

Main Findings from the Global Partnership Survey

Global Partnership Steering Committee Meeting
19-20 January 2015, The Hague, Netherlands

This document presents the main findings from an online survey taken by stakeholders of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation in late 2014. It summarises the respondents' views on the work carried out by the Global Partnership so far, as well as their suggestions on the Partnership's future direction and areas for improvement in the next biennium.

The survey findings are meant to inform the discussions at the seventh Steering Committee meeting. The analysis also includes a preliminary set of recommendations to Steering Committee members, highlighting possible ways to follow up on the suggestions gathered through the survey.

This document is shared with Steering Committee members for information and discussion.

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INTRODUCTION

The Co-Chairs of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation invited stakeholders to take an online survey on the Partnership in a letter issued on 17 October 2014. The purpose of the survey was to gather views on the Partnership's work and inputs for its strategic planning and continued improvement in the next biennium¹. Below is a concise summary of the main recommendations from survey respondents, followed by a brief description of the most recurring findings by section.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE

1. The Global Partnership should prioritise **implementing the aid and development effectiveness commitments** agreed in Busan, particularly at country level. The focus should be on action, tangible results and high-quality, multi-stakeholder development partnerships.
2. The Global Partnership can make a powerful contribution to the post-2015 development agenda – particularly the means of implementation - by building its value proposition on **its inclusive, multi-stakeholder model**; its ability to **link country-level approaches to global discussions**; and its focus on **accountability, knowledge sharing and lessons learning**.
3. **Refining the global monitoring framework** through an inclusive, transparent consultation process will be critical.
4. The Global Partnership's overall activities would benefit from a **sharper strategic focus** and a **clearer activity programme**, deepening and ensuring **continuity** in the Partnership's work on its substantive priorities.
5. **More clarity** is needed on the contribution and the accountability of the **Building Blocks and the Voluntary Initiatives**. They should be **streamlined** and anchored in the Global Partnership's main work plan.
6. The Steering Committee should intensify its efforts to **engage Southern providers**, and ensure the ongoing participation of other **emerging development actors**, like the private sector, philanthropic foundations, and civil society.
7. The Global Partnership should **reach out** more systematically to **regional organisations and platforms** to advance the implementation of development effectiveness commitments, Building Blocks and Voluntary Initiatives closer to the ground, for example by holding consultations at regional level.
8. Steering Committee meetings should be **more operational**, focusing the discussion on the implementation of an **agreed work plan on few selected thematic areas**, with clear targets and a set timeline.
9. Steering Committee members should regularly **reach out to their respective constituencies** to keep them involved in the Global Partnership's activities. Members should consult with the constituency they represent, particularly in preparation for Steering Committee meetings, **and report back on the progress made** in advancing the Global Partnership's work plan.
10. Future High-Level Meetings should prioritise **concrete commitments, action and results**. Meetings should also promote in-depth discussions on few substantive issues, gathering inclusive, multi-stakeholder and senior-level representation from the Global Partnership's stakeholders.

¹ Please refer to Annex 1 for a description of the survey's structure. A small number of figures visualising key survey findings are also available for consultation at the end of this document.

WHO RESPONDED?

A total of **32 respondents completed the survey** online: 63% of them from country governments, 19% from civil society and trade unions, 6% from local and regional governments, 6% from international organisations, and 6% from other, multi-stakeholder constituencies. One additional respondent submitted written comments separately, which were broadly taken into account but did not allow for standard data analysis. As shown in Figure 1, the survey responses do not capture the views from foundations, parliamentarians, multilateral development banks, or the private sector as representatives from these constituencies did not take part in the exercise. Also, **caution should be used** in interpreting the data as some respondents spoke on behalf of their constituency, while others participated in their individual capacity. In light of this, these survey findings do not represent the full breadth of views by Global Partnership stakeholders.

Respondents were mostly **English-speaking**, followed by French and Spanish-speakers. Language does seem to play a major role, especially in the way respondents assessed the level of communications with Global Partnership's members and the Joint Support Team (see Figure 5), with French speakers mostly satisfied with the information received, while English speakers would prefer messages with a broader scope and Spanish speakers more frequent updates.

VIEWS ON THE ADDED VALUE AND FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Overall, the results suggest a **strong convergence that the diverse, multi-stakeholder nature of the Global Partnership is its main added value**. Several respondents pointed to the global monitoring framework and the focus on implementing development effectiveness commitments as the Partnership's distinctive traits. Others described the Partnership as a unique space to share best practices and lessons learned. Inclusiveness, the ability to accelerate political reform and the global nature of the Busan agreement were also mentioned as part of the Global Partnership's brand, together with its country-focused approach, its responsiveness to a fast-changing development landscape and its potential contribution to the post-2015 development agenda.

