



OD partner perception survey 2020

Final report, September 30, 2020

Claudia Genier, Dr oec HSG, consultant

Management summary – Overall survey results

Grant process

- The **satisfaction level is very high (87%)** with various aspects of the grant (size, duration, eligible activities)
- Most of the OD and Capacity Development **work is completed in strategy, communication and fundraising** by providing **external expertise** and **covering personnel costs**
- For half of the respondents, the **grant focus evolved** compared to the initial plan

OD partnership

- **Three quarters** of the partners are **fine with the quality, frequency & transparency of information/communication**
- The **level of trust is high**: 90% of respondents are very comfortable or comfortable discussing issues with OD staff at MAVA/CDF BirdLife
- **OD staff** at MAVA & CDF staff at BirdLife International is **seen strong on problem solving** and **understanding local constraints**

Flexibility & responsiveness in uncertain times

- Respondents are **very satisfied (51%) or satisfied (41%) with the flexibility and responsiveness** in uncertain times

OD support outcomes

- **92% of the partners are pleased** with the OD and CDF **support outcomes**: 38% very satisfied and 54% are satisfied

Outlook on future work

- **All partners plan to pursue their OD beyond the current action plan**, both direct and delegated partners select **Fundraising, Communication and Governance** as top 3 priorities for the future
- **Advocacy, Outreach, Membership and Volunteer management** emerge from the open question upfront



Introduction to the survey

Grant process

OD partnership

Flexibility and responsiveness in uncertain times

OD support outcomes

Outlook on future OD work



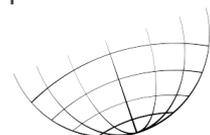
Introduction to the OD partner perception survey (1/2)

Context and objectives

- Midterm of implementing its 2017-2022 strategy, MAVA Foundation is seeking to gather extensive feedback from its OD partners. The aim is to assess how its OD portfolio is doing and find out whether adjustments for the remaining two years would be beneficial.
- Concretely, MAVA Foundation is interested in the following:
 - How are the OD grants perceived by its partners?
 - What are major outcomes, strengths and weaknesses?
 - What elements can be reinforced?
 - How does the COVID-19 pandemic affects its partners and how could the Foundation provide extra support?

Survey cornerstones

- The level of satisfaction was assessed through 30-35 questions in the following areas:
 - Grant process,
 - Partnership
 - External support
 - Flexibility and responsiveness in uncertain times
 - OD support outcomes
 - Outlook and survey closure.
- 19 direct partners and 18 partner of the CDF at BirdLife International ('indirect partners') were invited to answer the survey. The response quote was 100%.
- The feedback was collected in June 2020, analysed over Sommer and kept strictly confidential by an independent consultant
- The results have been shared in September 2020 with MAVA and the CDF team at BirdLife and other stakeholder in the syndication phase in an aggregated and anonymous way.



Introduction to the OD partner perception survey (2/2)

Syndication phase

- 15 syndication interviews and group discussions were conducted in September 2020 with direct partners (3), indirect partners from the BirdLife CDF (2), CDF staff at BirdLife International (2 at headquarters, 2 in the field), consultants (3), MAVA programme staff (9), MAVA OD staff and leadership (4). The aim was to share survey results, gather additional insights and finetune recommendations. Overall 25 stakeholders were involved in the syndication.

Inherent biases to keep in mind

- **Language bias:** Programme staff wonder whether the survey should have been conducted in several languages to further increase the quality of the answers. Not all partners are at ease in English or able to express all nuances in a foreign language.
- **Interest bias (funder effect):** Direct partners have an intrinsic interest in keeping a good relationship with their funder, their answers are thus not independent/uninterested. Everything was put in place to reduce that effect (independent survey, additional syndication phase, etc.) but it remains there to a certain extent. Some of the internal interview partner believe in the syndication phase that the results are too positive as a result, and consultants warn as well ('fair-weather'). Also, blind spots are not uncovered with a partner perception survey.
- **Single opinions:** While partners were asked to fill out the survey for the entire organization, some answers might only reflect the view of one person.
- **Sensitive comparison:** Both types of partners (direct and delegated through CDF at BirdLife International) cannot be compared 1:1. It is easier for an indirect partner to be critical about the OD support, knowing the results are not analysed on behalf of their OD provider, but on behalf of the funder MAVA. Thus the inhibition is reduced.
- **Negativity bias:** even when of equal intensity, negative experiences or memories have a greater effect on one's psychological state and processes than neutral or positive things.



Survey data : 37 respondents, 2 funding mechanisms, 100% response rate

Demographic information for all partners

Overview

37 total responses (19 direct partners and 18 indirect partners)
100% response quote

Headcount

38% <10, 10<37%<20, 20<27%

Region

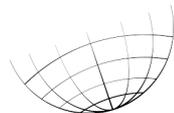
40% Europe, 29% Western Africa, 7% Northern Africa, 24% Other
(Mediterranean, Near East, Middle East, West Asia, Central,
Southeast Asia, Transatlantic, Global,)

Grant size (EUR)

54%<50000, 50000<32%<200000, 200000<14%

Grant duration (years)

68%<2, 2<24%<3, 3<8%



Introduction to the survey

▶ **Grant process**

OD partnership

Flexibility and responsiveness in uncertain times

OD support outcomes

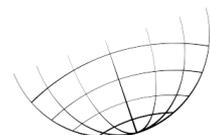
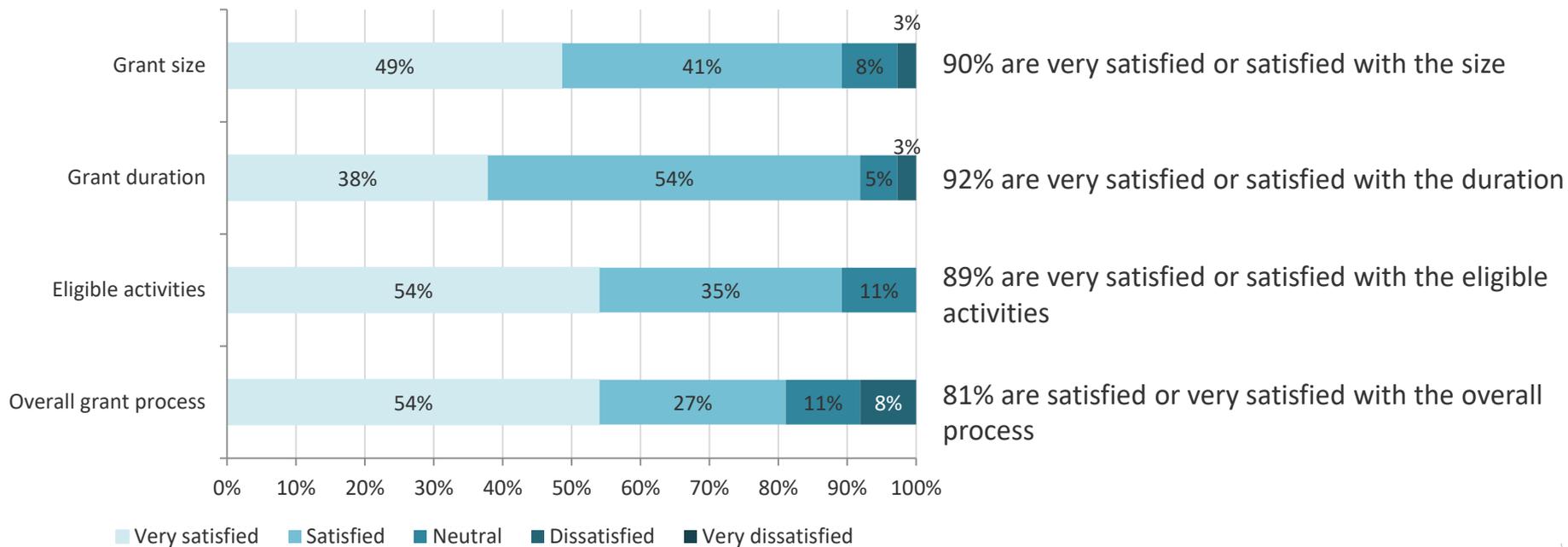
Outlook on future OD work



