UNHCR-NGO Partnerships

Overview

- Key Findings from 2019 UNHCR-NGO Partnership Survey
- Partnerships in the Context of COVID-19
- Looking Forward Towards 2021

2019 UNHCR-NGO Partnership Survey

Key Findings

Methodology and Demographics

Objective: Track partnership dynamics and develop a body of evidence on perceptions of UNHCR-NGO Partnership.

Annual Survey – Started in 2014

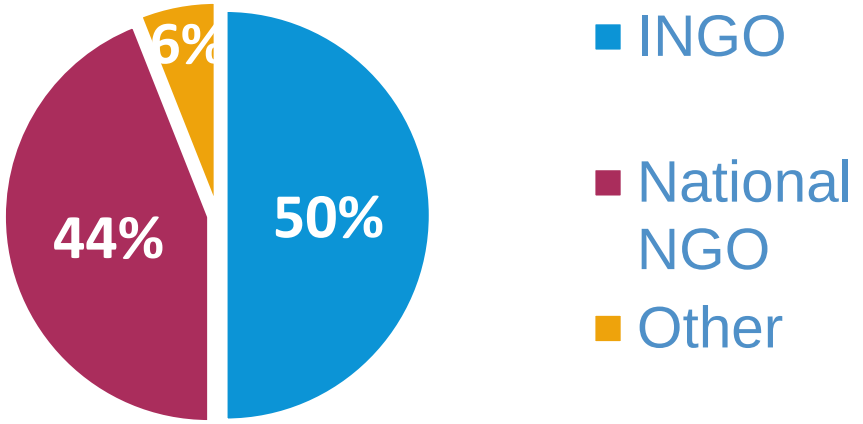
Survey Dates: March 19-June 15, 2020

Respondents:

105 **UNHCR respondents (+32 from 2018)**

550 **NGO respondents (+342 from 2018)**

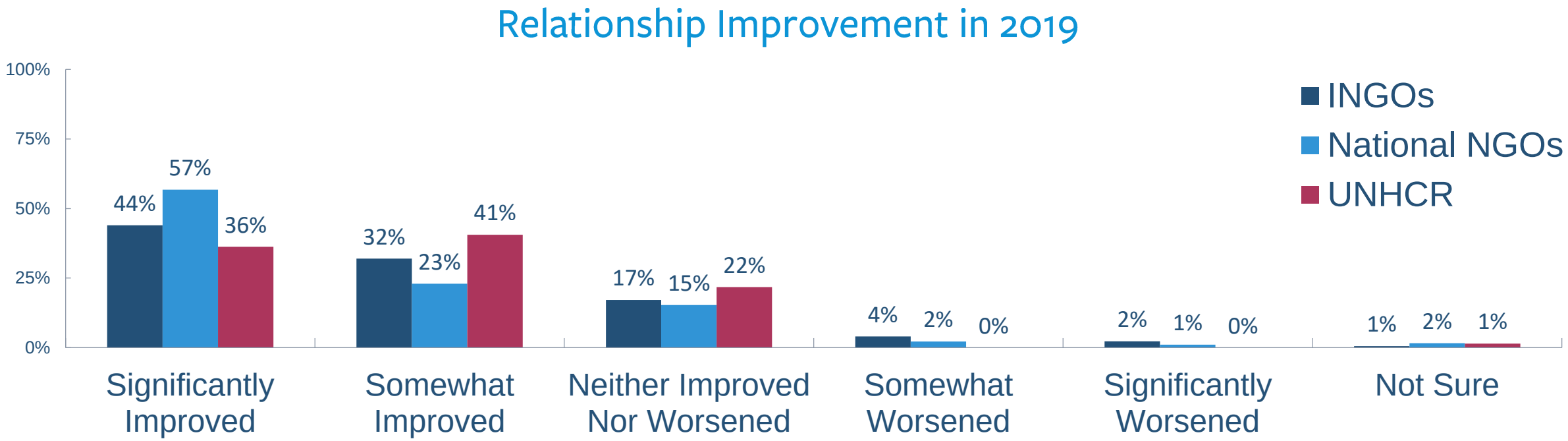
NGO Respondents



Overall Partnership Assessment

77% of both UNHCR and NGO respondents reported an overall improvement in the partner relationship during 2019