The majority of respondents found that their views on the Global Partnership's added value are reflected in its vision and activities (Figure 2) and provided additional explanations for their responses. Interestingly, even those who gave opposite initial responses often shared similar supplementary views, for example on the need for the Partnership to focus more on refining the monitoring indicators. The word clouds in Figure 3.a, 3.b, and 3.c. provide a quick snapshot of the words most frequently used as part of the open comments from this section.

Many appreciate the inclusive and multi-stakeholder nature of the Global Partnership, as well as its outreach to Southern providers. **They recommended, however, stronger engagement with the BRICS and the private sector**. Other areas of common concern are a desire to see greater implementation of the Busan commitments; more clarity on how the Building Blocks and Voluntary Initiatives link into the Partnership's core work and improved reporting on their progress; and a sharper strategic focus and a clearer work programme for the Partnership as a whole. Those respondents who did not feel their views are reflected by the Global Partnership noted in particular that the **monitoring work is not given adequate importance or visibility** and that the Partnership may be putting **too much emphasis on showcasing success stories**.

On the Global Partnership's future direction

In reply to the question on which direction the Global Partnership should take in 2015-16 many suggested **focusing on the “core business” of implementing aid and development effectiveness commitments**. Respondents also recommended improving the quality of development partnerships in general; producing tangible results and deliverables; listening more to the demands of recipient countries; and identifying focal points at country level. The **global monitoring framework** was seen as important not only to measure progress but also to link the Global Partnership into post-2015 monitoring and accountability. It was also stressed that the Partnership should become **part of the “how of post-2015” and support the UN Financing for Development process**. Some pointed to the need for greater involvement of key development stakeholders and for making the most of the inclusive nature of the Partnership to draw from its broad membership. Others suggested finding a balance between the Partnership's global reach and the need to intensify its support to regional platforms or better link the global conversation to local processes.

On substantive priorities

With regards to the substantive agenda discussed at the first High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership in Mexico, overall respondents showed no appetite for adding new themes; quite to the contrary, many emphasised the need to **stick to current priorities**, adapt them to the post-2015 development context, and improve the Partnership's performance in delivering on agreed commitments on the ground. In particular, **South-South Co-operation** and the **role of middle-income countries; domestic resource mobilisation, international taxation and illicit financial flows**; and the **global monitoring framework** were the substantive priorities that received the strongest support. **Inclusive development** was also considered a cross-cutting theme deserving more attention, while some respondents called for a more nuanced approach to the **private sector**, highlighting both risks and opportunities in asking for it to play a more prominent role in development. Contextualising the **development effectiveness principles** in the post-2015 development agenda also received some traction.

In terms of adding specific new themes, **gender equality** and **women's rights** were most frequently mentioned, followed by a stronger **human-rights based approach**, a focus on **least developed countries** and on **climate change** and **climate finance**. Other topics mentioned included: the alignment of donor policies with national priorities, better donor coordination with their country offices, country-level support to development finance strategies, stronger alignment with the New Deal agenda, aid for trade, knowledge sharing, national labour legislation, financing for development, and mapping gaps in national capacity and resources.

As a general side comment to this section, several also noted that the Global Partnership agenda needs to be less focused on Building Blocks and Voluntary Initiatives. Rather, it should **prioritise progress on the ground and avoid heavy process discussions**, e.g. on High-Level Meetings preparations.

On deliverables

Refining the monitoring indicators was seen as a key deliverable by several respondents, who also called for a more transparent internal consultation process and a clearer, simpler monitoring framework. To this end, a few respondents raised the importance of consulting monitoring experts from civil society and the private sector on their respective indicators. A more open approach to the Global Partnership's monitoring work was also suggested to better engage middle-income countries and the BRICS.

Specific deliverables proposed include producing evidence on the impact of inclusive development on results; supporting case studies on good practices on domestic resource mobilisation, tax systems and South-South co-operation to help inform the future SDGs; building regional linkages on DRM based on the G20's work; providing more aid to fragile states and

least developed countries; developing national development finance assessment tools; monitoring women's conditions in developing countries; agreeing country-level results frameworks that promote alignment; and supporting national and global multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Some suggested deliverables that were more process-oriented, like making inclusive development, human rights-based approach and the enabling environment for civil society cross-cutting, ensuring consistency throughout Global Partnership activities. Other responses stressed the need to identify concrete deliverables for individual Building Blocks and Voluntary Initiatives by agreeing on a work plan of activities that brings together all Global Partnership's thematic priorities.

