



FELLOWSHIP ALUMNI SURVEY

BACKGROUND

In April-May 2013 Pact conducted a survey of the alumni of its Leadership Fellows Program for the entire period of its existence (2006-2012). The survey was designed to assess the qualitative and quantitative outcomes and direct impact of the program from the perspective of the participants. Pact will use the published results of the survey to renovate the design and content of its 8th consecutive Leadership Fellows Program.

METHODOLOGY

43 of the 80 alumni took part in the online survey. With a 54% response rate, the survey is considered to be sufficient for this type of online research. The theoretical/methodological basis used to design the online feedback form is the [Donald Kirkpatrick's Four Level Evaluation Model](#), which is specifically used for training and learning evaluation. As a justification, the Kirkpatrick Four Level Model allows creating a chain of evidence showing the learning value to CSOs' capacity development process. It consists of quantitative and qualitative data that sequentially connects four levels showing the ultimate contribution of learning and reinforcement to the CSO sector and its impact on community/society development. The chain of evidence serves to unify the learning and CSO mission/activity, not to isolate training or set it apart.

The survey focuses on return on expectations (ROE) as the ultimate indicator of value which identifies what the organizers wanted to achieve, and what results they find satisfactory. This is a holistic measurement of all of the benefits realized from the program, both qualitative and quantitative. ROE allows for the understanding of whether Pact's expectations, available in the concept papers of each round of the fellowship, were converted into observable, measurable success outcomes.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

The very philosophy of the fellowship program – result-oriented focus and positive social changes – was adopted by the participants and recognized in the top lists, both of personal and CSO achievements.

The adoption of this approach is also shown by the high level of ROE. Namely, expectations were clearly met by focusing modern leaders and their CSOs on promoting positive transformational processes in the country. This yielded the development of strong leaders with a special set of knowledge, competencies and attitudes; as well as strong CSOs capable of facing adaptive challenges and achieving visible results.

The theoretical/policy knowledge (social change theory, trends inside the CSO sector, and influences of the external environment) and communication skills are considered by the alumni as the most important and valuable in the program. The knowledge gained in these categories are widely introduced by the leaders into the practices of the CSOs and recognized as achievements.

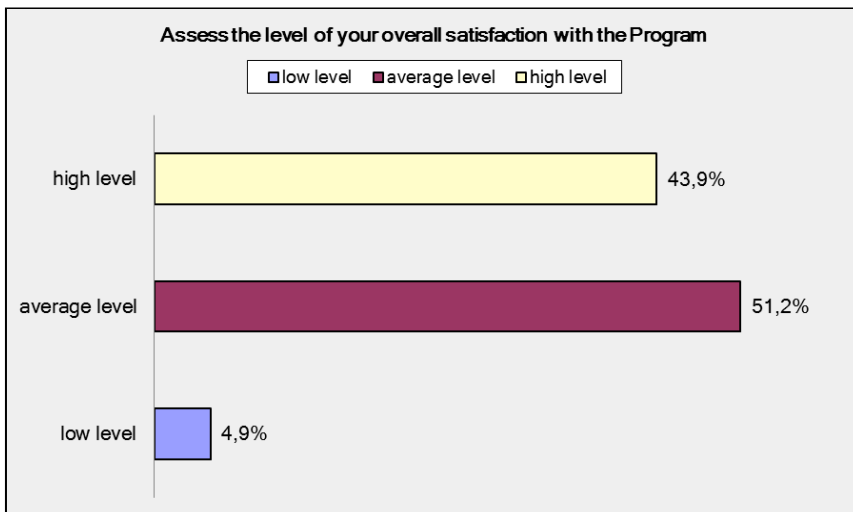
Communication skills are a priority, both for personal leadership growth and CSO activity/social issues promotion. The survey's questions reveal the importance of such skills as public speaking, conflict resolution, negotiation, PR and promotion, online tools, and advocacy campaign designing. In other words, most of these components are associated with the need to promote/communicate efficiently a personal or organizational brand/ activity or social issue in the public space, including online opportunities.

New social capital is one of the main components where the fellowship clearly meets the participants' expectations; new social contacts are recognized by the alumni as a significant personal achievement under the program. That demonstrates the proper direction of the program is to develop networking skills and to invite a diverse set of fellows and experts.