The satisfaction level with various aspects of the OD grant is very high (87%)

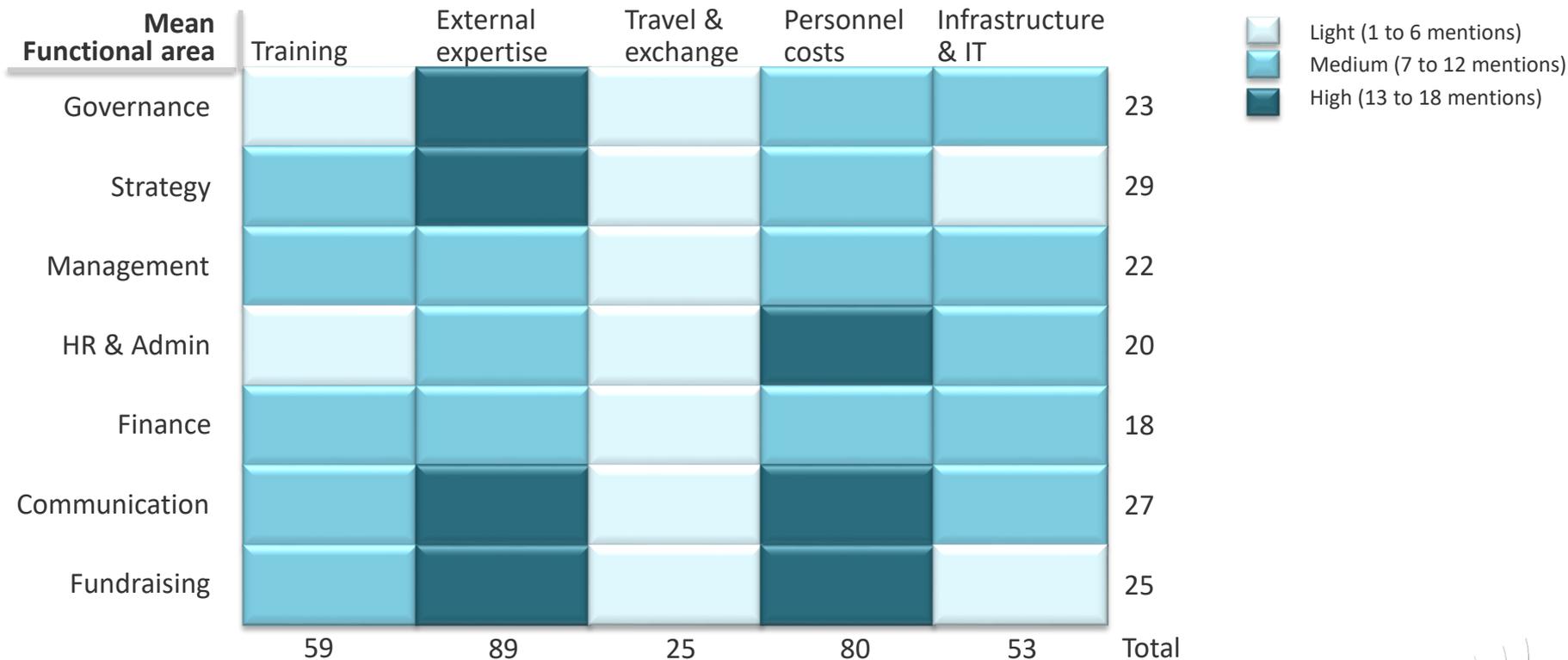
Q6: How satisfied are you with various aspects of the grant?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



Most of the OD and Capacity Development work is completed in strategy, communication and fundraising by providing external expertise and covering personnel costs

Q5: What functional areas does the OD grant/CDF grant cover and by which means? Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



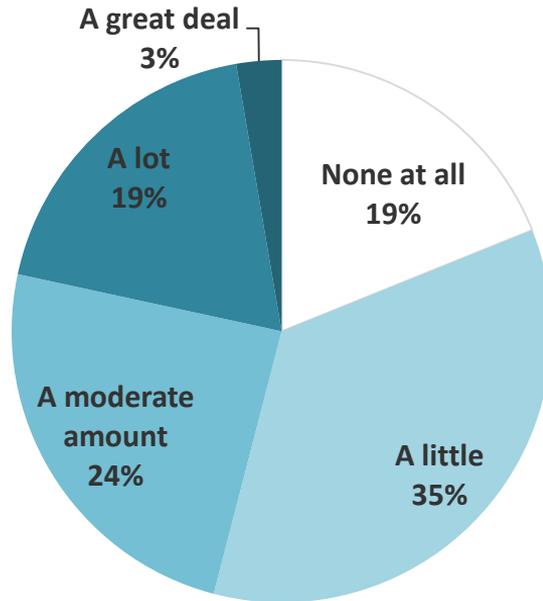
Travel and exchange is seen as important for peer learning. It was reduced with the Covid-19 pandemic, but should be considered again in a second phase.



For nearly half of the respondents, the grant focus evolved a moderate amount or more

Q4: Looking at the purpose and focus of the grant, would you say it evolved over time compared to the initial plan?

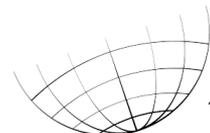
Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



*The purpose evolution of the grant is **inherent to OD** and/or Covid-19 driven according to interviewed partners.*

***Staff turnover** contributes also to grant evolution according to MAVA Programme staff.*

*Part of it is due to **competing priorities** and sometimes **bad time management** according to the consultants*