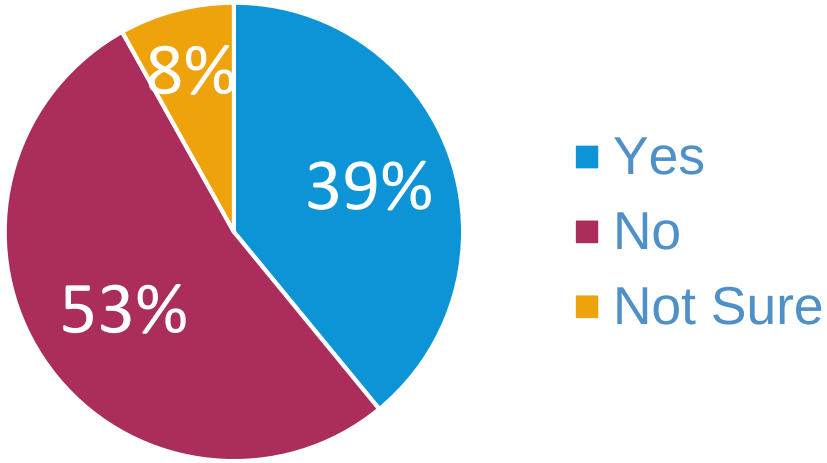
National NGOs and UNHCR reported having a **stronger** relationship compared to international NGOs and UNHCR



PPA Signing and Implementation

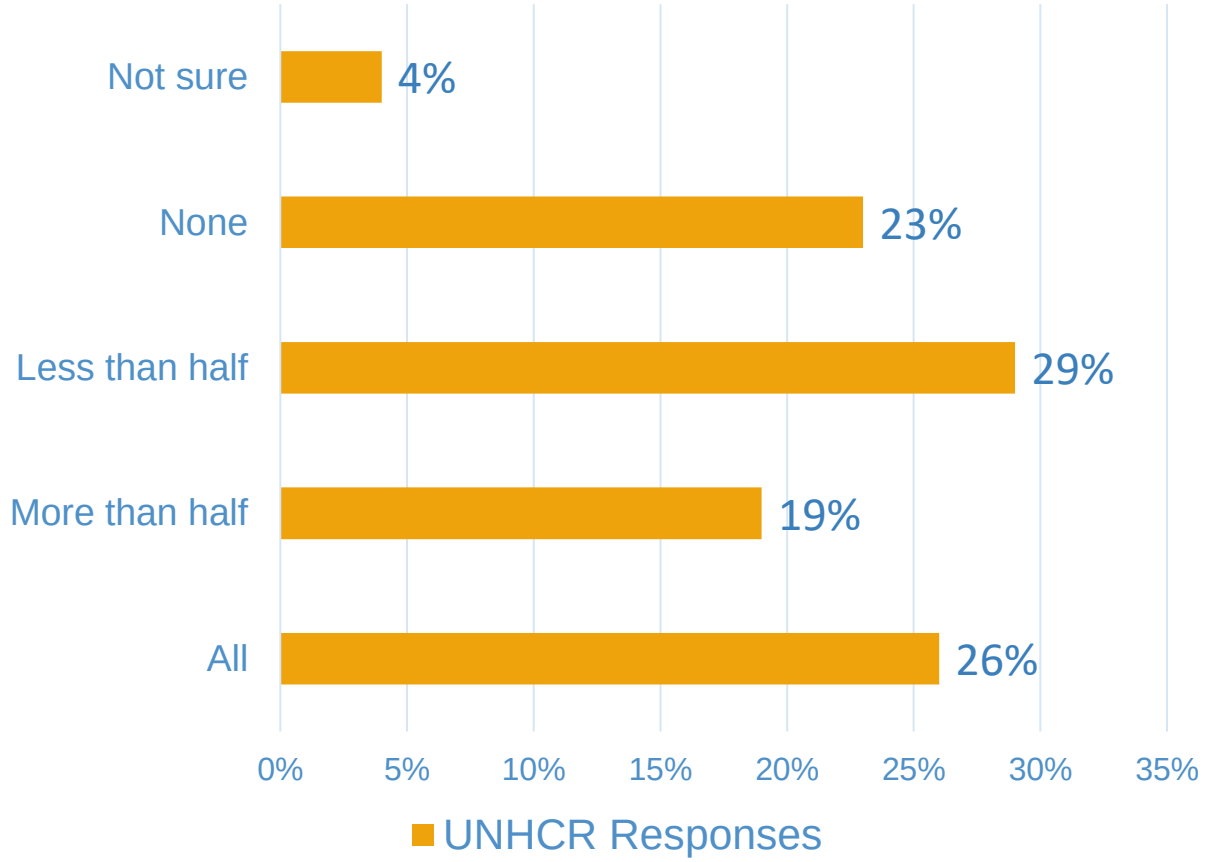
Main causes of delays remained the same as in 2018: negotiations over **project narrative** and **budget**