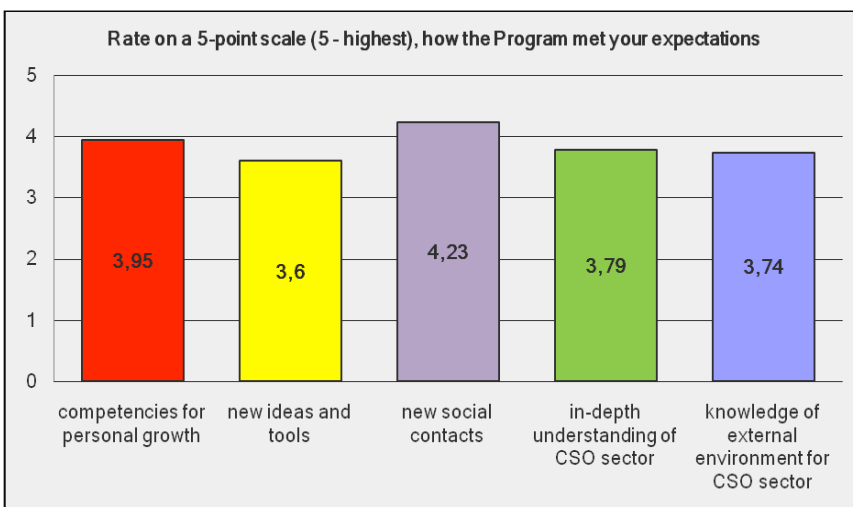
The fellowship mostly failed to bring up "policy leaders" with the relevant skills to influence the developing and promoting of strategic issues (expertise for local and international organizations and media turns out to be on the bottom of the lists of achievements). At the same time, the related knowledge, skills, and competencies are identified as highly requested.

Furthermore, the participants' expectations regarding new ideas and tools have still not sufficiently been met. To address these concerns, the program will seek to draw in additional experts in these fields to more actively engage with the fellows. Moreover, the addition of a wider range of new fellows in future rounds will add to the unique experiences and skill sets present in the program and aid in meeting the expectations of all participants.

FINDINGS



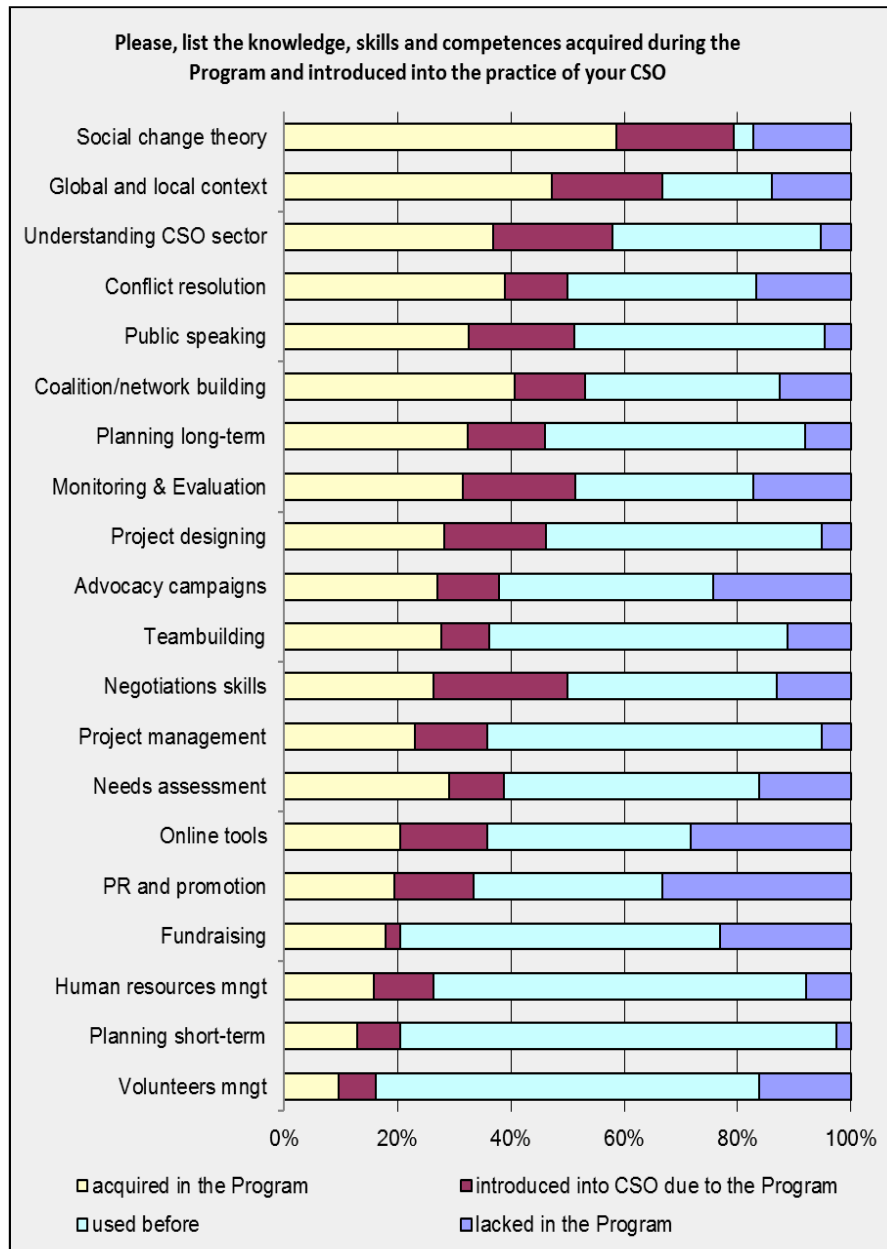
About 95% of respondents expressed high or average satisfaction in the program. Overall positive satisfaction with the program could be used to attract alumni for the recruitment of new participants for future rounds of the fellowship, as well as for promotion of other Pact programs/tools in the CSO sector.