Introduction to the survey

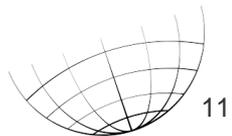
Grant process

▶ **OD partnership**

Flexibility and responsiveness in uncertain times

OD support outcomes

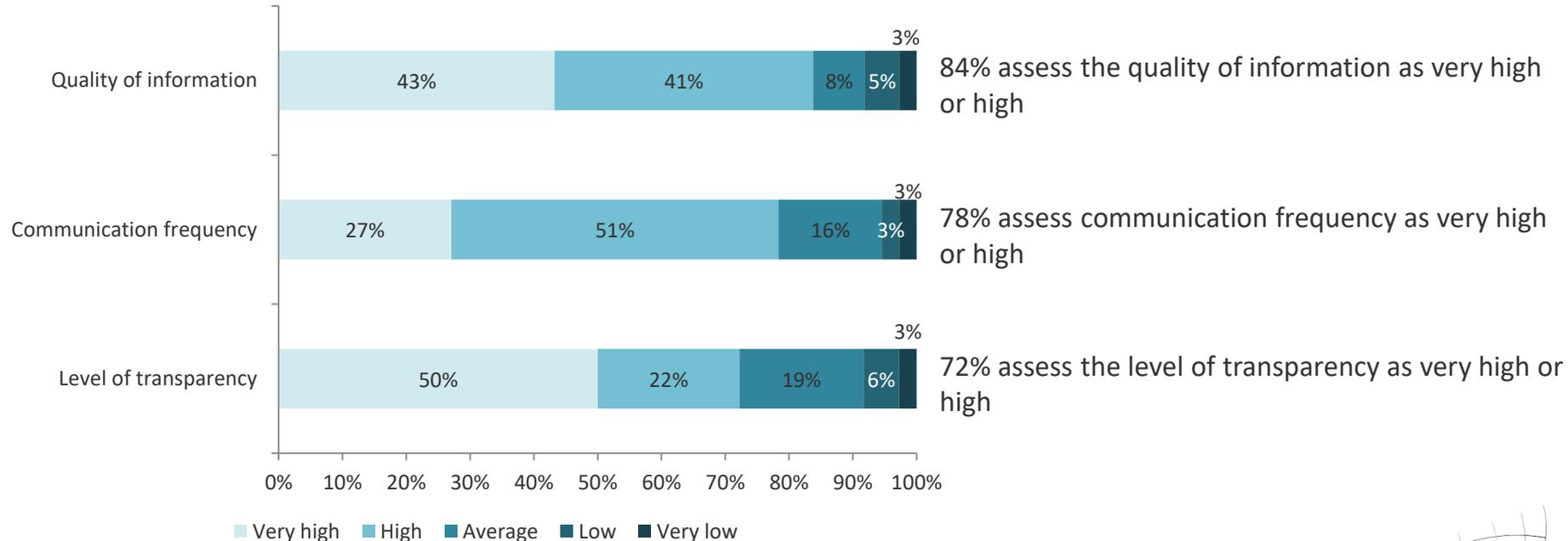
Outlook on future OD work



Overall, three quarters of the partners are fine with the quality, frequency and transparency of information and communication

Q7: How do you assess the level of transparency, communication frequency and quality of information from OD staff at MAVA/from CDF staff at BirdLife International?

Answered: 37 (36 on transparency) Skipped: 0 (1 on transparency)

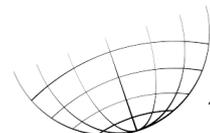
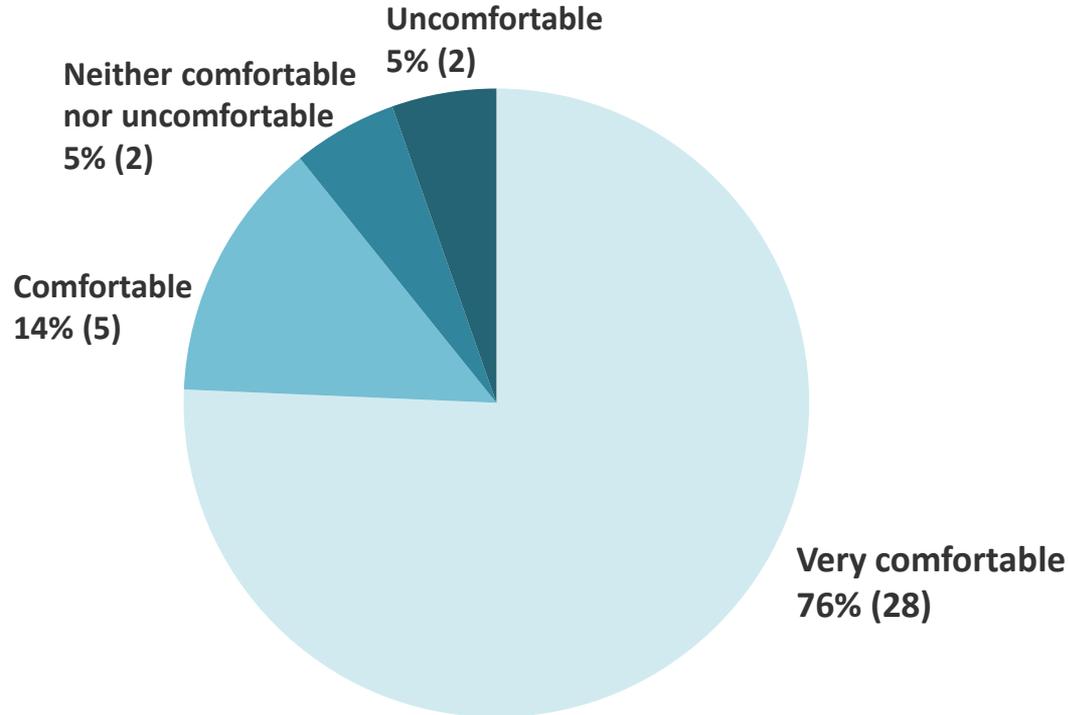


The level of trust is high: 90% of respondents are very comfortable or comfortable discussing issues with OD staff at MAVA/with CDF staff at BirdLife

Q8: How comfortable are you with discussing sensitive issues openly with OD staff at MAVA/with CDF staff at BirdLife International?

Answered: 37 Skipped:

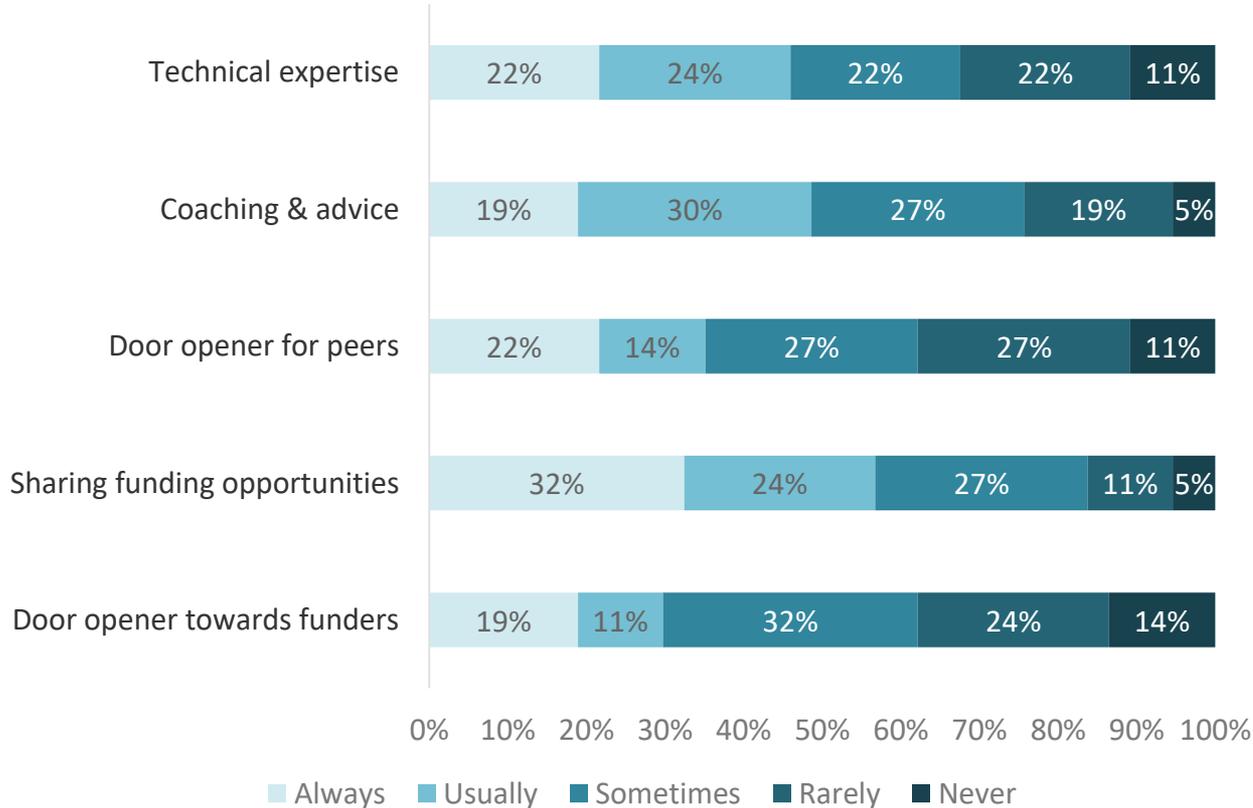
0



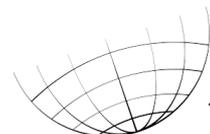
Partners acknowledge non-financial support provided, in particular sharing funding opportunities (56% always or usually) and coaching & advice (49% always or usually)

Q9: How often you get various types of non-financial support from OD staff at MAVA/from the CDF staff at BirdLife International?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



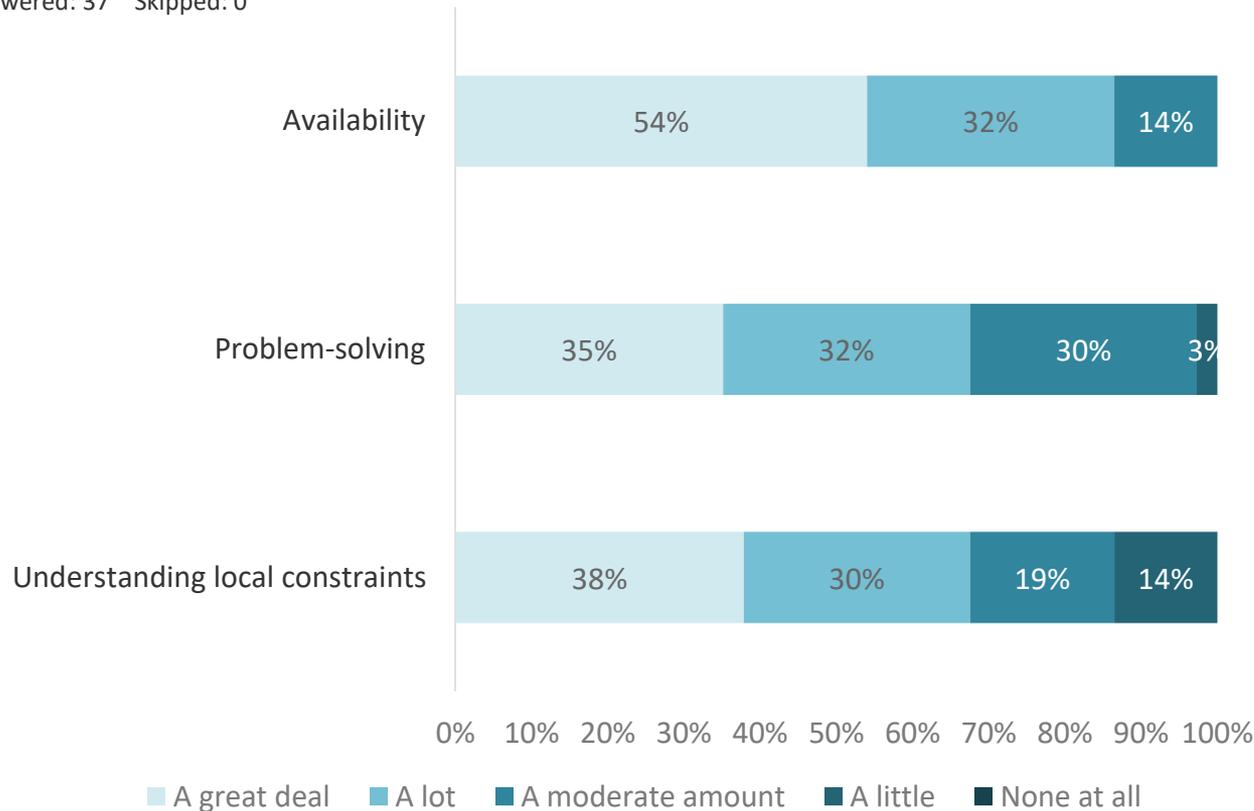
The partners rate non-financial support in very different manners, depending on their own experience. The partner's maturity level is reflected (the lower the more support), as is the tailored support by the OD staff.



86% of respondents rate OD staff and CDF staff as available a great deal and a lot, 67% as strong on problem-solving, 68% as understanding local constraints

Q10: Please rate aspects of your interactions with the OD staff at MAVA/with the CDF staff at BirdLife International

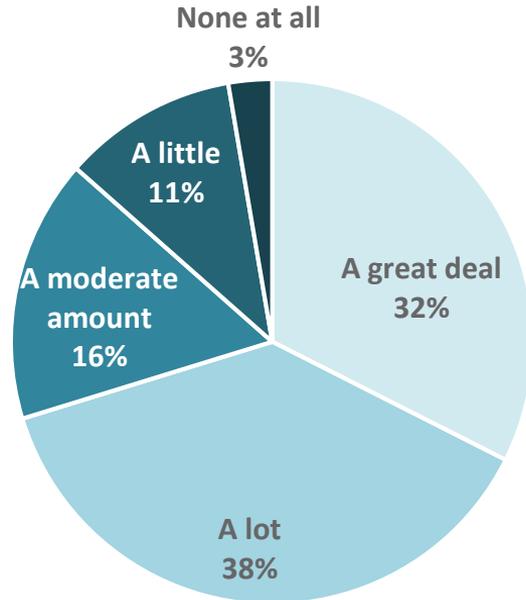
Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



70% of partners see a high alignment in the messages from different interlocutors at MAVA and BirdLife International

Q11: How aligned are the messages from the different interlocutors at MAVA/CDF staff?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