One or More 2019 PPAs Not Signed On Time (NGO)



Most PPA delays lasted **1-3 months**

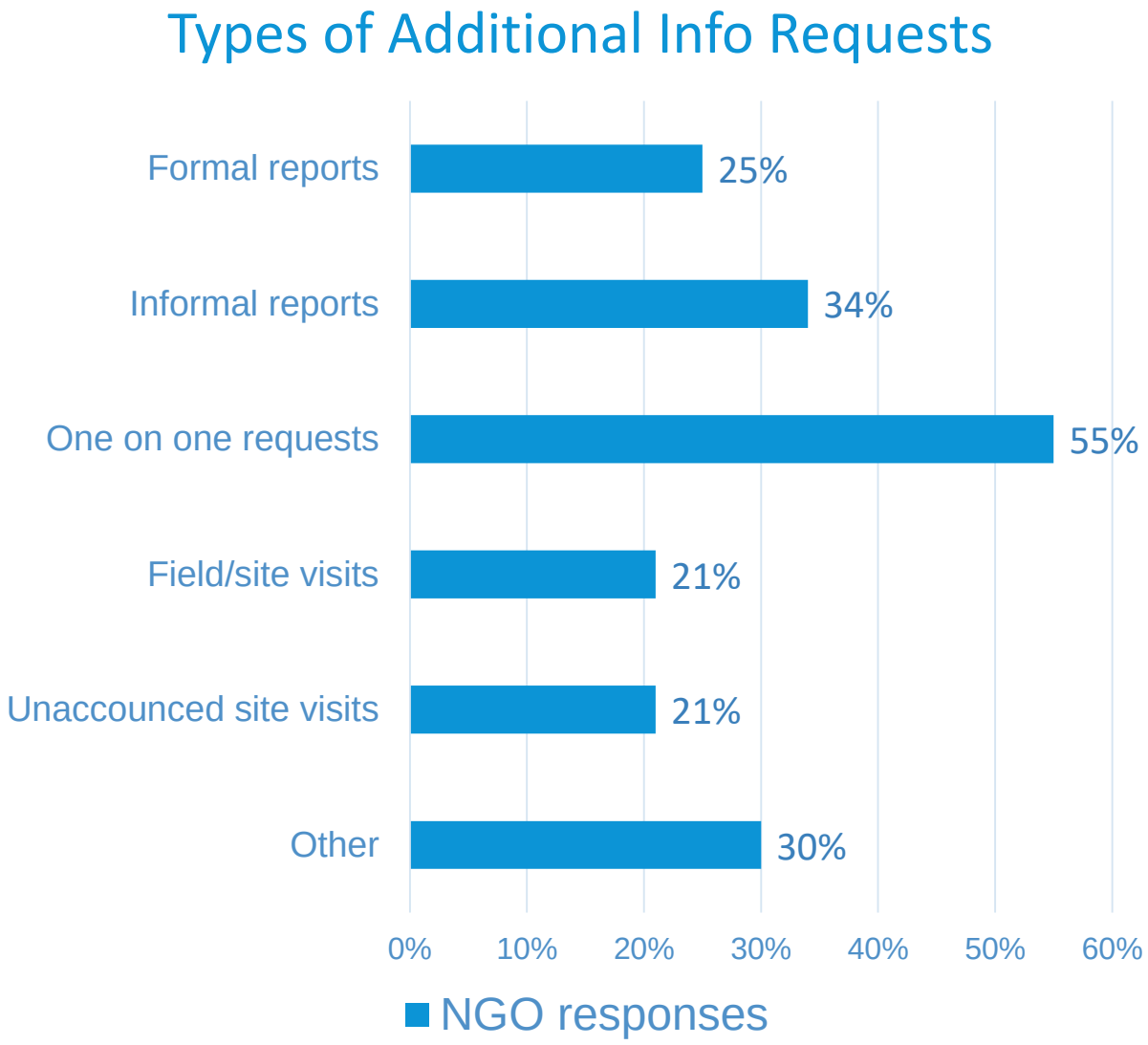
Proportion of PPAs Signed On Time (UNHCR)



Additional Information Requests

70% of UNHCR respondents reported that they requested additional information, reporting, or site visits not outlined in PPAs.