The general question on the alumni's expectations of the program demonstrates that the most important issue was obtaining new social contacts. This point was further confirmed in the answers to additional questions. The respondents also considered "competencies for personal growth" as important. The fellowship also appeared to meet the participants' expectations in knowledge and understanding of the CSO sector and the wider external context at a near equal level. However, while "new ideas and tools" were rated higher than the median score it nonetheless remained the lowest of all the expectations.

Main Program Outputs

The detailed chart below presents the knowledge, skills and competences acquired during the program and introduced by fellows into the practice of their CSOs. The top 3 is comprised of theoretical knowledge obtained under the program – “Social change theory”, “Global and local context knowledge” and



“Understanding CSO sector” (about half of respondents). The other two subject areas in the top belong to communication skills, namely “Conflict resolutions” and “Pubic speaking”.

About one-third of respondents indicated “Coalition/ network building”, “Long-term planning”, “Monitoring & Evaluation”, “Project designing”, “Advocacy campaign designing”, “Team building” and “Negotiation skills” as being a primary focus.

At the same time “volunteers management”, “Short-term planning” and “Human resources management” are at the bottom of the list of skills obtained under the program.

It’s worth noting that the components most likely to be adopted into the CSOs appear to be correlated with those obtained in the program. The top 5 most introduced components being: “Negotiation skills”, “Understanding CSO sector”, “Pubic speaking”, “Global and local context knowledge” and “Social change theory” (a quarter of respondents). This is in stark contrast to the three least

introduced components which are also found at the bottom of the list of learnt skills. For example, only between one and three respondents declared that they introduced “Volunteers management”, “Short-term planning” or “Fundraising” into their CSOs following the fellowship.

The chart explains the irrelevance of certain technical skills under the fellowship by the fact that many respondents had used them before the Pact program. The results demonstrate that “Short-term planning” (72% answers), “Human resources management” (61%), “Project management” (56%), “Fundraising” (54%), and “Volunteers management” (51%) are among the most frequent components used before attending the fellowship. At the same time, again, only one respondent indicated that he/she had applied social change theory to their CSO before the program.

21% - 28% of the respondents also noted that the components the fellowship lacked the most were “PR and promotion”, “Online tools”, “Advocacy campaign designing”, and “Fundraising”. It’s possible to assume that

most of these components are associated with the need to promote/communicate efficiently the organization's brand/activity or social issue in the public space, including online opportunities.