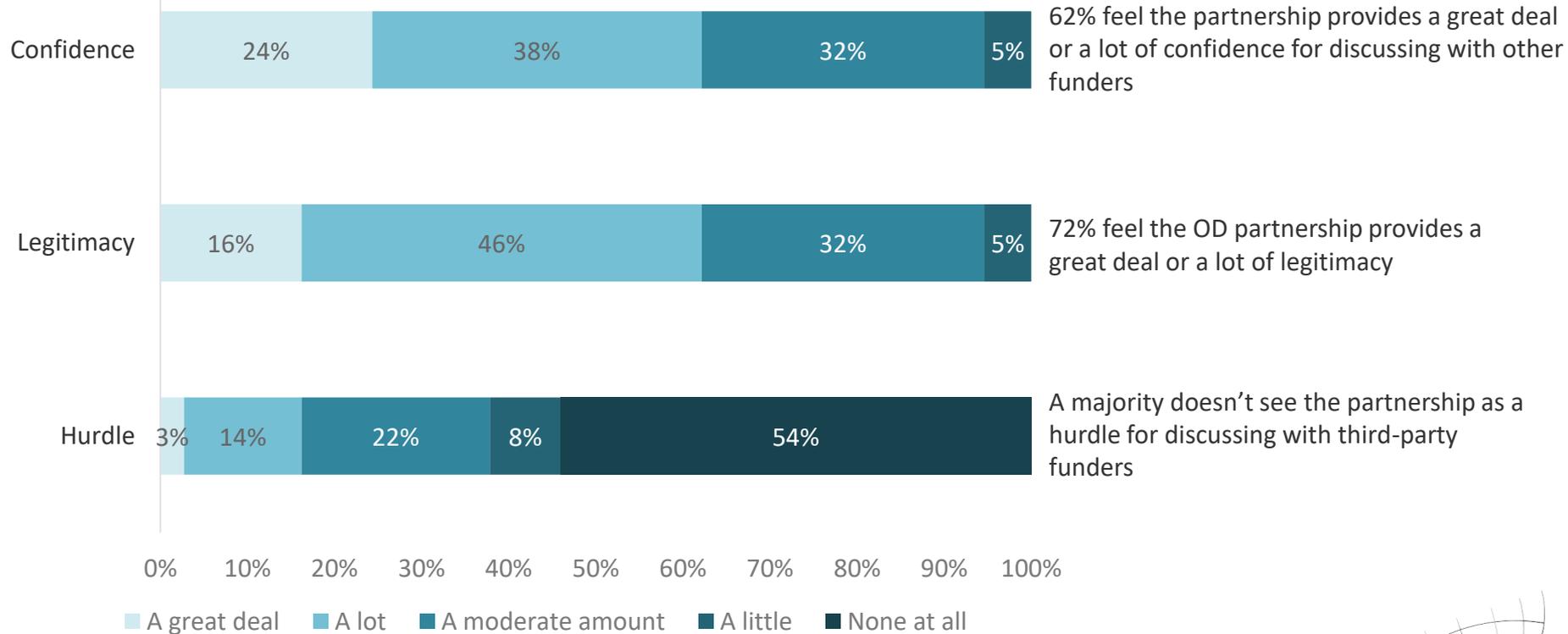
The single feedback on 'no alignment at all' is directed towards other units and the overall organisation, not the OD/Capacity Development Unit



The partnership provides confidence and legitimacy to its partners for discussing with third-party funders.

Q12: To what extent does the OD partnership with MAVA provide some of the following for discussing with third-party funders?

Has the CDF support provided any of the following with others? Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



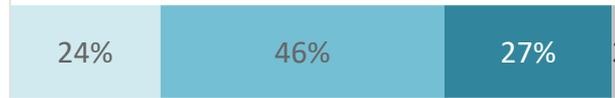
A partnership fosters feelings of solidarity. The increased legitimacy results in a better standing in the sector.



Over two third of respondents are satisfied or highly satisfied with non-financial support, triangular relationships are not an issue

Q13: Overall, how satisfied are you with various aspects of the OD partnership/of the CDF partnership?

Non-financial support
Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



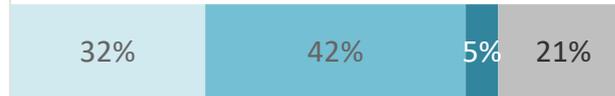
70% are very satisfied or satisfied with non-financial support

Triangular relationship with MAVA OD/CDF and programme staff at MAVA/BirdLife
Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



65% are very satisfied or satisfied with the triangular relationship

Triangular relationship MAVA-consultant
Answered: 19 Skipped: 0

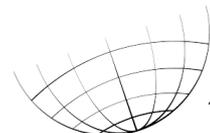


66% are very satisfied or satisfied with the triangular relationship

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Very satisfied Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied N/A

Non-financial support could be further spelled out and tailored in view the last two years



OD partners have suggestions for MAVA and the CDF at BirdLife International

Q14: What suggestions do you have to further improve the OD partnership?

Suggestions overview and categories for MAVA

Rethink role and presence

Integrate Covid-19 pandemic

Make assertive decisions

Consider follow-up project

Increase (face to face) meetings

Open doors to other funders

Keep/leave space for action

Help with governance issues

Suggestions overview and categories for BirdLife International

Improve coordination/harmonisation

Encourage autonomy

Increase flexibility/efficiency at all levels

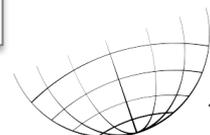
Increase peer exchange, know the partners, improve communication channels

Improve processes, incl. grant allocation

Extend time horizon

Transparency & less hierarchical approach

Decision-making, communication and governance are areas with suggestions



Introduction to the survey

Grant process

OD partnership

▶ **Flexibility and responsiveness in uncertain times**

OD support outcomes

Outlook on future OD work

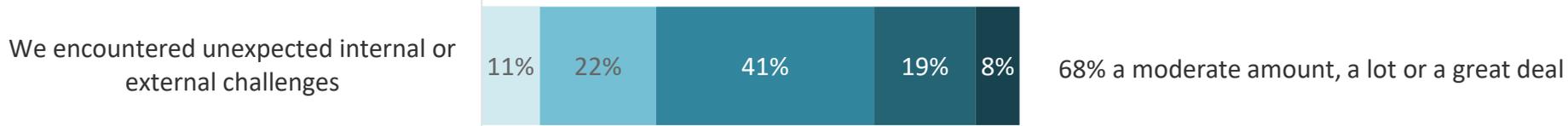


Nearly 90% of respondents encountered unexpected challenges and over 80% feel at ease discussing with MAVA and BirdLife



Q19: Please share your experience with unexpected developments during the course of the OD grant/CDF grant

