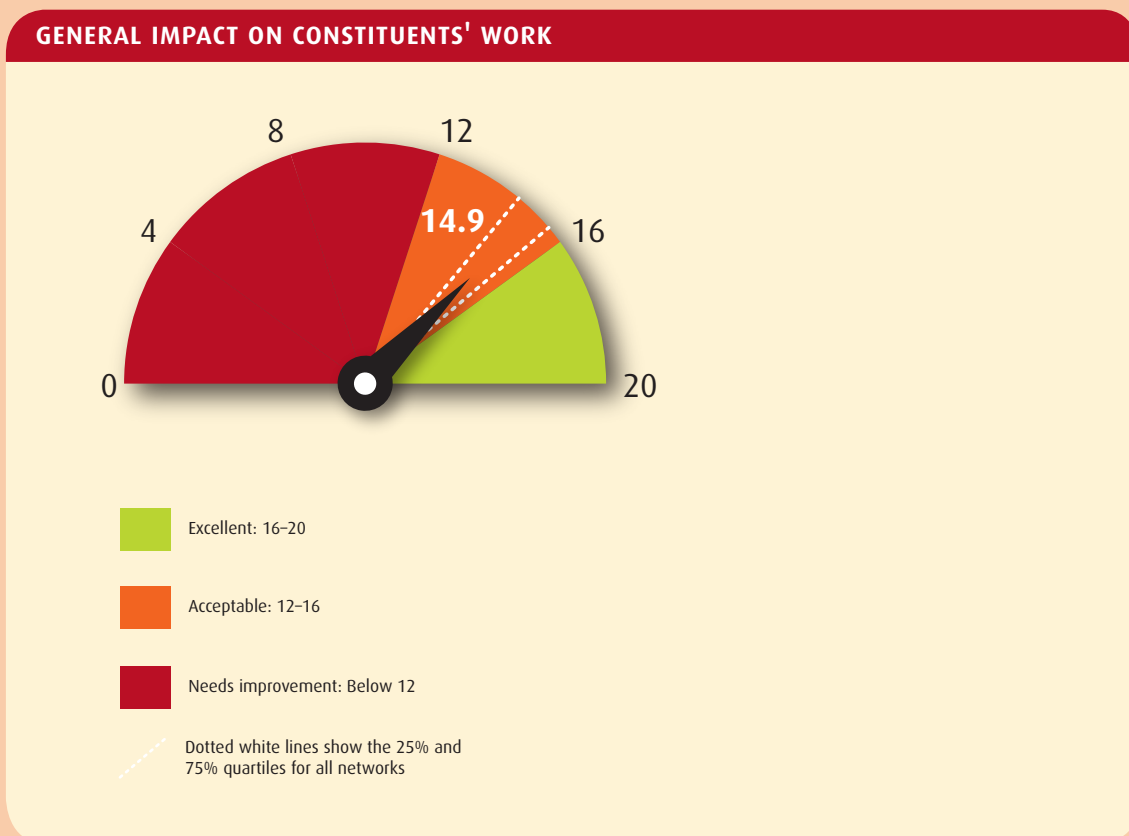75% quartiles for all networks

Respondents give relatively high ratings (average of 15 out of 20) on the extent to which their participation in the networks has met their expectations. The lowest rated network gets a score of 12 and the highest a score of 18 out of 20. A typical comment was: "[Network] has been very supportive in facilitating networking in several areas and responsive to our needs. Facilitating the sharing of knowledge between constitutents is key and helps move things forward a lot more quickly".

Overall effectiveness of the networks in adding value for constituents is rated relatively high, although there appears to be room from improvement in various areas (these vary considerably depending on the network).

Some common suggestions for participating networks are:

● Map the needs of their different constituencies and identify strategies to address them.
● Explore together with constituents potential changes in the network's strategy for enhancing the value that they add for them.

Network's impact

GENERAL IMPACT ON CONSTITUENTS' WORK

8   12

4

14.9   16

0   20

Excellent: 16–20

Acceptable: 12–16

Needs improvement: Below 12

Dotted white lines show the 25% and
75% quartiles for all networks

In terms of general impact on constituents' work, respondents give an average score of 15 out of 20 to the networks in the group. The lowest performer in this area gets a rating of 13 and the highest a rating of 16 of 20. A large number of respondents say that their participation in the network has not impacted them in any way. A typical comment was: "The biggest impact has been to be able to present the argument that we are part of an international entity".

Some common suggestions for participating networks are:

● Review, in light of the survey data, the areas of potential impact on constituents' work and identify key areas to focus on for further improvement.

● Some of the networks might also want to examine strategies for raising their own profile in the field.

Detailed findings

Next we present the findings for all 9 participating networks by section of the survey. Data are presented in an anonymous way.

DATA PRESENTATION

We use a variety of charts to present the findings of the survey. Some are simple column graphs. Sometimes we summarise the performance of the whole group of networks by using quartiles.

A quartile is a sub-group of 25% (or a quarter) of the whole group of networks.

In these charts, a shaded background shows the performance of all networks using quartiles. The top quartile shows the performance of the highest-rated 25% of networks. It is shaded yellow. The lowest-rated 25% of networks fall in the bottom quartile, which is shaded dark green. The middle-performing group included two quartiles, or 50% of the whole group. It is shaded light green. When you compare a network's score to the shaded area, you are able to see whether it is among the top 25% of performers, the middle 50% of performers, or the lowest 25% of performers of the whole group.

Quartiles are well suited for comparing this type of perceptual data, which can often be subjective and not precisely accurate. Understanding which quartile a network sits in gives a reasonably accurate basis for comparing performance against other networks.

AN EXAMPLE OF USING QUARTILES

Network X Score

ALL NETWORKS

HIGHEST RATED 25%

MIDDLE

LOWEST RATED 25%
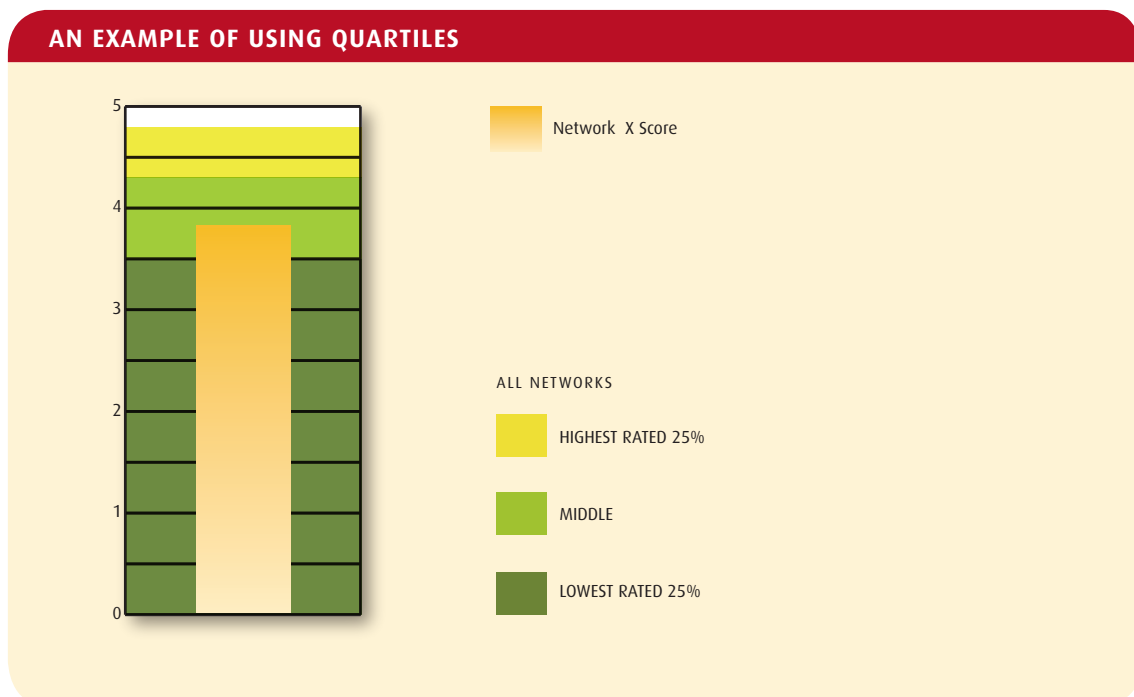
This chart shows the average score given to "Network X" by its constituents in a specific area of performance (the yellow column) against a shaded background that shows the equivalent rating for all networks grouped into quartiles.

In this chart, the top quartile of networks is made up of those that are rated in average between 4.3 and 4.7 out of 5 by their constituents. These are the highest rated networks in the group.
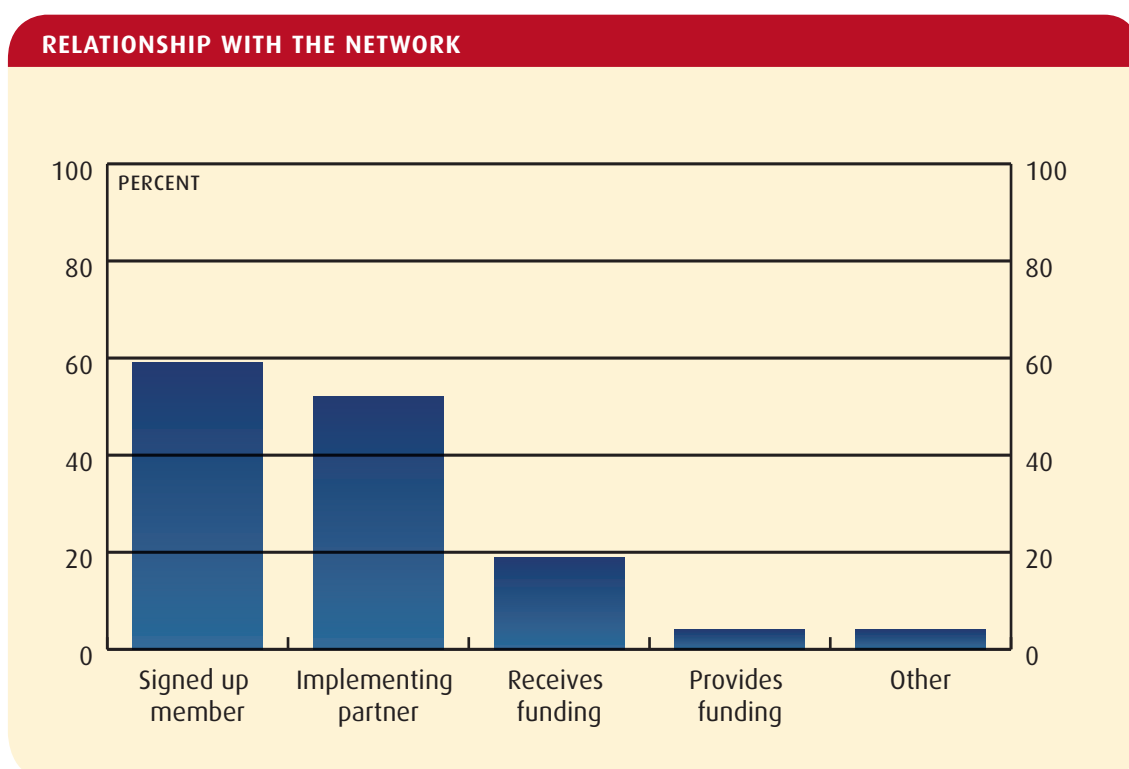
Detailed findings

The next 50% of networks are given an average rating between 3.5 and 4.3 out of 5. These are the middle performers across the whole group of networks.

