



## Key Findings and Recommendations from Global Fund for Children’s 2021 Grantee Perception Report

Prepared by the Center for Effective Philanthropy

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*In September and October of 2021, the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) conducted a survey of Global Fund for Children’s (“GFC”) grantees, achieving a 77 percent response rate. The memo below outlines CEP’s summary of key strengths, opportunities, and recommendations from GFC’s Grantee Perception Report (“GPR”). GFC’s grantee perceptions should be interpreted in light of its goals and strategy.*

*This memo accompanies the comprehensive survey results found in GFC’s interactive online report at <https://cep.surveymresults.org> and in the downloadable online materials. The Fund’s full report also contains more information about survey analysis and methodology.*

*Throughout this summary, GFC’s ratings are defined as higher than typical when it is rated above the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile in CEP’s comparative dataset, lower than typical when it is rated below the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile, and typical when ratings fall between those thresholds. Ratings described as “significantly” higher or lower reflect statistically significant differences at a P-value less than or equal to 0.1.*

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Overall, grantees have extremely positive perceptions of the Global Fund for Children and its efforts. They write that GFC is “a funder who understands the sector and [has] a passion for change and social justice,” and that their partnership with GFC is “very participatory and respectful.” Notably, GFC is near the top of CEP’s comparative dataset of more than 300 funders for the quality of its relationships with grantees. It also receives very strong ratings for its impact on grantees’ fields, communities, and organizations.

CEP previously surveyed GFC grantees in 2018. Compared to GFC’s last GPR, significant changes in ratings are always in the positive direction, and in several places are of an unusual magnitude. Moving forward, the data indicates opportunities for the Fund to further streamline its grantmaking process and improve monetary return for grantees.

### Very Strong Perceptions of Impact on Grantees’ Fields and Communities

- ▶ Grantees recognize GFC’s strong impact on and understanding of their fields, providing ratings that are statistically significantly higher than in 2018 and now place GFC in the top 10 percent of CEP’s comparative dataset on related questions.
  - Ratings for the extent to which GFC impacts and understands grantees’ local communities have also significantly increased since 2018 and are now higher than typical.

- In written comments, one grantee highlights nuances of their work and GFC’s understanding, sharing that “the field that we work in is particularly niche...so it can be difficult for organisations not in this field to fully understand the complexities it contains. However, GFC gets this and they support us to think critically by being a sounding board...”
- ▶ Relatedly, grantees’ perceptions of how well GFC understands beneficiaries’ needs and the social, cultural, and socioeconomic factors that affect grantees’ work have improved significantly since 2018, placing the Fund near the top of CEP’s dataset.

## Stellar Strong Relationships Marked by Improvement Over Time

- ▶ Strong funder-grantee relationships – defined by high quality interactions and clear, consistent communications – are a key predictor of grantees’ perceptions of a funder’s impact on their organizations, fields, and local communities.
- ▶ Marked by significant increase from 2018, Global Fund for Children now receives exceptionally positive ratings for all related measures in the survey.
- ▶ Grantees provide particularly positive ratings - in the top 3 percent of the dataset - for their comfort approaching GFC and the responsiveness of its staff, representing a dramatically higher rating than in 2018 when the Fund was rated in the bottom quartile for each of these measures.
- ▶ Grantees illuminate these findings in their open-ended comments praising the “outstanding” GFC staff and note that the team is “always ready to listen to us and give constructive feedback. They understand our needs and always look out for our growth.”
- ▶ Perhaps relatedly, grantees report experiencing more high-touch relationships with all grantees now reporting interaction with GFC at least once every few months. Additionally, the vast majority of grantees indicate that the initiation of contact is either driven by GFC or balanced equally between grantees and GFC.
- ▶ On measures related to the Fund’s communications, grantees also provide higher than typical ratings for both the clarity and consistency of communications.