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

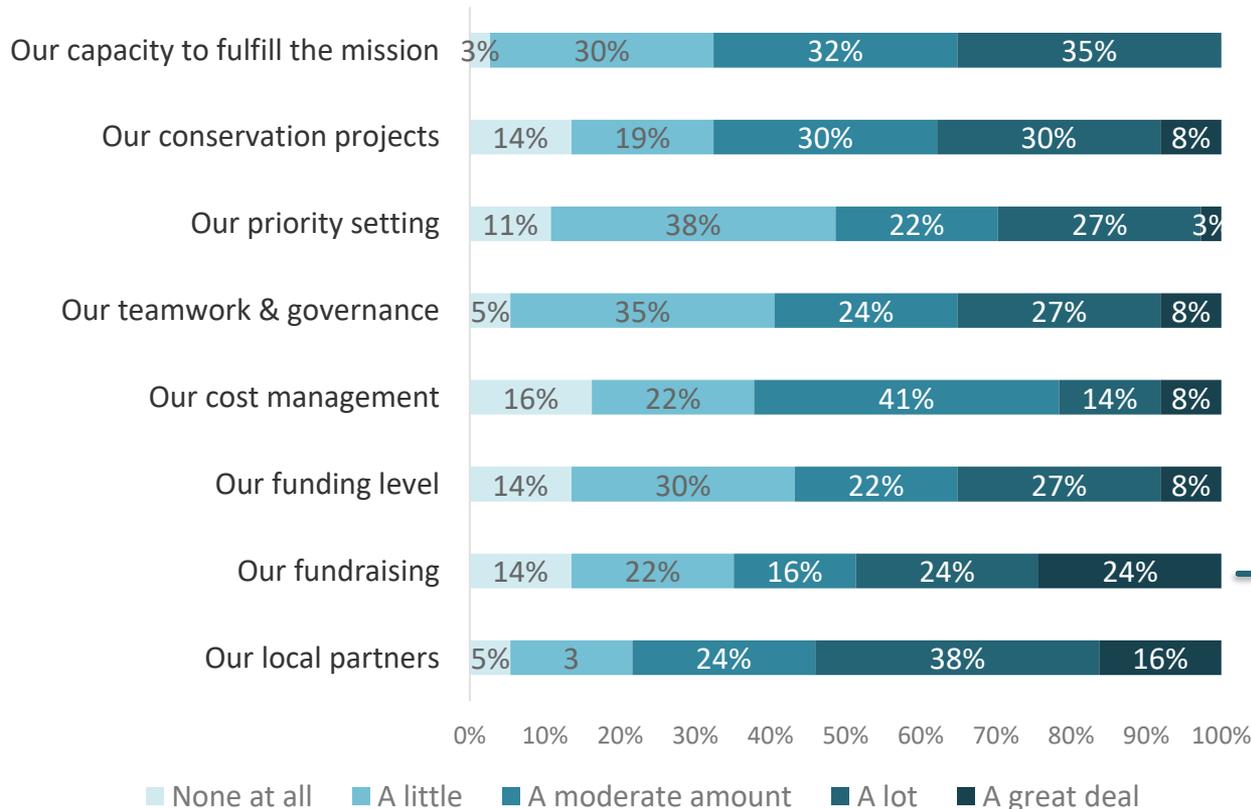
None at all A little A moderate amount A lot A great deal

The level of trust is high in this special Covid-19 year. A large majority of respondents feels at ease sharing their challenges



The pandemic is affecting all areas of work. Fundraising and local partners seem most affected, while 16% at the most claim not to be affected in each dimension

Q20: Is the current COVID-19 pandemic causing challenges to your organisation? Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



*"(...) Current grants have to be modified, discussed with donors, **some grant opportunities are disappearing** while others are emerging. (...)"*

*"(...) **fundraising is more complicate**, on one hand there are **new opportunities for project that do integrate biodiversity conservation, human development and health**. On the other side we feel that **some funding was drained** from conservation to health, digitalisation, etc."*

*"(...) **We will feel the challenges with a time-lag**, once the funding organisations slow down with their calls or (...), once the existing national co-financing mechanisms are shifted towards other priorities."*



Introduction to the survey

Grant process

OD partnership

External support through a consultant

Flexibility and responsiveness in uncertain times

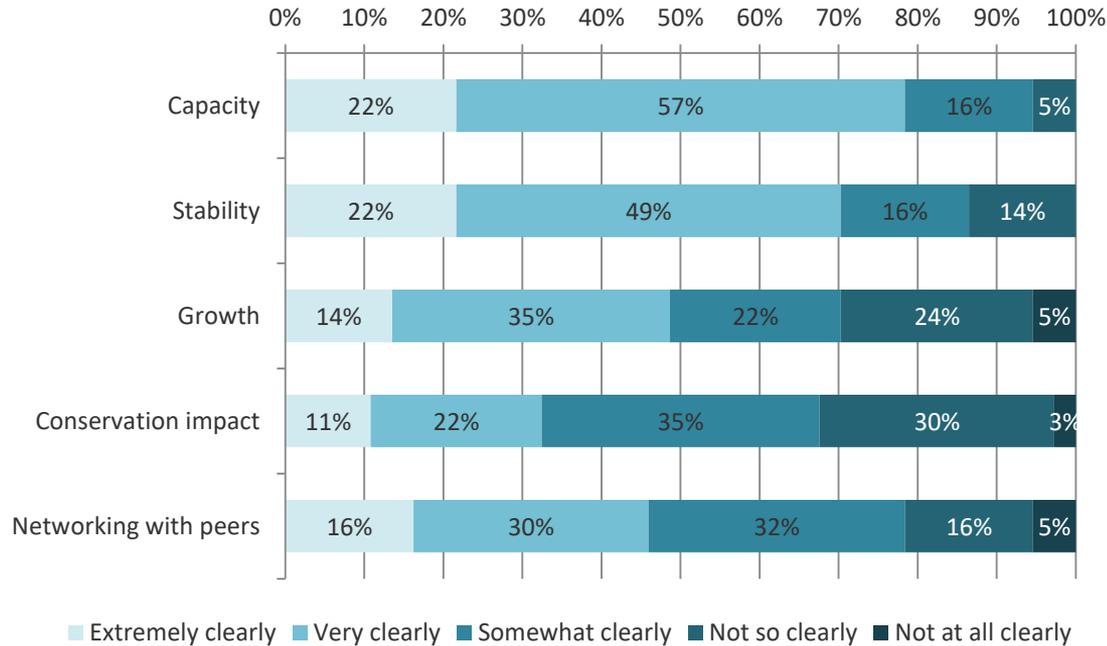
▶ **OD support outcomes**

Outlook on future OD work

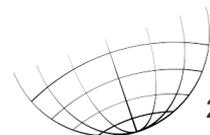
Overall, respondents believe OD support is strengthening most clearly the stability and capacity, less clearly other dimensions such as growth, conservation impact and networking with peers

Q25/21: Would you say the OD/CDF support strengthened / is strengthening your organisation's ...