The networks in the bottom quartile are given a maximum score of 3.5 out of 5. These are the lowest performing networks.

So, we can see that Network X, with an average rating of 3.8 out of 5, is placed within the middle performers of the group of 9 networks.

In the present report, the yellow column represents the mean rating for all the participating networks in combination to the quartiles presented in the shaded background.

Respondents' profile

PERCENT

[Bar chart showing percentages for relationship categories:]

- Signed up member: ~60
- Implementing partner: ~52
- Receives funding: ~19
- Provides funding: ~4
- Other: ~4

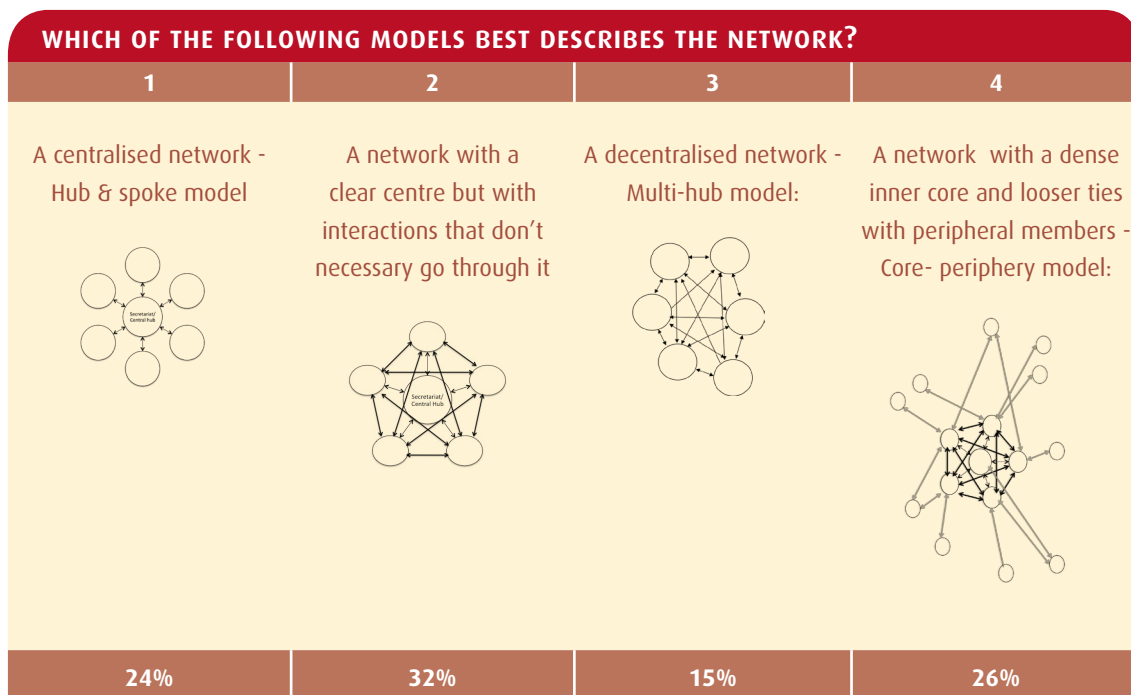*(Y-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 on both left and right sides)*

- We asked respondents 5 questions on their profile (type of organisation, position in the organisation, type and length of relationship with the networks and country of work).
- Respondents answered the questions on behalf of their organisations (66%) or in their individual capacity (25%) when associated with the networks as individuals.
- On average, almost half (48%) of respondents are in civil society organisations, 22% are in the academic institution/research team category, 7% are from either national or sub-national governmental authorities and 7% from the private sector. There are also some representatives of international intergovernmental organisations (5%) and of funding/grantmaking organisations (4%).
- Most respondents (51%) hold the position of Executive Director or equivalent in their organisation; twenty-four percent are Managers or Team Leaders, and the same amount are Officers or Researchers.
- As shown above, on average, the majority of respondents (59%) identify themselves as signed up members; half (52%) are currently implementing or have in the past implemented a project/initiative with the respective network; and, 19% say to receive funding from the network. Four percent provide funding to the networks.
- Twenty-four percent have been associated with the respective network for less than a year, 39% from 1 to 3 years and 36% for more than 3 years.
- Across the different networks, the largest concentrations of respondents were in Africa (23%) and Europe (22%). There are also 19% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 16% in North America and 5% in South-Eastern Asia and 7% in other parts of Asia and in Oceania7.

7   Countries were grouped following the UN macro regions categorisation: http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/maplib/worldregions.htm

Section 1
Structure and function of the network

Structure and function of the network

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING MODELS BEST DESCRIBES THE NETWORK?			
1	**2**	**3**	**4**
A centralised network - Hub & spoke model	A network with a clear centre but with interactions that don't necessary go through it	A decentralised network - Multi-hub model:	A network with a dense inner core and looser ties with peripheral members - Core- periphery model:
24%	**32%**	**15%**	**26%**

- One of the striking findings of the survey is that respondents tend not to see their network structure in the same way. This is true for almost all the networks in the survey. Could it be that respondents do not think about the structure of the networks in these terms? Or could it be that the structures of the networks are opaque or experienced differently by different members?
- On average, 56% of respondents see the networks as having a single well-defined centre (i.e. as 'hub & spoke' model or 'clear centre').

Structure and function of the network
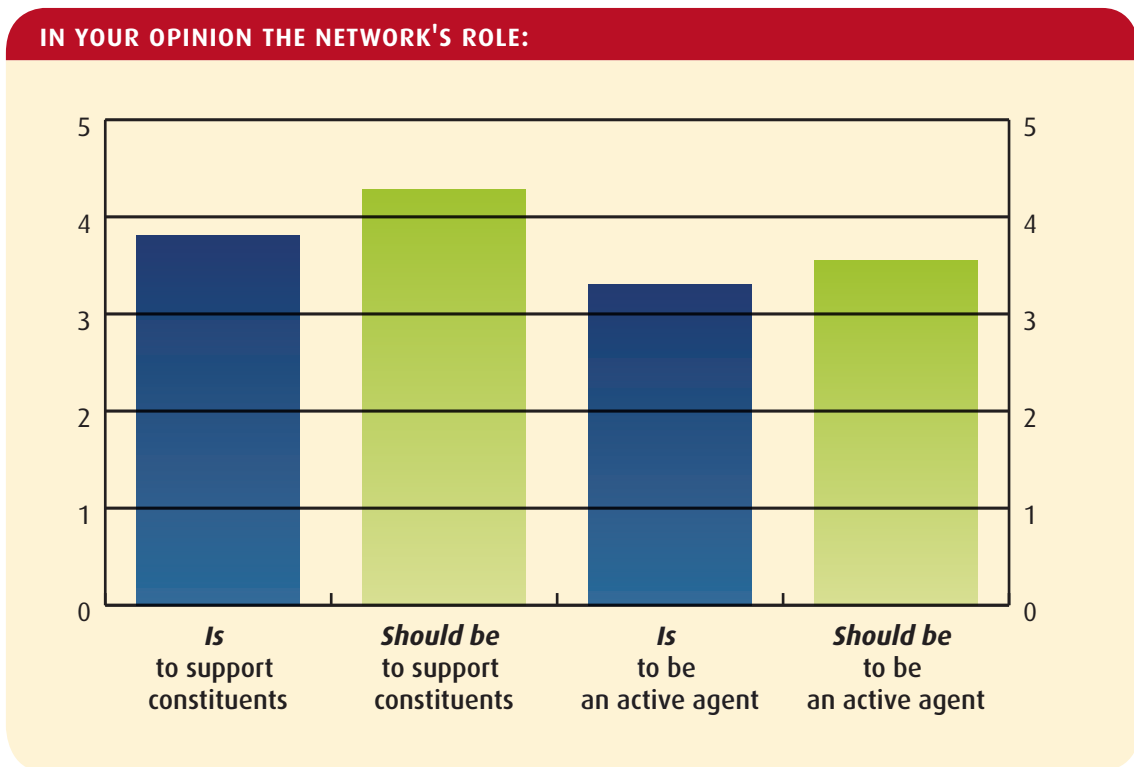
- On average, respondents rate their perception of how much the network's role is to support its constituents in performing certain activities at 3.8 out of 5. Seventy-nine percent of respondents across the 9 networks feel that their respective network's role should be to support its constituents in performing activities (average rating of 4.3 out of 5).
- The rating given on whether its current role is to be an active agent undertaking activities on behalf of its members is 3.3 out of 5. Fifty-six percent of respondents feel that the network's role should be to be an active agent on their behalf (average rating o 3.6 out of 5).
- The correlation between the perception of their current role and what this role should be suggests that, in general, the networks in the group are not meeting their constituents' expectations regarding their support role, while they pretty much are fulfilling their active agent role to the level of expectation of their constituents.

Section 2
Quality of relationships with the Secretariat

Quality of relationships with the Secretariat

MEAN Score

ALL NETWORKS

HIGHEST RATED

MIDDLE

LOWEST RATED
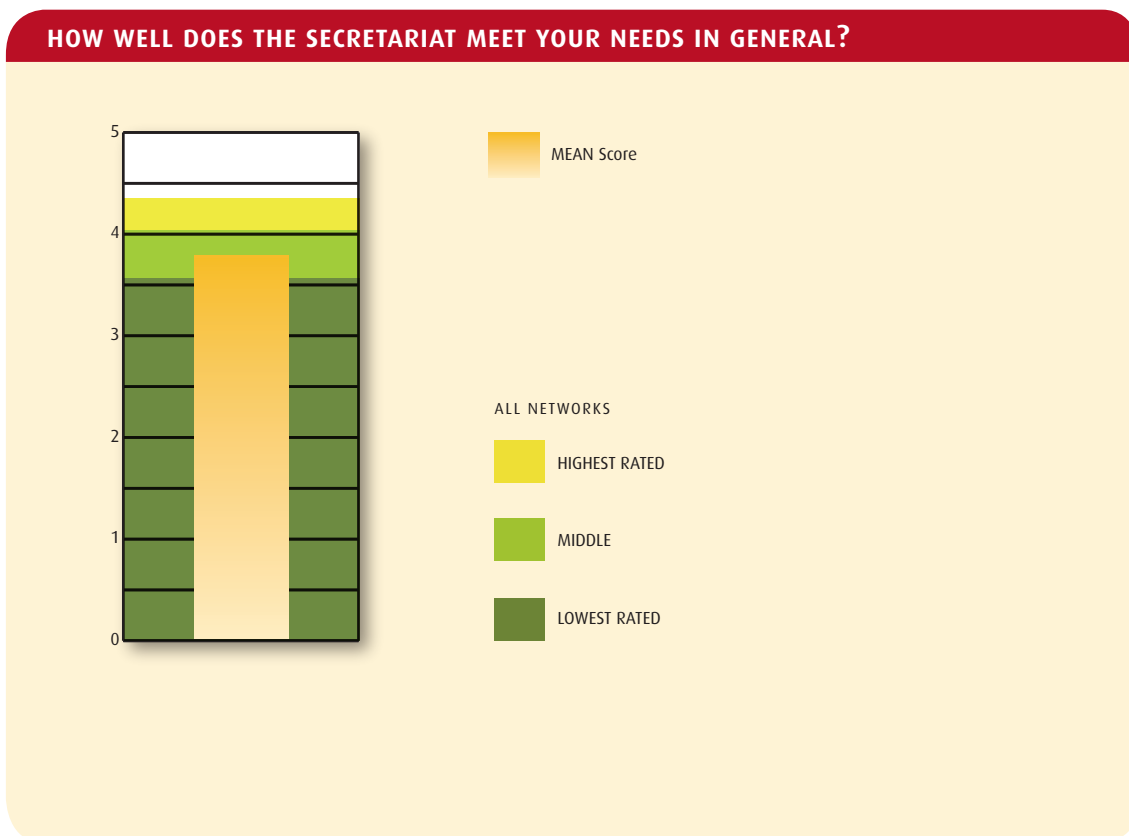
- On average, respondents give the 9 networks a rating of 3.8 out of 5 for how well the Secretariat (or equivalent) meets their needs in general. The ratings received in this area range from 3 to 4.4 out of 5.
- The next chart analyses respondents' satisfaction with the different Secretariats in more detail.