Main Program Outcomes

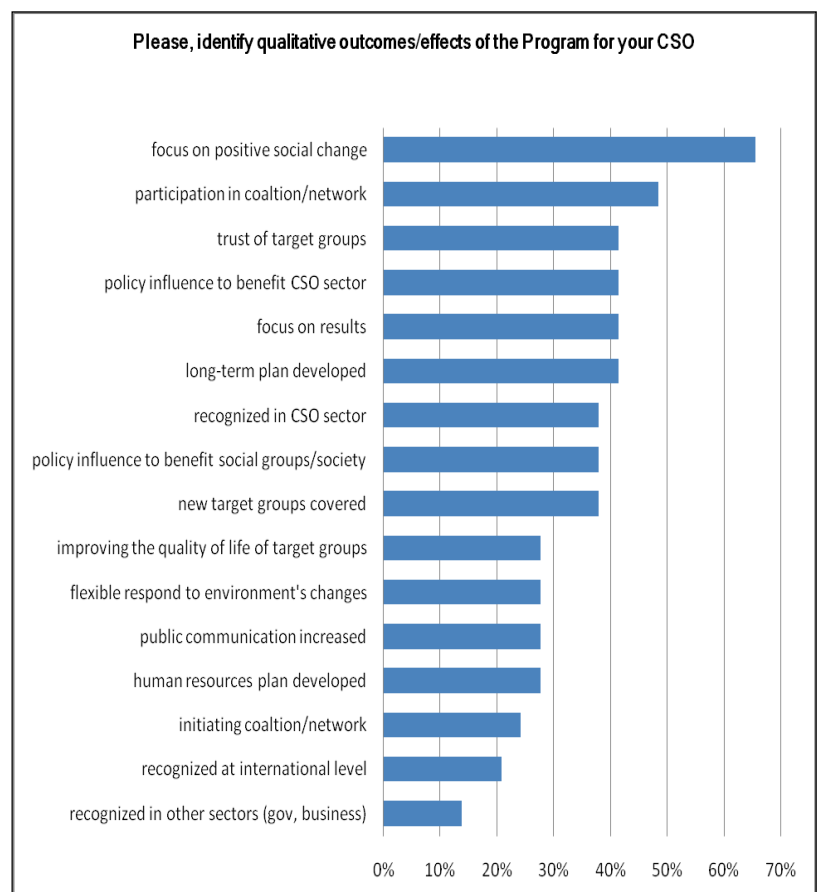
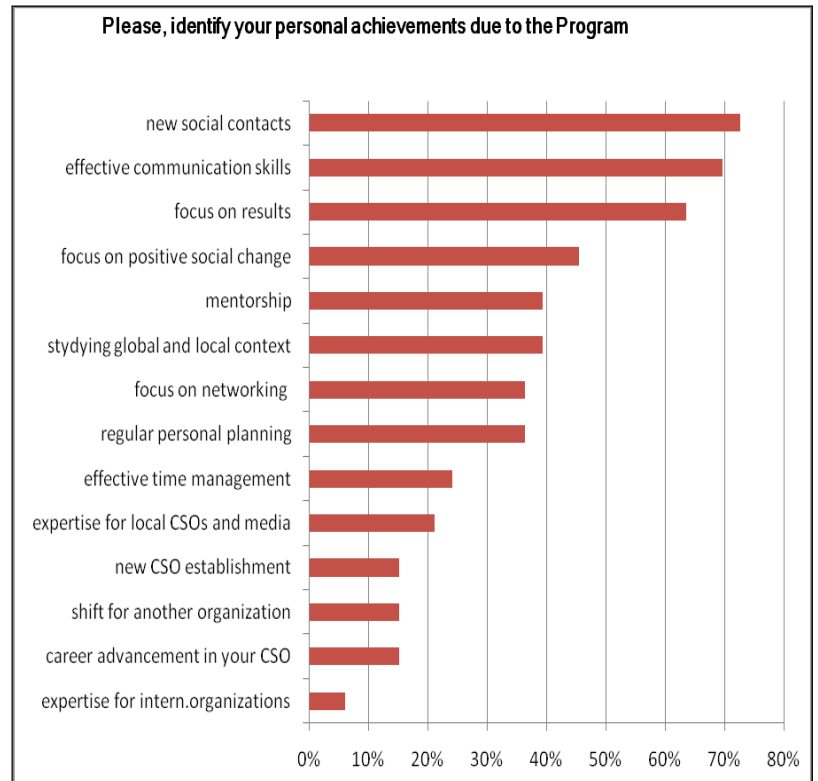
The following questions were designed to measure the outcomes of the program in order to assess the success of the fellowship in general. In order to complete this assessment the survey asked the leaders to reveal how much their influence/effectiveness in the CSOs and communities was enhanced by their participation in the fellowship.

The success of each fellowship round was identified by Pact through three key points:

1. Strong leaders who get work done through teamwork; proficiency in managing relationships and building networks; motivate their CSOs to adapt its work to remain strong and influential as a tool of social change. *(the major focus of the 2009-2010 round)*
2. Strong CSOs which are capable of facing adaptive challenges in order to contribute effectively to the democratic values-based transformation of the sector/ community/society. *(the major focus of the first three rounds in 2006-2008)*
3. Promotion of positive transformational processes in the country as the main focus for modern leaders and their CSOs. *(the major focus of 2011 and 2012 rounds)*

The aforementioned points are necessary to understand the level of ROE, in other words, how Pact imagined the success of the fellowship and whether those expectations were met by the participants and proved by the results. The answers below show that the ROE can be considered quite high according to the qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the survey.