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



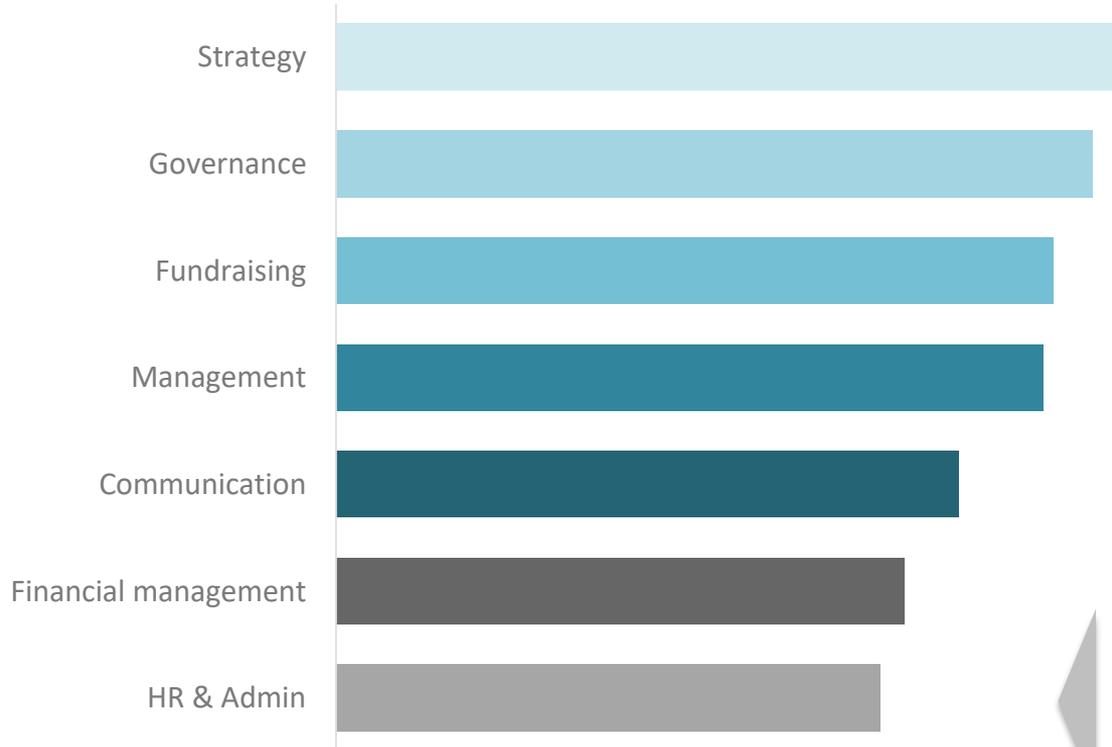
For partners, the provided support is resulting most in increased capacity and stability; growth and conservation impact will occur indirectly with a time lag



Partner see Strategy as the area with the highest level of impact, followed by Governance and Fundraising

Q26: Please rank the functional areas from the highest to the lowest level of impact resulting from the OD/CDF support

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



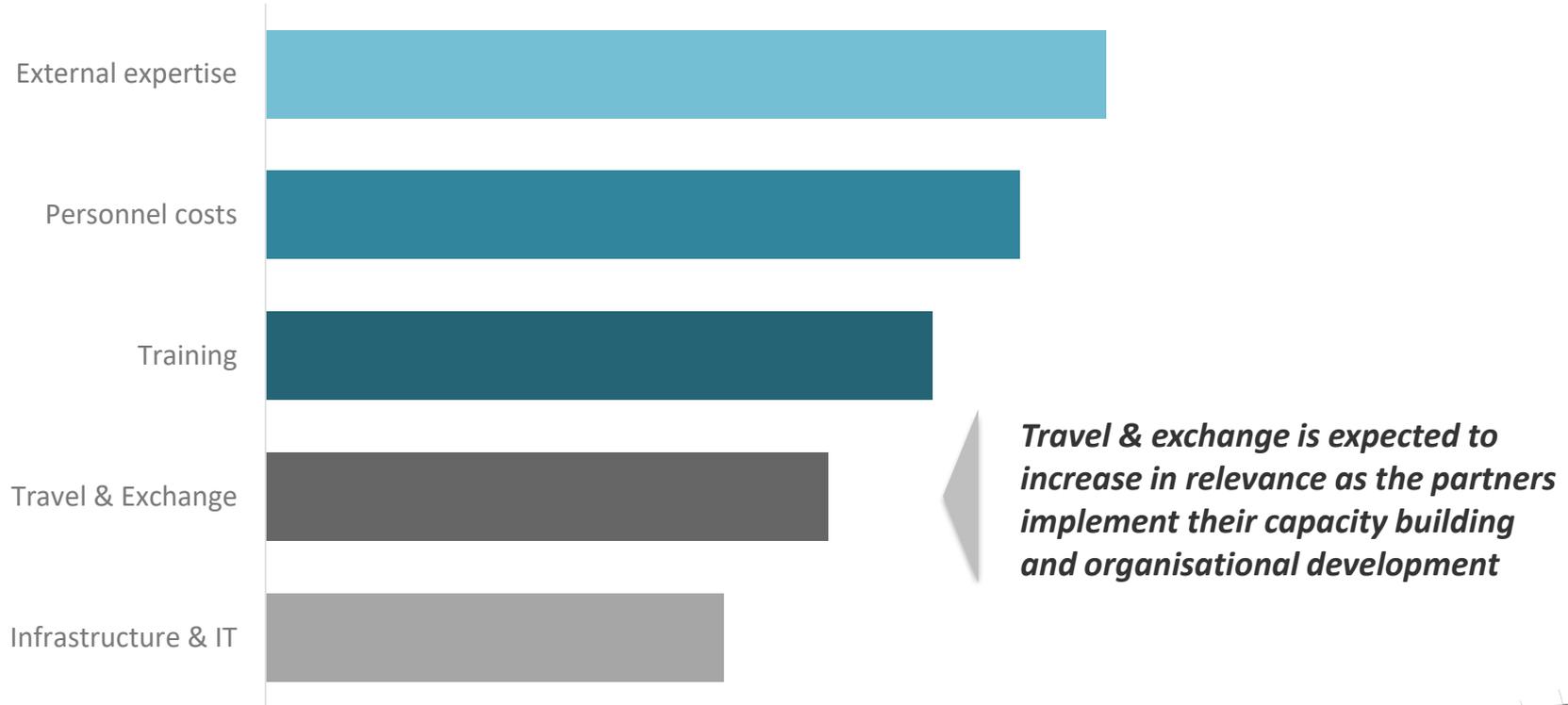
Even if ranked last here, HR & Admin is a polarised topic: a few rank it very high.



All partners agree that the top 3 tools are external expertise, support to personnel costs and training

Q27: Please rank the functional areas from the highest to the lowest level of impact resulting from the OD/CDF support

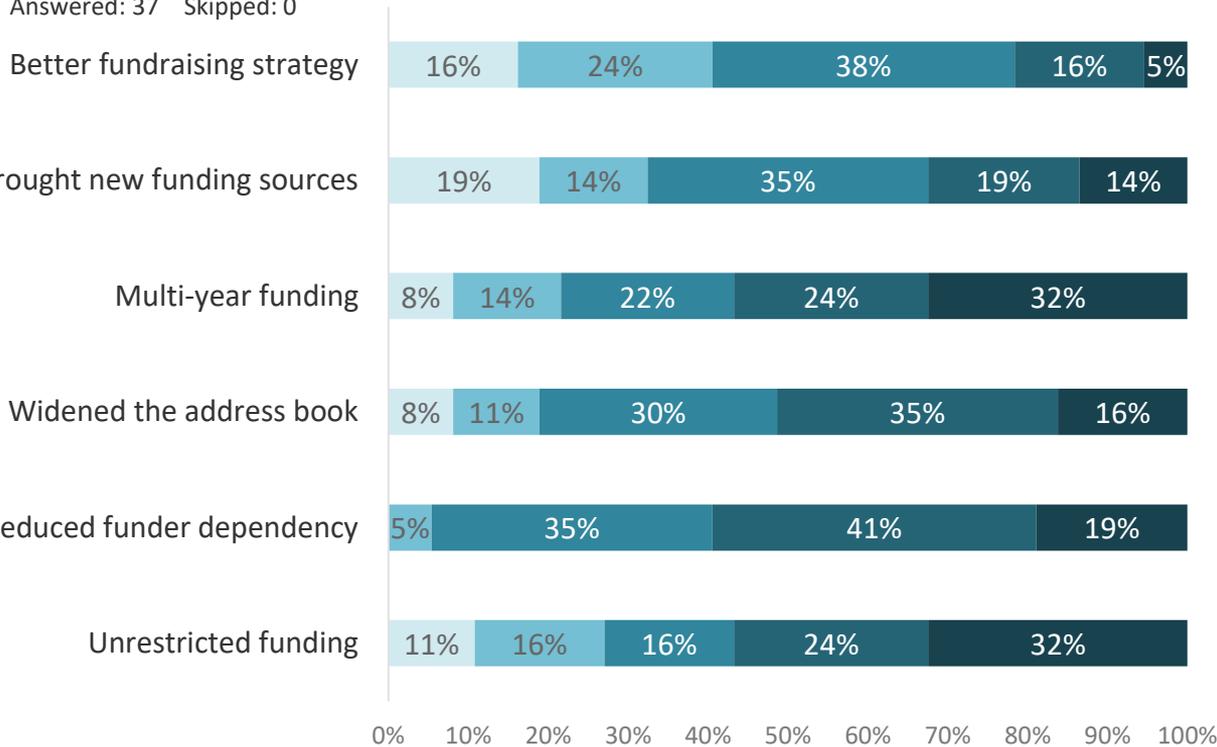
Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