Quality of relationships with the Secretariat

HOW WELL DOES THE SECRETARIAT MEET YOUR NEEDS?

Legend: Lowest score · Mean · Highest score

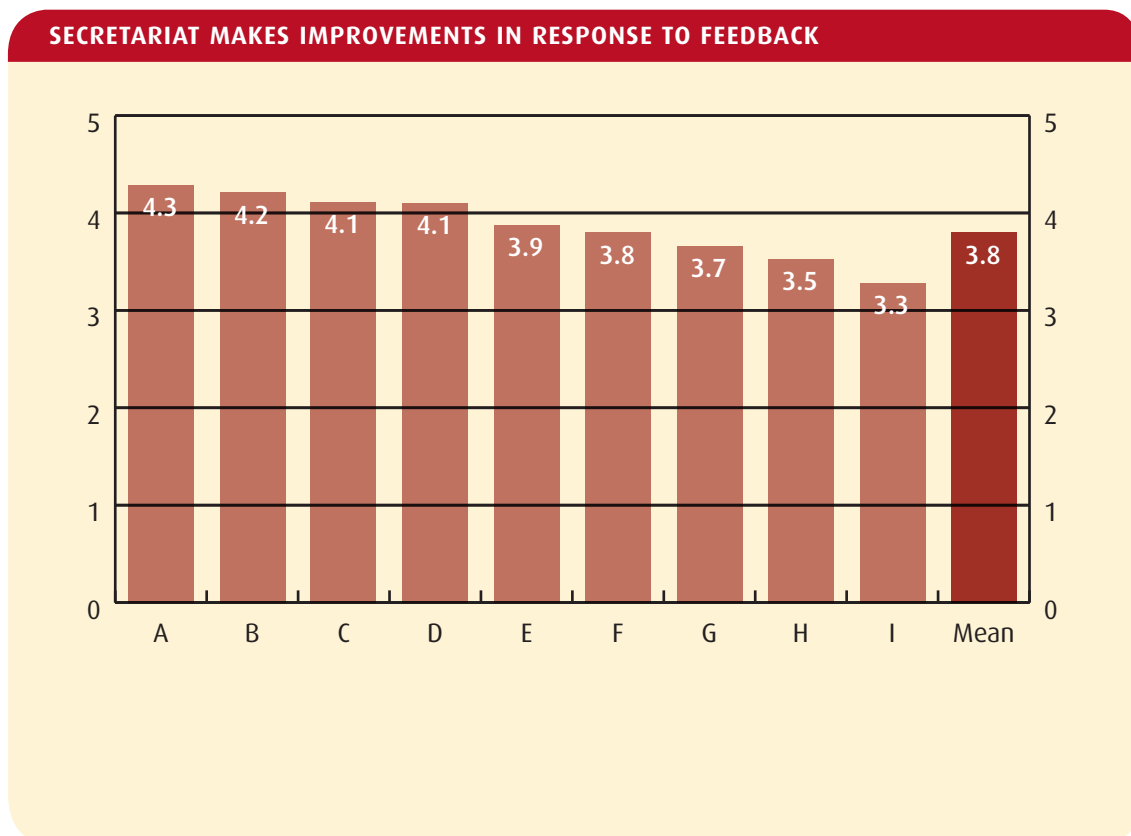| Category	Lowest score	Mean	Highest score
Info on events	3.5	4.0	4.5
Info on results	3.3	3.7	4.3
Response to queries	3.6	4.0	4.4
Admin follow-up	3.2	3.8	4.4
High quality services	3.1	3.7	4.4
High quality coordination	3.0	3.7	4.3
Flow of information	3.4	3.8	4.3
Contacts with other constituents	3.0	3.6	4.0
Contacts with policy makers	2.8	3.3	3.8
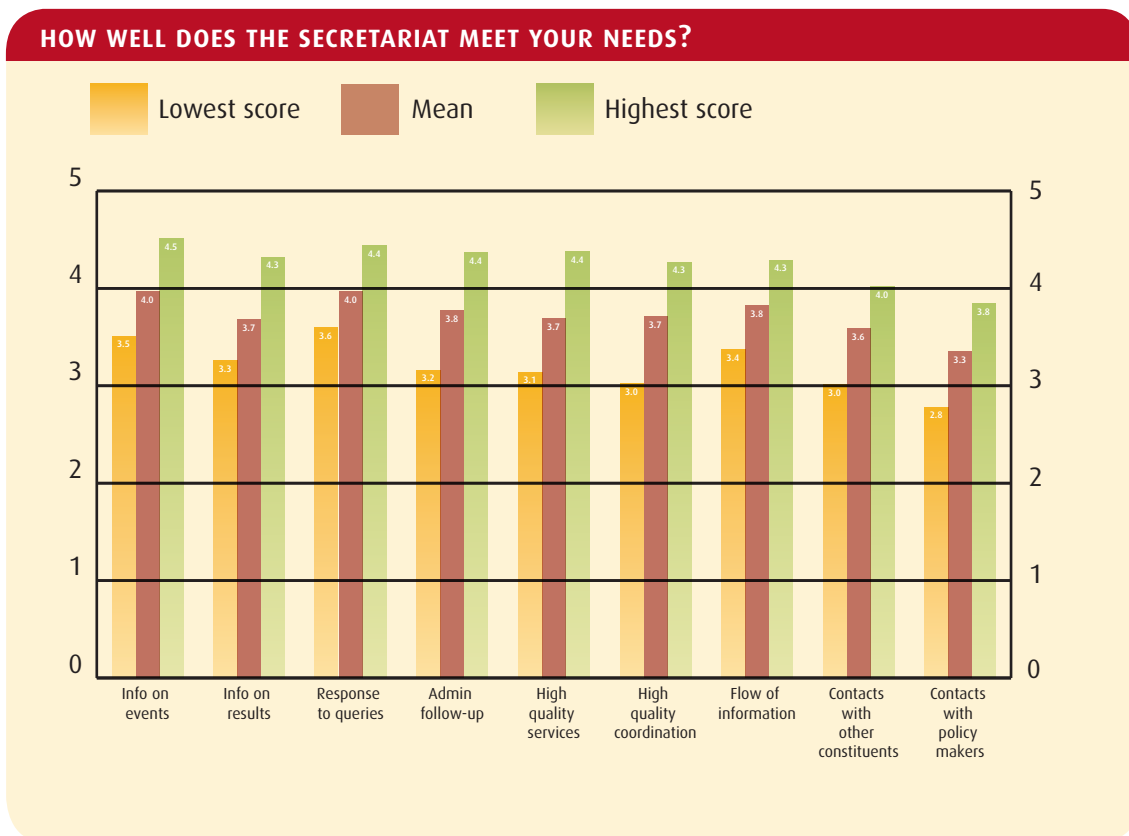
- Across the 9 networks, the highest rated areas are the provision of timely information on network events and responding quickly to queries (4 out of 5 for both). Interestingly, the lowest rated areas are the ones related to networking, such as the facilitation of contacts between constituents and with key allies or policy makers.
- The following percentages of respondents feel that the networks' Secretariats meet these needs either "well" (4) or "very well" (5):
  - Timely information on network events by 69%.
  - Timely information on the network's results by 60%.
  - Quick response to queries by 65%.
  - Administrative follow up by 56%.
  - Provision of high quality, relevant services by 51%.
  - Provision of high quality, relevant coordination by 55%.
  - Enabling transparent and efficient flow of information by 63%.
  - Facilitating contacts between constituents by 54%.
  - Facilitating contacts with key allies or policy makers by 41%.

Quality of relationships with the Secretariat

QUALITY OF COMMUNICATIONS WITH SECRETARIAT

MEAN Score

ALL NETWORKS

HIGHEST RATED

MIDDLE
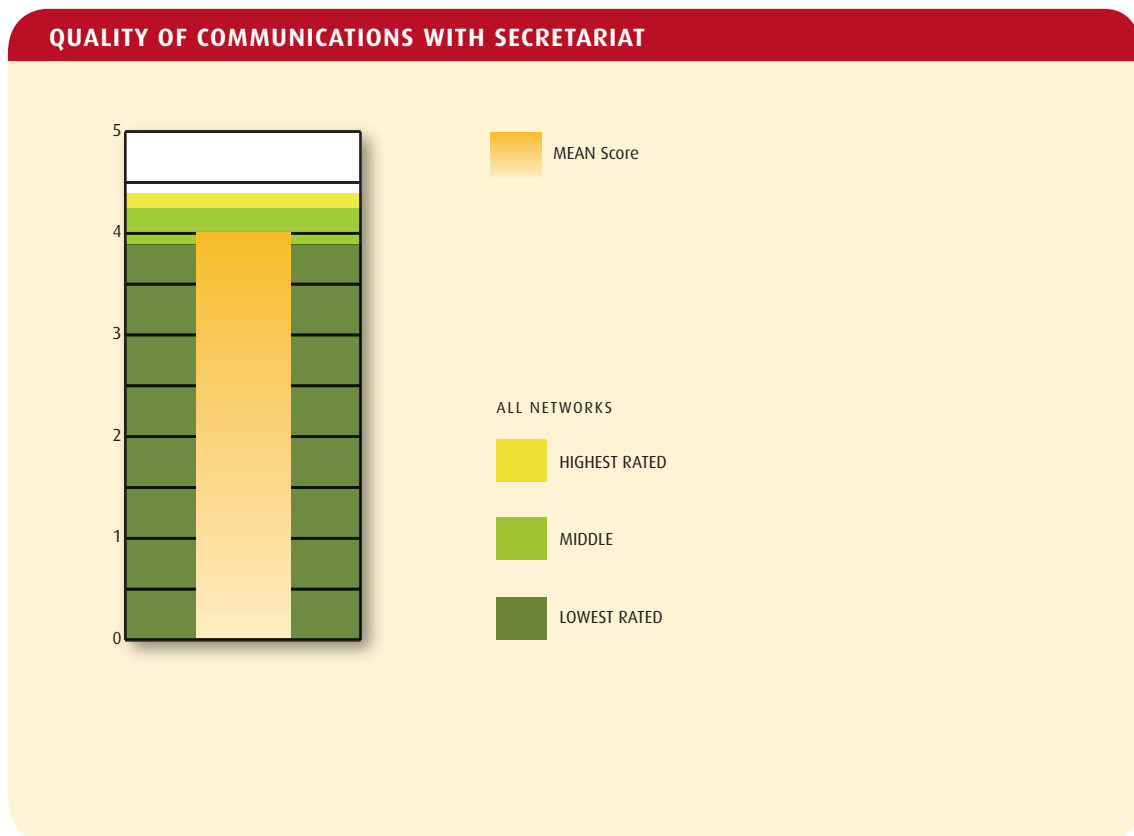
LOWEST RATED

- Asked about the quality (i.e. timeliness, openness, relevance, accuracy) of communications that they have with the Secretariat, respondents give their respective networks an average rating of 4 out of 5. The lowest rated network received a score of 3.4 and the highest a 4.4 out of 5.
- On average, 62% of respondents give their network's secretariat a high (4) or very high (5) rating.