*“[GFC is] an exceptional funder. They are so helpful, open and caring with a level of support we have never experienced...”*

## Exceptional Perceptions of Impact on Grantees’ Organizations

- ▶ GFC receives higher than typical ratings for its impact on and understanding of grantees’ organizations.
- ▶ These positive perceptions may in part relate to the Foundation’s incredibly strong awareness of challenges facing grantees’ organizations. GFC is now rated in the top one percent of funders for its awareness of challenges facing grantee organizations, a rating significantly higher than in 2018.
  - Relatedly, GFC’s is now rated at the top of CEP’s dataset for its openness to ideas from grantee about its strategy.
- ▶ GFC’s grantmaking characteristics are distinct:

- GFC grantee organizations report smaller budgets than is typical in CEP’s dataset or the Fund’s cohort. As a result, GFC’s smaller than typical grants go toward funding a larger proportion of grantee budgets than the typical funder.
  - Although the average GFC grant length (2.2 years) has decreased, a larger than typical proportion of grantees—24 percent—report receiving multi-year unrestricted grants, compared with just 14 percent in 2018. Notably, grantees who receive this type of support rate GFC significantly higher for several measures throughout the survey including its awareness of their challenges.
- ▶ In their suggestions for improvement, 15 grantees (the largest proportion of respondents to this open-ended question), mention aspects of grantmaking characteristics. Grantees primarily ask for longer, larger, less restricted grants.

### Valuable Non-Monetary Assistance

- ▶ Over 80 percent of grantees, double that of a typical funder, report receiving non-monetary support. These grantees rate the Fund significantly higher for many measures in the survey including its impact on their organizations, communities, and fields.
- ▶ When asked (in a custom question) which roles are most important for GFC to play beyond grantmaking, the largest proportion of grantees, 61 percent, indicate that encouraging other funders and donors to embrace participatory approaches to grantmaking is one of the most important roles. Additionally, a little over half of grantees select promoting community-based organizations as one of the Fund’s most important roles.



*“We would not be where we are today without GFC believing in our work and our mission. GFC takes chances and leaps of faith on community-led organizations and helps them to grow. Few funders are willing to do that, and that limits the diversity of voices being heard at the table. GFC’s support levels the playing field.”*

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- ▶ A larger than typical proportion – 90 percent – of grantees are aware and of GFC’s actions in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the movement for greater equity for historically disadvantaged groups and strongly agree that the responses were effective.
- ▶ In a series of questions about the Foundation’s approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion grantees provide higher than typical ratings for the Foundation and staff’s commitment to DEI, communications surrounding what DEI means for GFC’s work, and for its commitment to combatting racism.
- ▶ Further, the substantial majority of GFC grantees—a larger than typical proportion—indicate that the efforts funded by their grant are meant to benefit historically disadvantaged groups.



*“GFC were one of the first funders to respond to COVID and ensure that we were supported and that they weren’t asking us to do anything that would put us at risk AND a wonderful understanding that service providers priorities were like moving sands and GFC were so understanding of cancelling meetings etc.”*



*“GFC has done an incredible job in helping organizations respond the pandemic through emergency funding opportunities as well as resources to share with staff and beneficiaries.”*

## Solid Grantmaking Processes with Opportunity to Streamline Reporting

- ▶ At the median, grantees report spending 25 hours on GFC’s requirements over the lifetime of their grant – in line with that of the typical funder.
  - Still, given the relatively small median grant size, grantees receive a lower monetary return for every hour they spend on GFC’s processes when compared to the typical funder in the dataset.
  - And while grantees view the application and reporting processes as being very helpful in strengthening their organizations and their efforts, they also provide typical ratings for the straightforwardness and relevance of the reporting process; these are two of the few measures where GFC is not rated in the top quartile of the dataset.
- ▶ According to CEP’s research, pressure experienced by grantees is one of the key predictors of the strength of funder-grantee relationships: high pressure is associated with lower relationships ratings. In line with the research and exceptionally positive relationship ratings, grantees now report experiencing lower than typical amounts of pressure, representing a significant shift since 2018.

## Recommendations

- ▶ Celebrate the exceptionally positive ratings and upward trends seen throughout the survey. Spend time reflecting on the choices, approaches, and values that GFC has used to achieve these results and ensure they are clearly understood and codified into the Fund’s practices to maintain these positive perceptions.
- ▶ Given the more positive experiences of grantees who receive non-monetary support and multi-year, general operating support, continue offering these types of support where possible.
- ▶ Refine pieces of the Foundation’s reporting and evaluation processes that grantees find to be burdensome or unnecessary to further streamline process and improve monetary return for grantees.

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