"UNHCR required all the official reporting mentioned in the PPA, plus weekly and monthly reports and data and info on spot requests." – NGO Respondent



Multi-Year (MY)

72% of UNHCR Offices did not offer MY PPA

51% of NGOs were aware of MY PPA

32% of NGOs applied for MY PPA

81% of NGOs that applied were selected

Why Not? (UNHCR Responses)

- *Challenging context*
- *Senior Management decision*
- *Only if funding is confirmed and secured for MY PPA*
- *No predictability of funding*
- *Waiting for other offices to test and share best practices*

"Most UNHCR Country Offices we contacted were little aware of the option, and not ready to pursue MY PPAs." – NGO respondent

"UNHCR indicated that it was not yet an option in that context." – NGO respondent

"The discussion was not even on the table." – NGO respondent

UN Partner Portal

96% of UNHCR respondents used to post Calls for Expression of Interest

45% of NGOs learned about Calls for Expression of Interest from the Portal

UNHCR Recommendations:

- More detailed info on objectives/activities/areas
- More user-friendly (specifically for NNGOS)
- Automatic updates and feedback to partners
- Acknowledgement of submissions
- Enable partner to submit reports

NGO Recommendations:

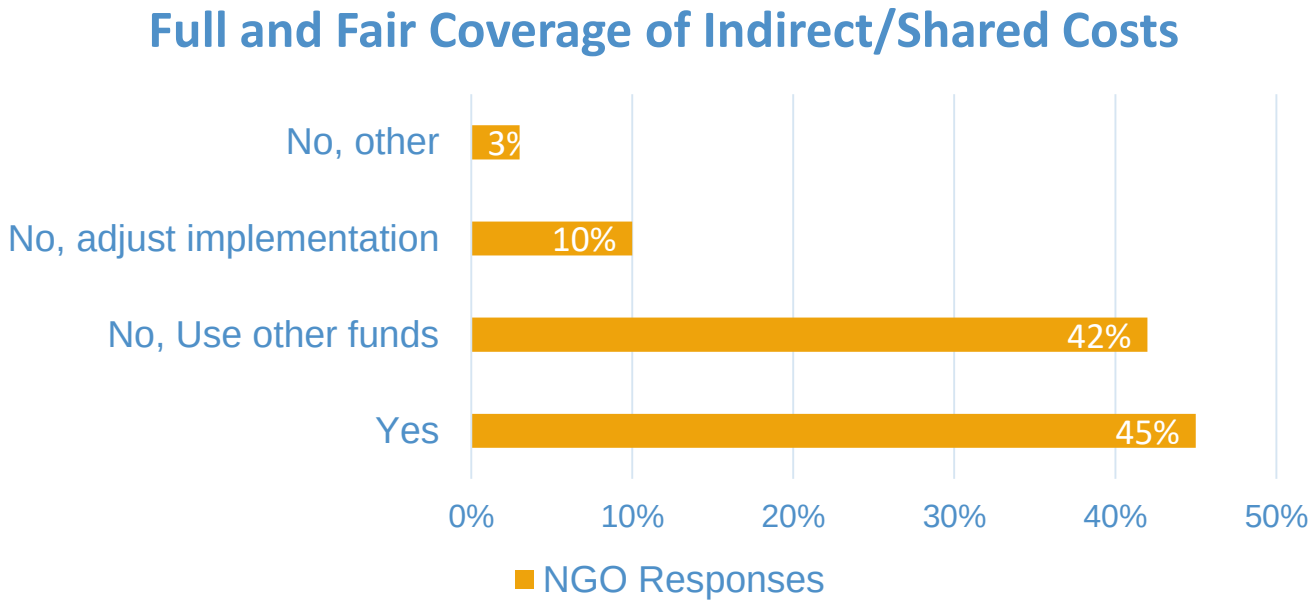
- Use for whole grant cycle (proposal submissions, reporting)
- Provide a dashboard for overviews
- Offline options for poor internet
- Use for UNHCR to provide feedback
- More user-friendly interface