Quality of relationships with the Secretariat

SECRETARIAT MAKES IMPROVEMENTS IN RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Mean
Rating	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.1	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.8

- Respondents give the Secretariats a rating of 3.8 out of 5. This lowest rated network receives a score of 3.3 and the best rated gets a score of 4.3.
- We also asked questions about the quality of communications and improvement on the basis of feedback about other bodies within the network (governance boards, councils, committees and task/theme related workgroups or committees). On average 54% of respondents across all networks say that they didn't know. This suggests that constituents are not aware of these other bodies, and perhaps do not see them as being as important or relevant as the Secretariats.

Illustrative examples of comments and suggestions made by respondents in this section include:

- "Exchanges are direct and are generally channelled through a secretariat that is efficient and [operates] with great transparency".
- "We have direct communication with [the] Secretariat but have [little] contact with the council or other committees and (...) get little information of them and do not know much about what is going on with the other parts of [Network]".
- "The African Secretariat still needs to improve in providing quick responses to the different queries coming from the members".
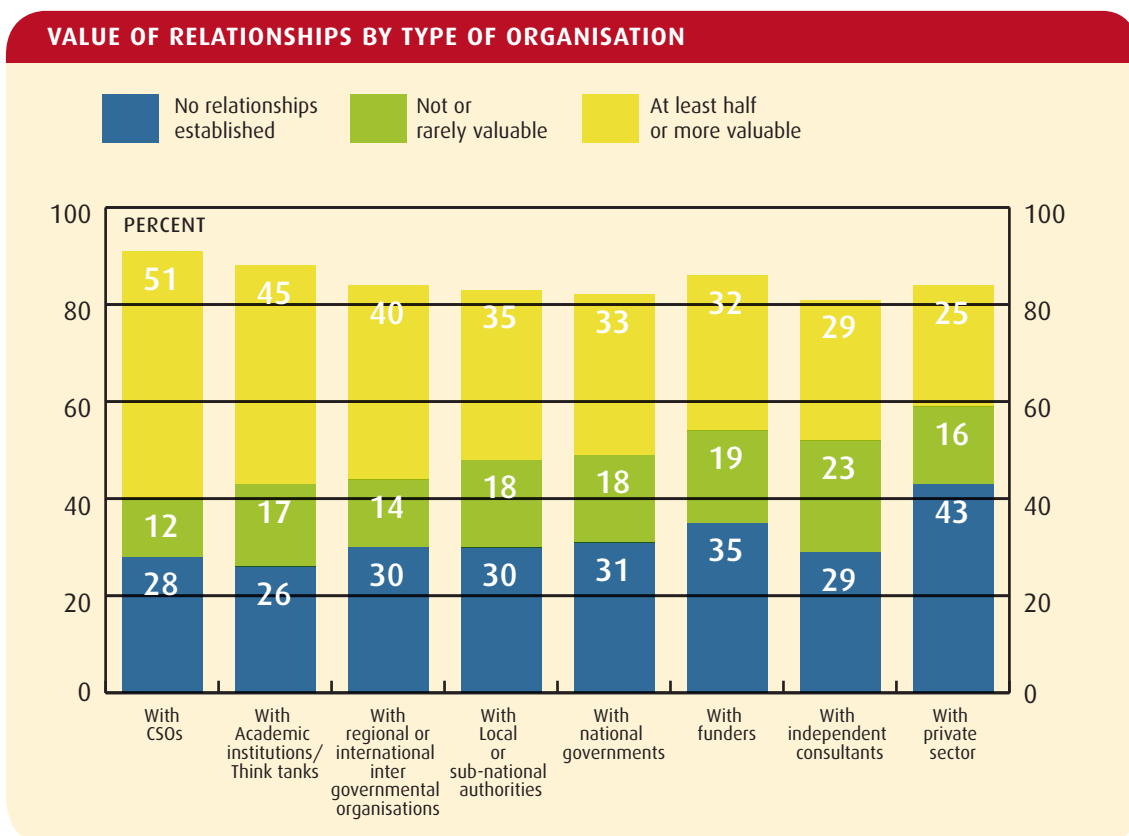
Section 3
Network vibrancy

Network vibrancy

VALUE OF NEW RELATIONSHIPS INDEX

MEAN Score

ALL NETWORKS
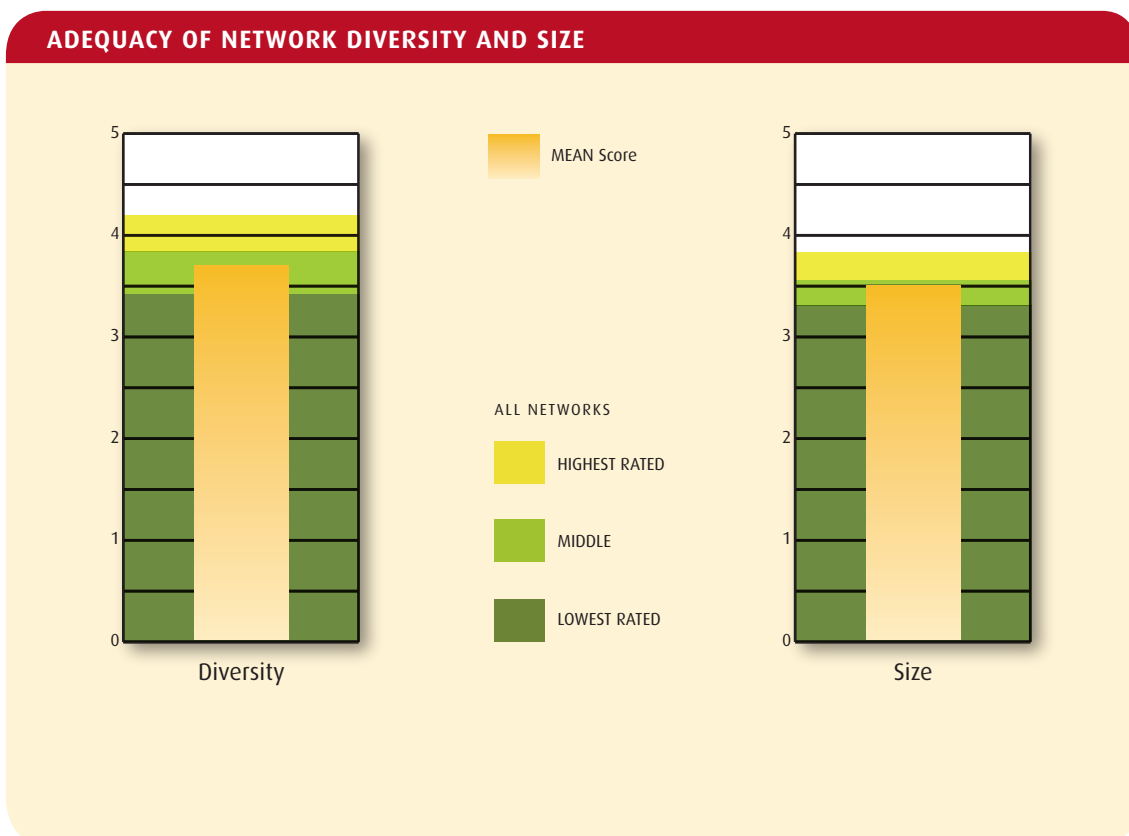
HIGHEST RATED

MIDDLE

LOWEST RATED
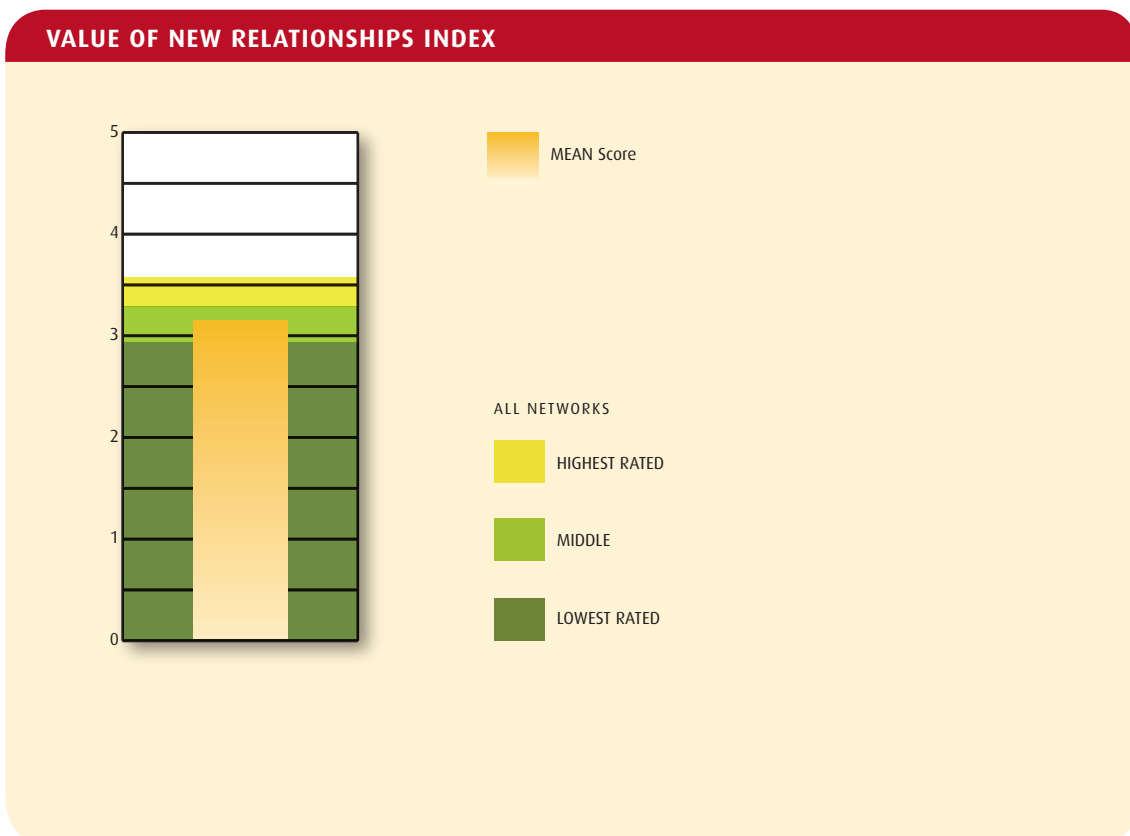
- The "Value of new relationships Index" summarises the value that respondents give to the new relationships that they have established with different kinds of actors as a result of participating in the network.
- Respondents' give an overall value of relationships established of 3.1 out of 5. The lowest score for this measure is 2.6 and the highest is 3.6.