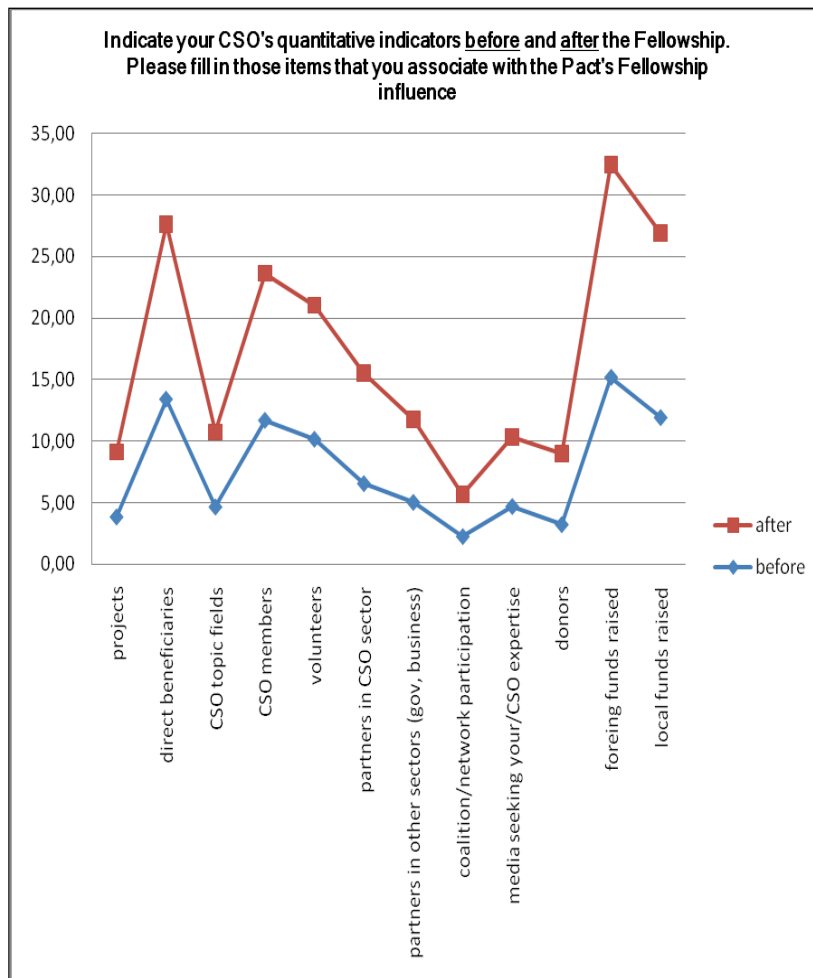
Above all, the personal achievements were identified as the most important skills learnt; including "new social contacts" (73% agreed), "effective communications skills" (70%) and "focus on results" (64%). All these components are necessary for a strong leader/visionary



to be successful whether they work on their own or within a team.

However, personal expertise for local organizations and media (21%) and international institutions (6%) are at the bottom of list of personal leadership achievements which means that the program mostly failed to bring up “policy leaders” with the related skills of developing and promoting significant/strategic issues at decision-making levels.

The major effects for CSOs are observed in the following areas: “focus on positive social change” (66%) and “participation in coalition/network” (48%). About 40% respondents declare that their CSOs gained more trust of the target groups, had a policy impact to benefit the CSO sector, focused on results (as opposed to focusing



on the processes), and designed strategic plans of development. Thus, it's possible to state that the program helped the fellows' CSOs to become stronger, more visible, and flexible organizations that develop visionary, result-oriented approaches enabling them to achieve observable results which are recognized both by other CSOs and direct beneficiaries in the communities. The weakest areas, however, remain recognition by other sectors (government, business) and at the international level.

Finally, the trend lines, produced by the quantitative data obtained, demonstrate that progress was made in the leaders' CSO on each indicator as a result the program.

Expressing the progress in some numbers, it looks as follows:

- The number of projects developed and implemented by the leaders' CSOs was doubled; 23 respondents declared that their CSOs designed 70 new projects due

to the fellowship;

- The number of direct beneficiaries of the CSO's services is also doubled; 20 respondents noted that their CSO's outreach increased to 12,300 new customers;
- The leaders' CSOs engaged with 150 new volunteers and cooperated with 250 new partners from other CSOs through the course of their activities;
- The leaders also attracted about \$300,000 USD from foreign donors and \$25,000 USD from local sources – these successful fundraising efforts are linked by the respondents to their participation in the Fellowship.

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