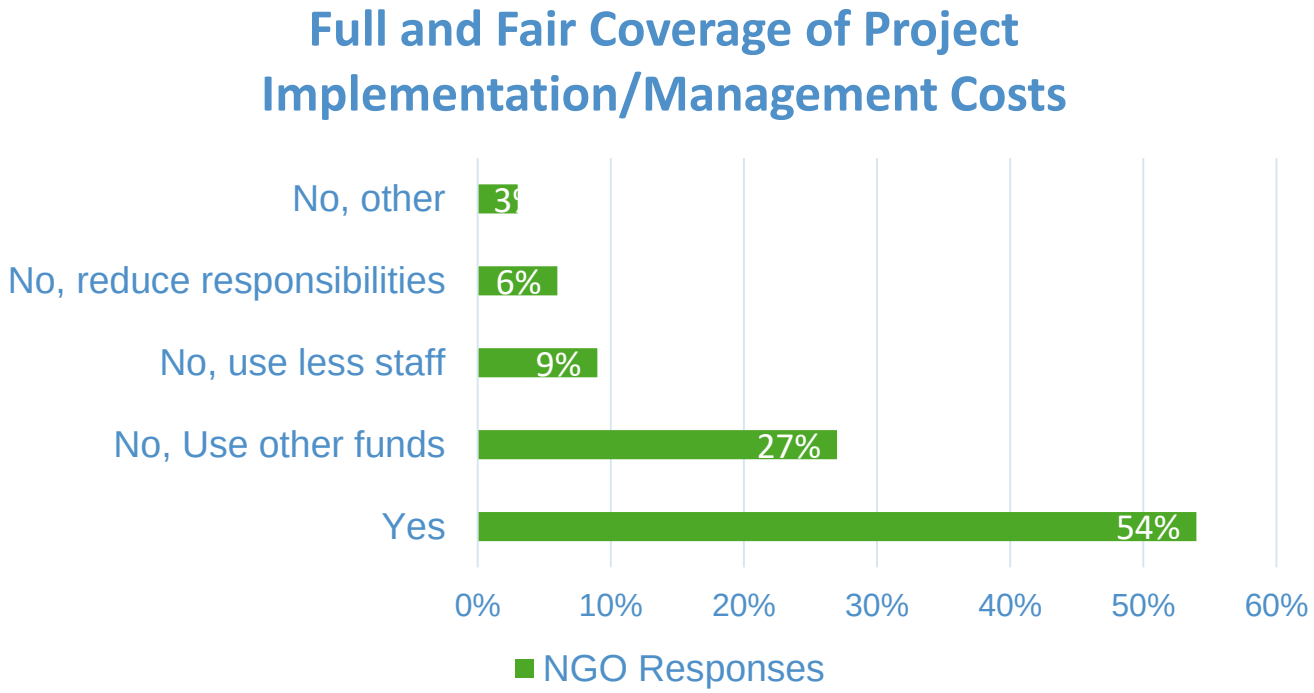
UNHCR Funding

50% of **national NGOs** reported that 50% or more of their 2019 budget came from UNHCR

54% of project management costs fully and fairly funded

45% of other partner indirect/shared costs fully and fairly funded





Concluding Comments

Recommendations from NGO respondents:

- Provide more clarity and feedback during selection processes, specifically on MY agreements
- Simplify administrative burdens of PPAs and reporting
- Ensure MY agreements allow budget carry over to 2nd year
- Give organizations more autonomy in project implementation
- Respect the hierarchy of partner organizations by communicating through appropriate channels

Recommendations from UNHCR respondents:

- Improve UNHCR internal communication and coordination to ensure consistent information is sent to partners
- Develop a common UN database on partner performance to make the selection process easier
- Revise NGO partner selection criteria/ratings to place more weight on financial management and technical experience
- Open consultations to new/other partners rather than the same ones every year

Partnerships in the Context of COVID-19

Where Are We Now?

- COVID-19 reinforced importance of partnerships and served as a stress test for humanitarian financing
- Criticality of flexibility and quality funding
- Timeliness matters – importance of getting funding to frontline responders
- Impacts are not only short and medium, COVID-19 will have consequential impacts requiring a long-term response
- NGOs are concerned about 2021 funding, with many already using negative coping mechanisms to mitigate shortfalls

Where Do We Go From Here?

- **Improve Efficiency**: Flexibility put in place for COVID-19 should be make permanent and implemented consistently across contexts
- **Provide Full and Fair Costs of Programming**: Ensure NGO partners have adequate resources, taking into consideration financial strains and diminishing core/private funds
- **Prioritize Secondary Impacts Now**: Funding to address secondary/socio-economic impacts may fall short. Begin mobilizing resources for and planning responses early
- **Advocate Together**: Use joint advocacy at country and global level to reinforce the importance of fast quality funding and long-term strategic planning