Network vibrancy

Legend:
- No relationships established
- Not or rarely valuable
- At least half or more valuable

PERCENT

| Category	No relationships established	Not or rarely valuable	At least half or more valuable
With CSOs	28	12	51
With Academic institutions/Think tanks	26	17	45
With regional or international inter governmental organisations	30	14	40
With Local or sub-national authorities	30	18	35
With national governments	31	18	33
With funders	35	19	32
With independent consultants	29	23	29
With private sector	43	16	25

- As a result of their participation in the respective networks, constituents most frequently establish relationships with civil society organisations (63%) and academic institutions/research institute/think tanks (62%) and find them somewhat valuable (51% and 45% respectively).

- Most commonly relationships were initiated by respondents meeting each other at an event organised by the network (average of 14%). Across all networks, 7% say to have been introduced by the Secretariat (or equivalent) and 6% to have met through the network's online platform or listserv. Seventeen percent state that they knew each other before joining the network. The low percentage of presentations made by the Secretariats, suggests that the Secretariats for most of the networks in the group do not have an active role in facilitating networking among constituents.

- On average 32% of respondents say not to have created relationships with the type of organisations listed in the questionnaire. Further analysis, with the exception of three networks, does not show any significant correlations between the type of organisation respondents are associated with and the value they assign to the relationships created with the different types of organisations.

Network vibrancy

**ADEQUACY OF NETWORK DIVERSITY AND SIZE**

- The adequacy of the diversity and the size of the participating networks are rated on average at 3.7 and 3.5 out of 5 respectively. Regarding the adequacy of the network's diversity, the lowest rating received by a network is 3.4 and the highest is 4.2. For the size, the lowest rating is 3.3 and the highest is 3.8.

Network vibrancy

■	1 - Peripheral
■	2
■	3
■	4
■	5 - Very active
■	Don't know-N/A
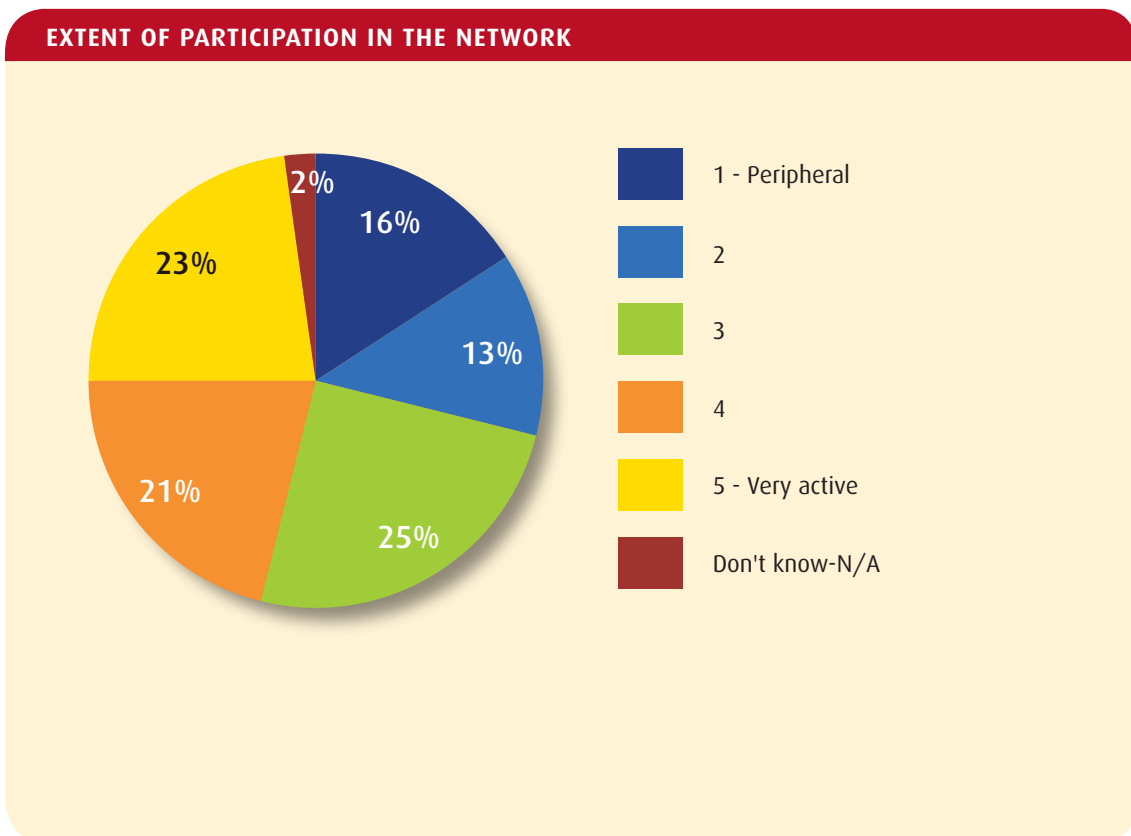
- Forty-four percent of respondents consider themselves as being active (4) or very active (5) participants in the respective networks, while 31% see themselves as not (1) or rarely (2) active.
- Across all networks, civil society organisations are the group of respondents that most see themselves as active or very active. Those that receive funding from their respective network report the highest levels of participation, followed closely by those that are implementing partners and signed up members. Those that provide funding to the networks are the group with the lowest levels of participation.

Network vibrancy

EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION IN NETWORK
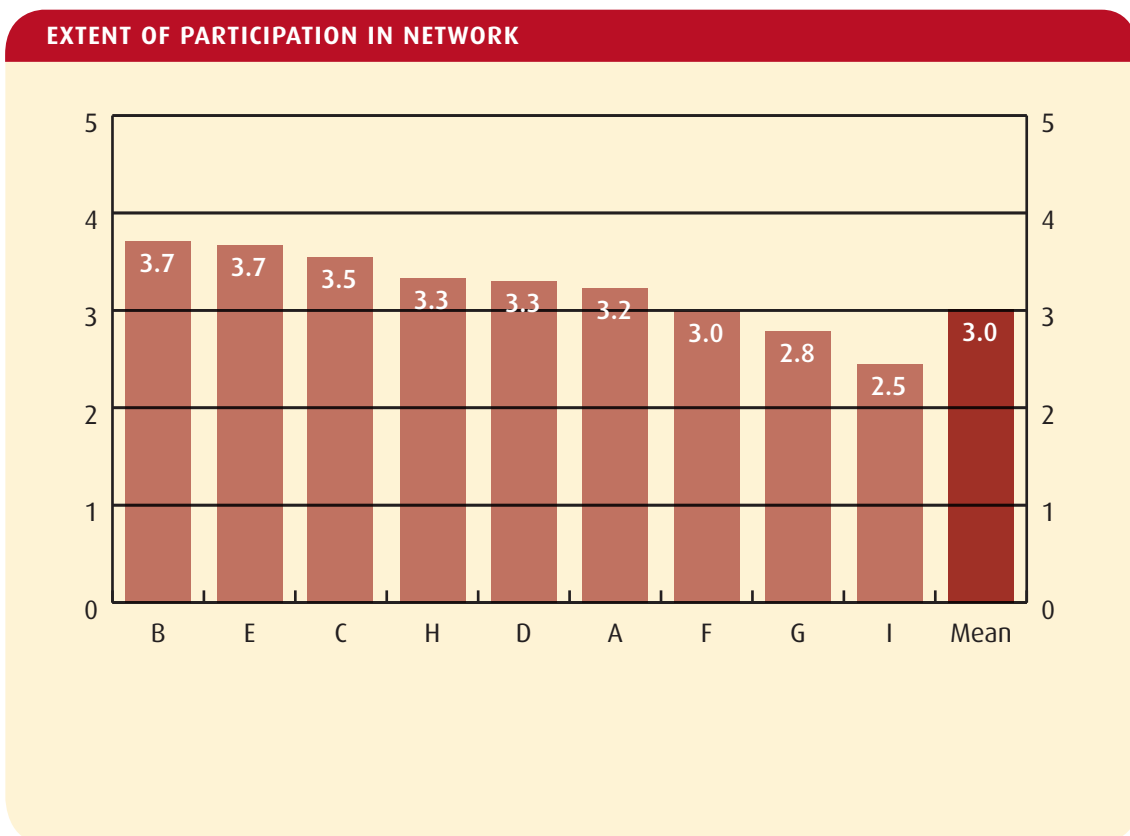
- On average, respondents rate their participation in the 9 participating networks as 3 out of 5. The network with the lowest level of participation reported receives a score of 2.5, while the one with the highest, receives a score of 3.7. Comparisons between the networks in the group suggest that there maybe an inverse correlation between the size of the network and the extent of participation in it; bigger networks tend to have less participation.
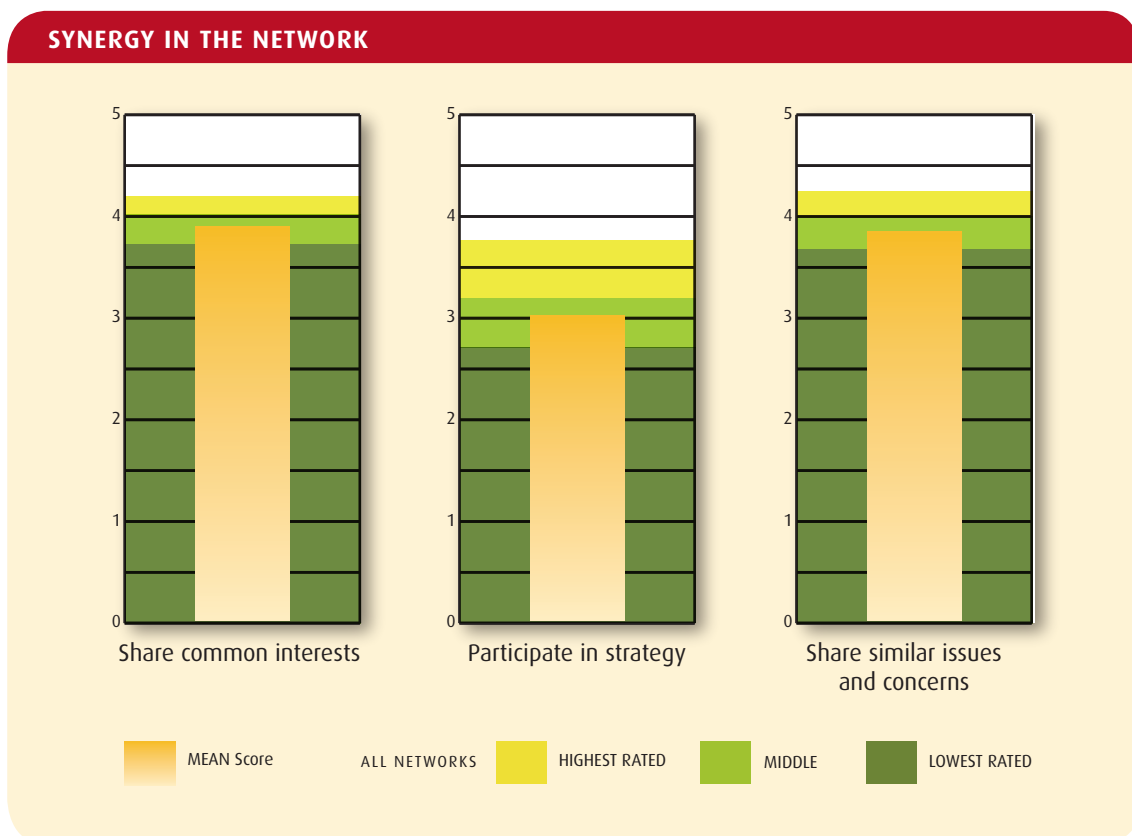
Illustrative examples of comments and suggestions made by respondents in this section include:
- "We have recently established a number of new relations following a [location] workshop, and have yet to see which ones of those work out. It is important also to take into account the personal relations that are established in events like these, which in the long run may prove very important".
- "There is a need to further define strategies in relation to networking and linking to various institutions. It should be noted that networking does not necessarily [mean] expanding the membership".
- "Regional processes/nodes should be strengthened having clear linkages with the [Network] global strategic objectives so that more organisations at the regional level having common areas of interest can participate in [Network] initiatives and work together to make significant changes".
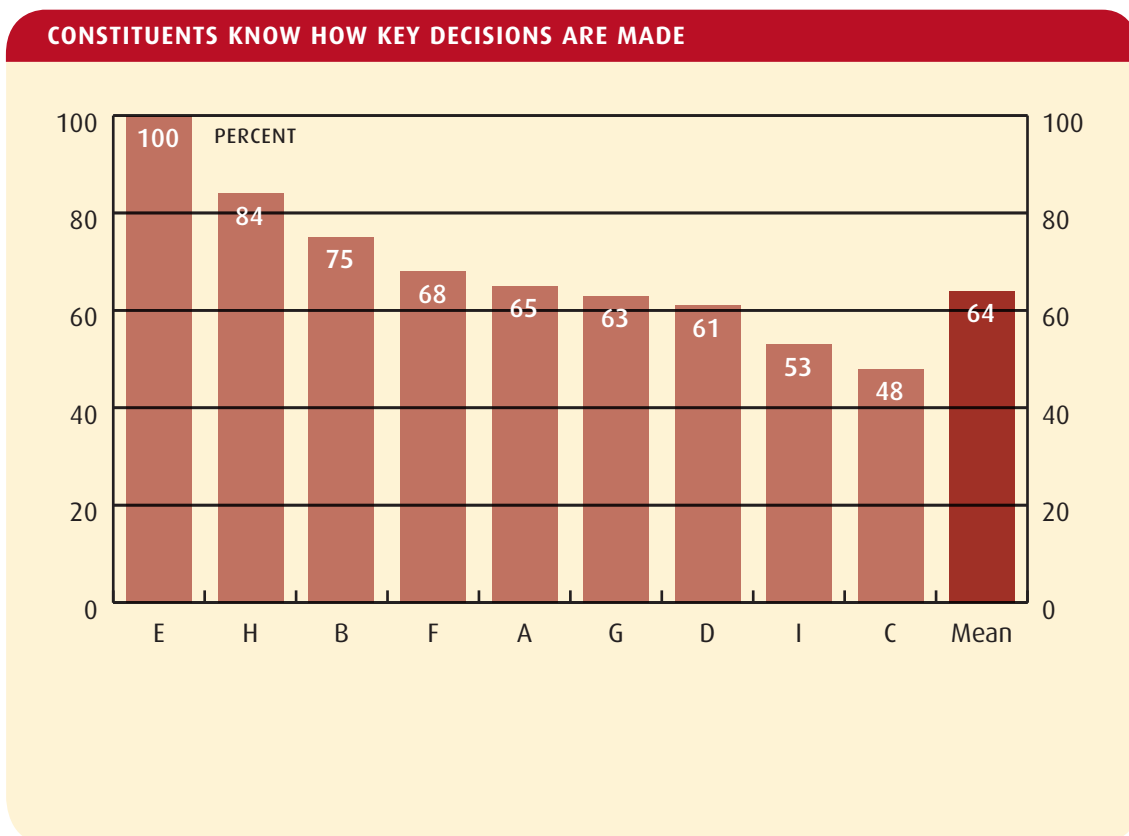
Section 4