When prompted on funding/fundraising, respondents name a better fundraising strategy and new funding sources as the two biggest outcomes of the OD support

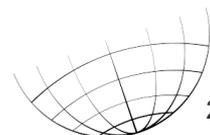
Q28/24: What direct or indirect effect did the OD/CDF support have on various aspects of your organisation's funding/fundraising?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



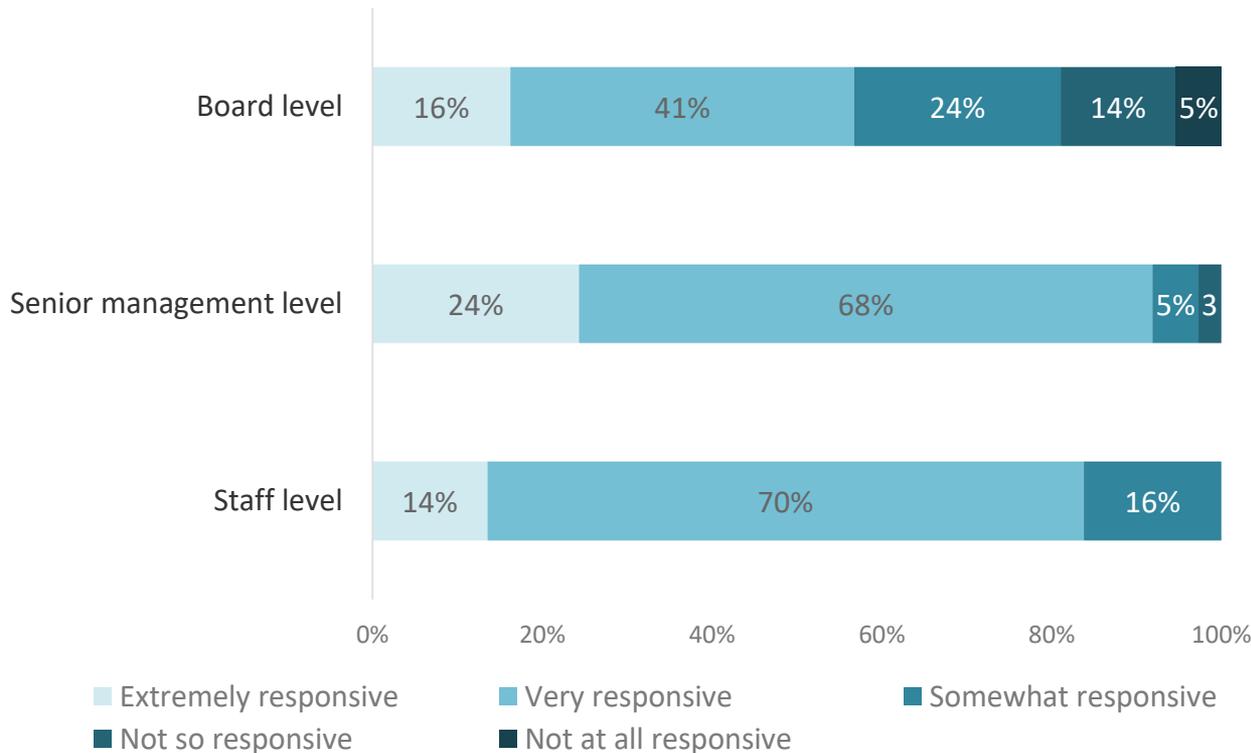
Fundraising was not in the focus of all OD and CDF grants

■ A great deal
 ■ A lot
 ■ A moderate amount
 ■ A little
 ■ None at all



Senior management shows the highest responsiveness and readiness for change (strong alignment), closely followed by staff

Q29: How would you rate the responsiveness and readiness for change at various levels of your organisation? Answered: 19 Skipped: 0

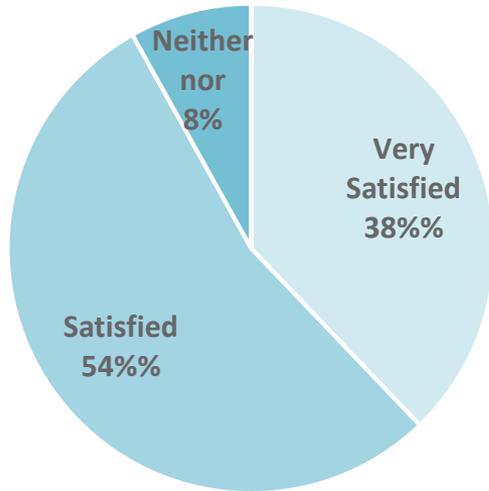


The most frequent barriers mentioned are lack of involvement & understanding, lack of time & resources, as well as little professional experience. Close to 20% of respondents rate their board as not so (14%) or not at all responsive (5%). Governance is identified by many as an area to work on in future.

**92% of the partners are pleased with the OD and CDF support outcomes:
38% very satisfied and 54% are satisfied**

Q30/26: Overall, how satisfied are you with the OD support outcomes?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 0



Partners have suggestions in 6 main areas:

- *Open doors to funders and provide meeting opportunities; provide additional & strong funding*
- *Reinforce technical support*
- *Stay flexible and provide support as a consequence of Covid-19*
- *Support peer exchange and encourage peer collaboration*
- *Encourage governance improvements*
- *Accelerate own decision-making*

Introduction to the survey

Grant process

OD partnership

External support through a consultant

Flexibility and responsiveness in uncertain times

OD support outcomes



Outlook on future OD work

All partners plan to pursue their OD beyond the current action plan, 73% select fundraising among their top 3 priorities for the future

Q32: Do you plan to pursue your organisational development, once your current OD action plan implementation is finalized? 100% Yes

Q34: Please rank the functional areas from your highest to lowest Capacity Development priorities for the future