Level of synergy within the network

Level of synergy within the network

SYNERGY IN THE NETWORK

Share common interests

Participate in strategy

Share similar issues and concerns

MEAN Score ALL NETWORKS HIGHEST RATED MIDDLE LOWEST RATED

● In this section we asked networks' constituents about the level of synergy in their respective networks, and specifically about the extent to which constituents share common interests with the network, participate in its strategy and share similar issues and concerns with other participants. On average, the 9 networks are rated 3.9, 3 and 3.8 in these three areas. There was little variation between the different networks in the areas regarding sharing common interests with the network and similar issues and concerns with other constituents. Regarding the participation in the network's strategy, the lowest rated network receives a score of 2.5 against a 3.8 out of 5 for the highest rated network.

Level of synergy within the network

CONSTITUENTS KNOW HOW KEY DECISIONS ARE MADE

PERCENT

E	H	B	F	A	G	D	I	C	Mean
100	84	75	68	65	63	61	53	48	64

- Asked about how key decisions affecting constituents are made in the network, more than a third of respondents (36%) across all networks say that they don't know. Those that receive funding from the network tend to have a better idea about how key decisions are made in it. The group that expresses the less knowledge regarding how decisions are made are those that provide funding to the network.
- Opinions about how decisions are made are spread across the spectrum. Twenty-two percent of respondents feel that either most or all key decisions are made by the Secretariat (or equivalent); another 20% that decisions are equally distributed between the Secretariat and being constituent driven and 31% that either most or all key decisions are constituent driven.
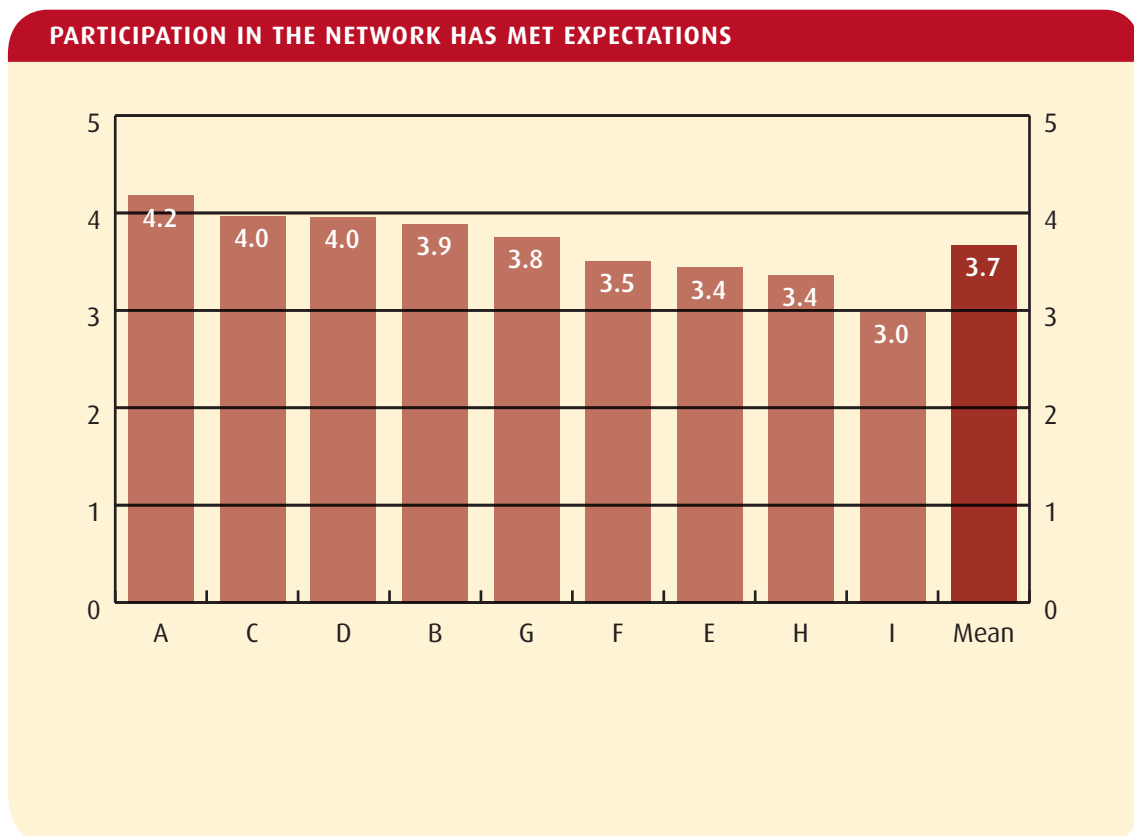
Illustrative examples of comments and suggestions made by respondents in this section include:
- "The synergy exists and should be strengthened through more workshops and other public forums".
- "It would be interesting to consider country project members in making decisions affecting constituents, design strategies in a participatory way."
- "There is a need for more information that is relevant and personalised on the decisions that are being made and how they affect each participant [Network]."
- "All members do not have the same level of information."
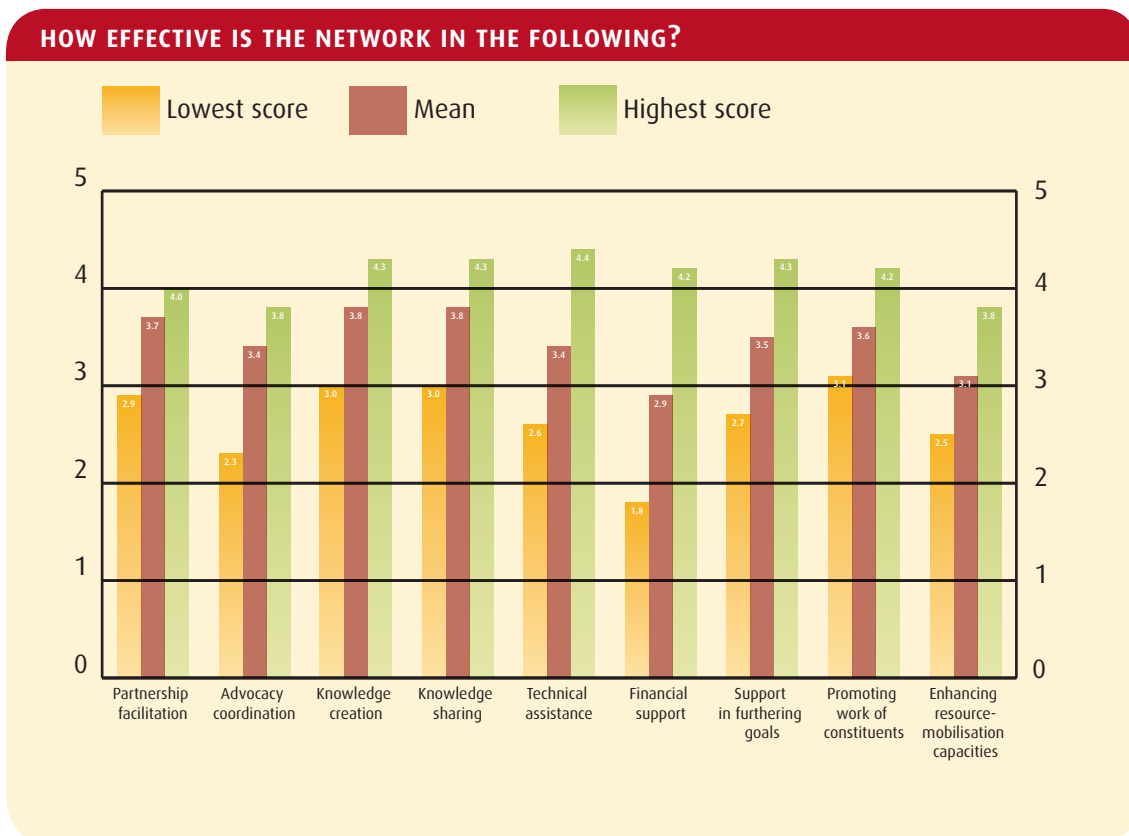
Section 5
Value added for constituents

Value added for constituents

PARTICIPATION IN THE NETWORK HAS MET EXPECTATIONS

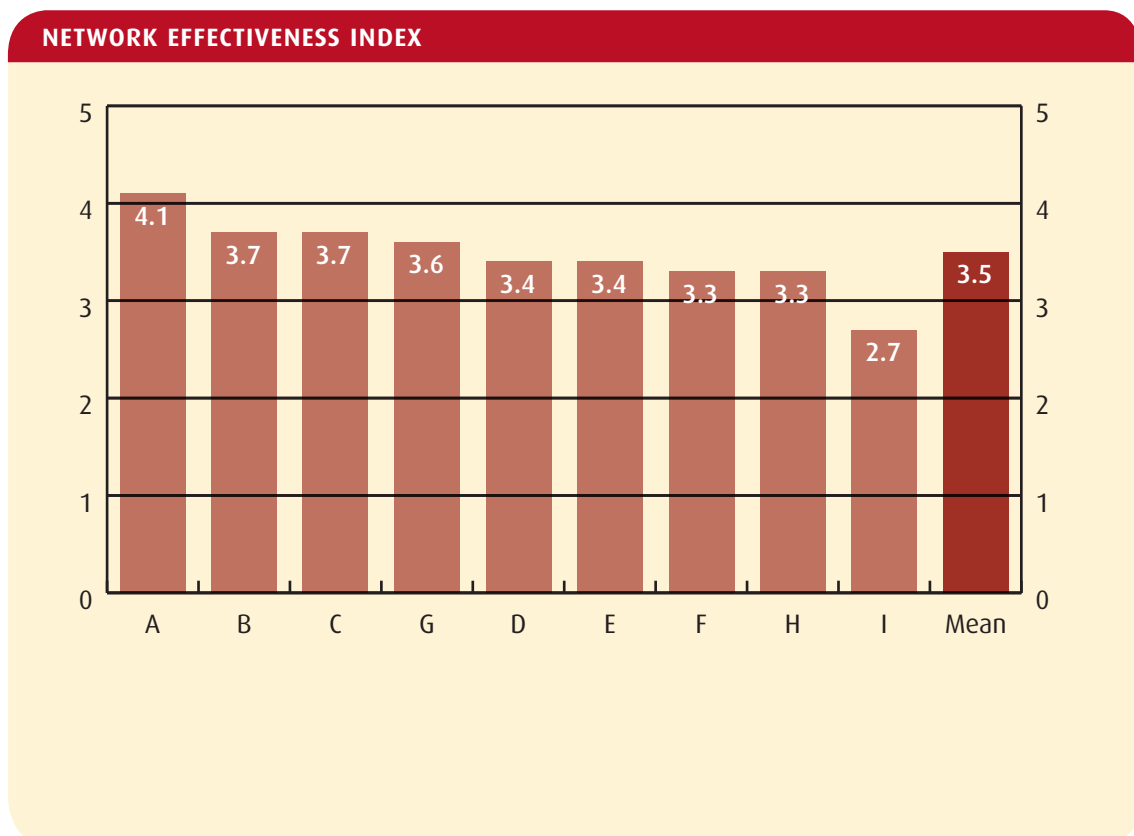|	A	C	D	B	G	F	E	H	I	Mean
	4.2	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.0	3.7

- Respondents give a rating of 3.7 out of 5 on the extent to which their participation in the respective networks has met their expectations. The highest rated network in this area gets a score of 4.2, while the lowest gets 3 out of 5.
- Fifty-six percent of respondents across the 9 networks say that the network they participate in met their expectations either very much (4) or absolutely (5), 27% give a medium rating (3), while 11% say that it didn't meet their expectations (1&2).

Value added for constituents

HOW EFFECTIVE IS THE NETWORK IN THE FOLLOWING?

Lowest score   Mean   Highest score

	Partnership facilitation	Advocacy coordination	Knowledge creation	Knowledge sharing	Technical assistance	Financial support	Support in furthering goals	Promoting work of constituents	Enhancing resource-mobilisation capacities
Lowest score	2.9	2.3	3.0	3.0	2.6	1.8	2.7	3.0	2.5
Mean	3.7	3.4	3.8	3.8	3.4	2.9	3.5	3.6	3.1
Highest score	4.0	3.8	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.2	3.8

- The graph shows the average ratings given by respondents to the networks' performance in a series of areas, as well as the lowest and highest scores received in each area.
- On average, respondents report that the network they participate in is either "very" (4) or "extremely" (5) effective in:
  - Facilitating networking and brokering partnerships between constituents by 52%.
  - Coordinating advocacy actions by 39%.
  - Creating new knowledge by 63%.
  - Facilitating knowledge sharing between constituents by 63%.
  - Providing technical assistance and capacity building to constituents by 47%.
  - Providing financial support to constituents by 32%.
  - Supporting its constituents in furthering their goals by 47%.
  - Promoting the work of constituents by 52%.
  - Enhancing constituents' capacity to mobilise resources by 34%.

Value added for constituents

Network effectiveness index chart showing scores for networks A (4.1), B (3.7), C (3.7), G (3.6), D (3.4), E (3.4), F (3.3), H (3.3), I (2.7), and Mean (3.5) on a scale of 0 to 5.

- The network effectiveness index, calculated from the average ratings on the series of areas relating to the network's performance, has an average score of 3.5 out of 5 for the 9 networks. The lowest rated network gets a score of 2.7 and the highest a score of 4.1 out of 5.
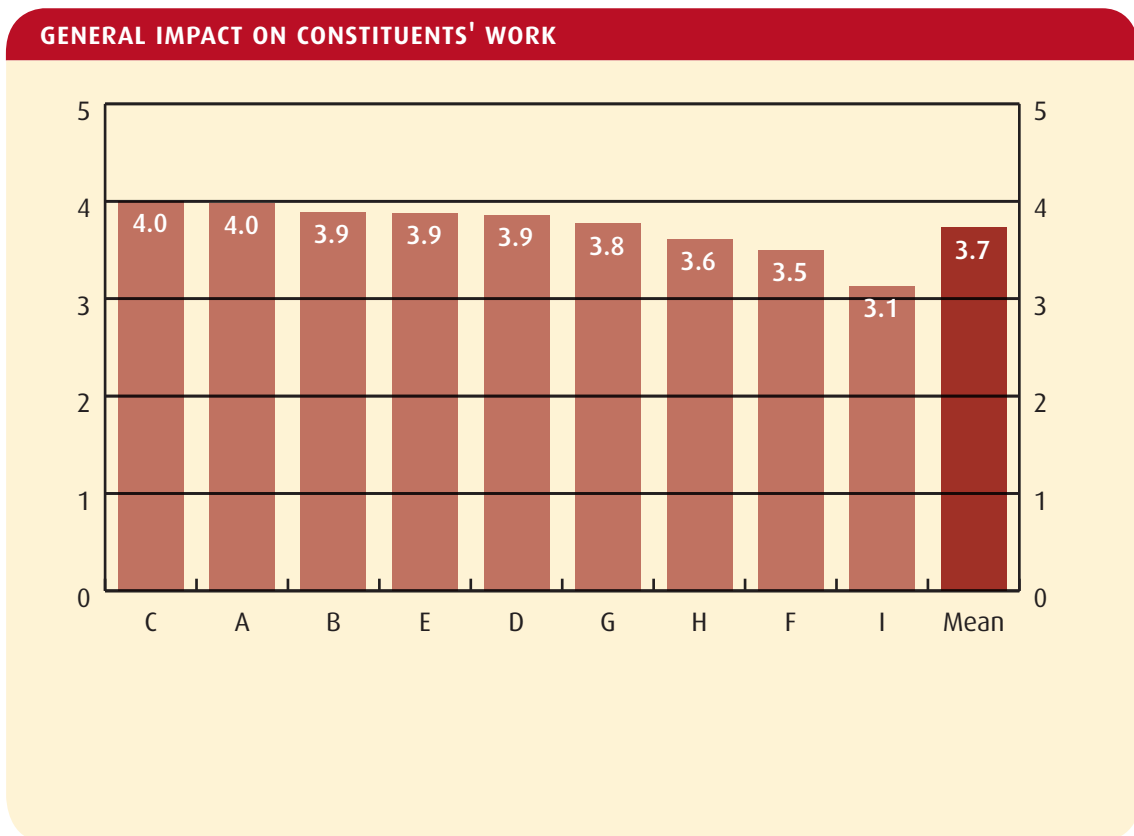
Illustrative examples of comments and suggestions made by respondents in this section include:
- "[Network] has been very supportive in facilitating networking in several areas and responsive to our needs. Facilitating the sharing of knowledge between constitutents is key and helps move things forward a lot more quickly".
- "Participating in [Network] has increased the visibility of [organisation] at country level and abroad".
- "At the moment it is only the funding that we got, but other than that, we do not see much value. I think [Network] should clearly state how NGOs can benefit from the network".

Section 6

The network's impact

The network's impact

GENERAL IMPACT ON CONSTITUENTS' WORK

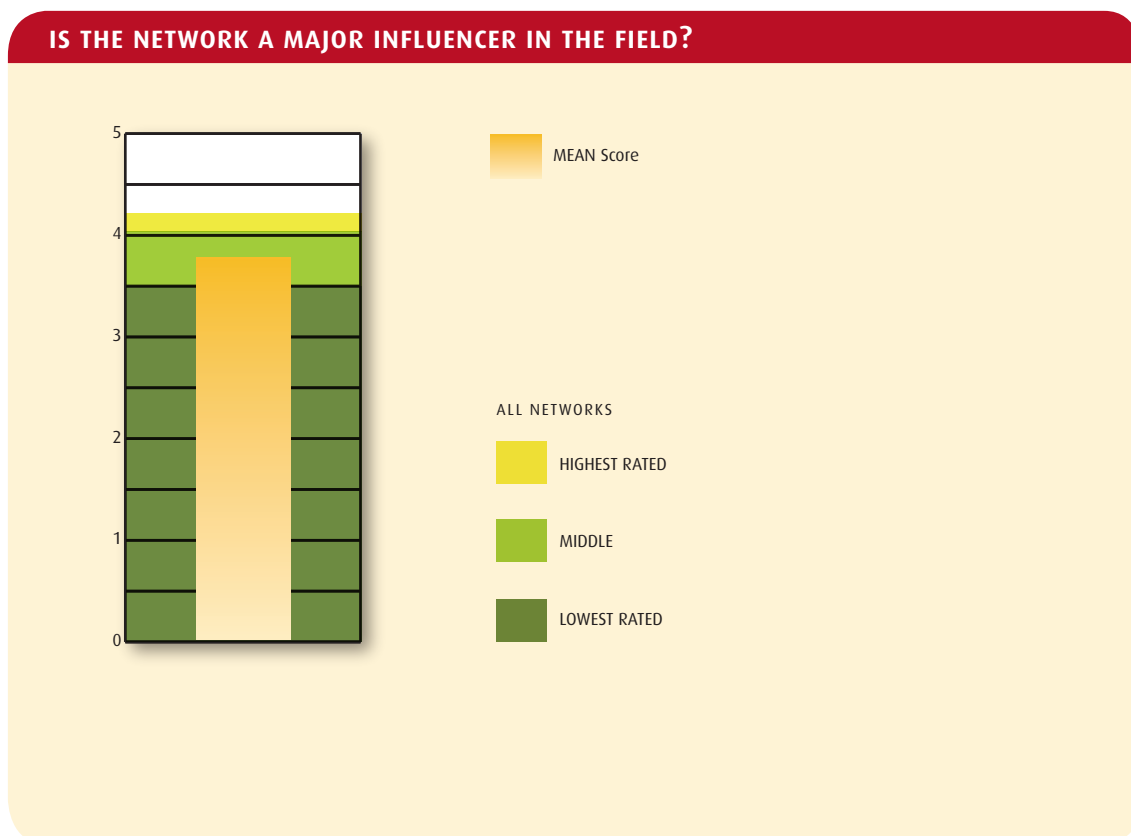| Network	Score
C	4.0
A	4.0
B	3.9
E	3.9
D	3.9
G	3.8
H	3.6
F	3.5
I	3.1
Mean	3.7

- In terms of general impact on constituents' work, respondents give an average rating of 3.7 to the network they participate in. There isn't a lot of variation between the different networks, with the lowest rated network receiving a score of 3.1 and the highest a score of 4 out of 5.

The network's impact
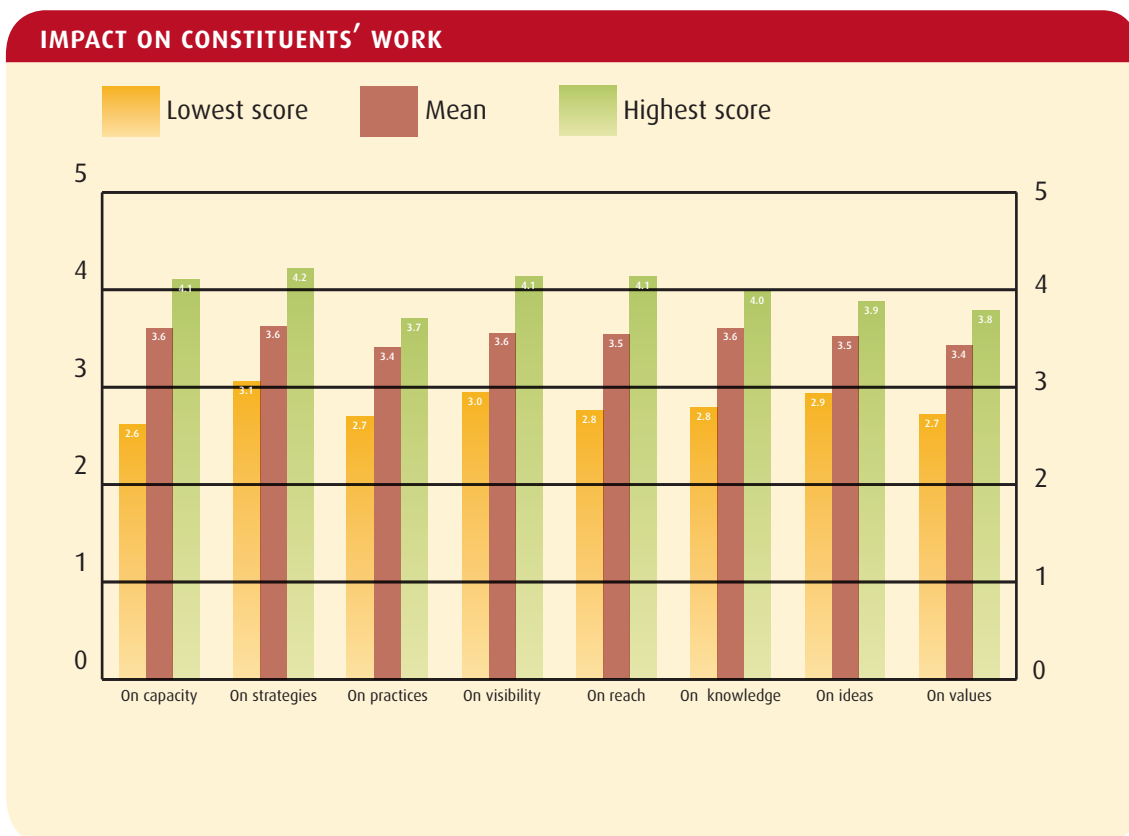
- The graph shows the average ratings given by respondents on the networks' impact on a series of areas relative to the work of their constituents.
- On average, the following percentages of respondents feel that the network they participate in has had either a "big" (4) or "massive" (5) positive impact:
  - On their capacity by 31%.
  - On their strategies by 33%.
  - On the way they work and their practices by 29%.
  - On the visibility of their work by 35%.
  - On the reach of their work by 34%.
  - On the sources of knowledge that they have available for their work by 34%.
  - On their ideas and the way they communicate them by 33%.
  - On their values and the way they apply them by 33%.
- Across all areas, an average of 18% of respondents say that their participation in the respective networks has had "no positive or negative impact at all" on their work. This percentage varied from 10% to 42% of respondents per network.

The network's impact

MEAN Score

ALL NETWORKS

HIGHEST RATED

MIDDLE

LOWEST RATED

- The 9 participating networks receive an average rating of 3.8 out of 5 in their perception by respondents as major influencers in their area of work. The lowest rated network received a score of 2.9 and the highest a score of 4.2 out of 5.
- On average, the participating networks are seen as major influencers (4&5) in their area of work by 58% of respondents; 24% give them a neutral rating (3) in this area and 14% feel they are not major influencers (1&2).

Illustrative examples of comments and suggestions made by respondents in this section include:
- "The biggest impact has been to be able to present the argument that we are part of an international entity".
- "Main impact is giving visibility to the [issue] and providing greater 'legitimacy' to local efforts, even if actual forms of direct support are limited".
- "Too early to comment".

Conclusion

The findings from this survey present independently gathered data about the value that networks' members and other constituents gain from participating in them. The survey provides an opportunity for the networks to discuss these issues with their constituents and consider how they can improve the value that they generate.
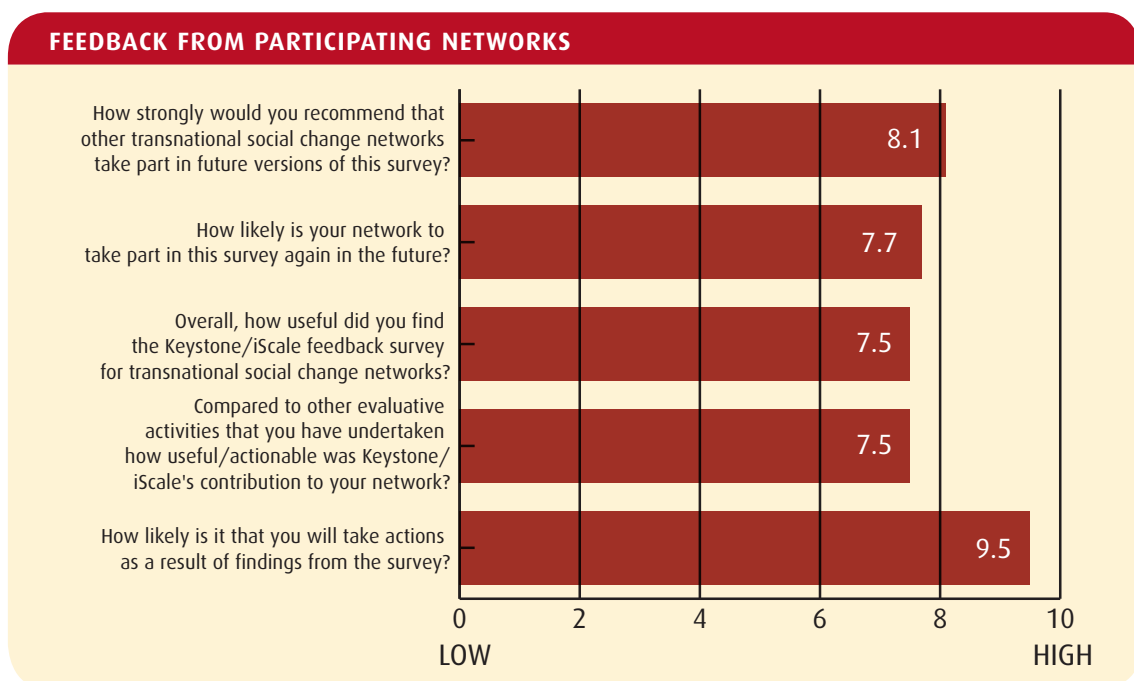
The findings from this survey show relatively good levels of satisfaction across the majority of the networks. They suggest that participating networks face similar challenges when it comes to how their performance is perceived by their constituents. There are however a couple of clear very high (and low) performers within the group of networks, demonstrating how increased levels of satisfaction are achievable in a network context.

Our analysis is based exclusively on the survey data and comparisons between the networks in the group. Each network has its own specificities and particular context. Each network's staff and board may add to this analysis with insights from their experience and specialist knowledge of the field in which their network operates. Another way to deepen analysis is to explore the report in depth through open conversations with members and other constituents.

Initial feedback from participating networks suggests that they found the survey and comparative analysis largely useful for identifying specific areas that need improvement. All of them were able to extract actionable points from the reports that they were presented with and have started to formulate a response to the feedback received from their constituencies.

One of the project participants said: "The survey shows strengths and weaknesses of the network, and will enable us to push for some internal policies and efforts (accountability, communication, support to new members and expanding the network membership). It was also important to have comparative data to assess the network "out of the box" and in relation with similar organisations even if the particular structure of the network I am part of appears as quite singular."

Keystone and iScale are planning to repeat this comparative feedback survey in a year's time. The 9 networks as well as other transnational social change networks will be invited to participate through an open call.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPATING NETWORKS

Question	Score
How strongly would you recommend that other transnational social change networks take part in future versions of this survey?	8.1
How likely is your network to take part in this survey again in the future?	7.7
Overall, how useful did you find the Keystone/iScale feedback survey for transnational social change networks?	7.5
Compared to other evaluative activities that you have undertaken how useful/actionable was Keystone/iScale's contribution to your network?	7.5
How likely is it that you will take actions as a result of findings from the survey?	9.5

LOW 0 — 10 HIGH