On Voluntary Initiatives

The general view is that **there are currently too many Voluntary Initiatives and that efforts should be made to merge or cluster them**. Respondents also expressed concerns about the accountability of these initiatives, based on the lessons learned from similarly loose tracking mechanisms of previous initiatives like the Building Blocks. **Many recommended some form of periodical reporting on progress**, including reporting facilitated by the Joint Support Team or updates submitted every six months or dedicated workshops or presentations at Steering Committee and High-Level Meetings.

On the other hand, several respondents noted that **Voluntary Initiatives have succeeded in injecting new life into the Global Partnership**, creating more opportunities for delivering on development effectiveness at the country level or for holding regular consultations with national stakeholders to determine priorities on the ground. Some of these initiatives also allow for more intense and flexible engagement with new development stakeholders, facilitating knowledge sharing and peer learning.

In addition, responses highlighted the **need for Voluntary Initiatives to enhance the main substantive priorities of the Global Partnership, with a stronger focus on country-level action**. They should be an integral part of the Partnership's work plan, linking directly to its main activities. Stakeholders should be able to provide inputs through clearer and more transparent feedback loops.

Contributing to the post-2015 development agenda

In identifying productive ways for the Global Partnership to contribute to post-2015 discussions respondents made similar considerations to those on the Partnership's added value (see above), namely the **strong potential for offering a refined global monitoring framework to support accountability for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly SDG 17; the importance of **(re)focusing on the Busan principles, commitments and implementation**; feeding **country-focused, multi-stakeholder, inclusive and human rights-based approaches** into the UN process; offering a space for **sharing knowledge, best practices and lessons learned**; and providing **linkages between international aid architecture and country-level discussions**, with an increasingly important role played by regional platforms/commissions and New York-based UN missions. Respondents also recommended **avoiding duplication of efforts**, pointing to the complementary role the Global Partnership can play in being part of the 'how' of the post-2015 development agenda and financing. There was general **appreciation for the Global Partnership's inputs to the UN Secretary-General's Synthesis Report**, which according to many captured well the Partnership's aspirations and contribution to post-2015 development.

VIEWS ON THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP'S COMMUNICATIONS, OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

As shown in Figure 4 the majority of respondents receive information by **email**, which **remains the preferred communication channel for keeping up-to-date** on Global Partnership's activities. While some find it important to make the online community space (Teamworks) more user-friendly, others expressed interest in receiving more information on the Partnership from UNDP country offices. A few respondents sent positive feedback on the Global Partnership's social media use; others think both the newsletter and the website can be useful tools in updating stakeholders on the state of play of the Building Blocks and Voluntary Initiatives. Other communications and outreach tools suggested included training workshops, study tours, and information meetings.

On outreach to Global Partnership's internal constituencies

Overall, there were **strong calls for individual Steering Committee members to reach out to their respective constituency more regularly** to ensure they fully represent their group's views at Steering Committee meetings. This internal outreach was also regarded as prerequisite to position the Global Partnership as a truly global and inclusive forum. Others pointed to the need for the Global Partnership to **ensure the ongoing and proactive participation of the private sector, civil society and emerging providers**. A few respondents suggested reaching out to issue-specific groups gathering Global Partnership stakeholders, such as the Task Team on CSO Development Effectiveness and Enabling Environment, fragile states supporting the New Deal or the EU Partnership for Development.

Respondents also called for **more frequent interaction with the Joint Support Team**, particularly on the monitoring work and the preparations for Steering Committee meetings. Suggestions for improvement included creating policy-focused mailing lists, sending regular email updates, organising conference calls with focal points from different constituencies and ensuring an open and multi-stakeholder consultation process to finalise the global monitoring framework, e.g. the transparency indicator. A wider consultation on monitoring activities, including on the Independent Advisory Group, was seen as especially crucial to maintaining the credibility and legitimacy of the overall exercise.

On engaging development players at national, regional and global level

In terms of engaging key development actors, responses prioritised the **need for the Global Partnership to identify development effectiveness focal points at national and regional level to promote the implementation** of the Busan commitments, as well as of the Building Blocks and Voluntary Initiatives. UN country offices and UNDP's regional centres were often mentioned as key players in supporting this level of engagement as they can help forge country-level partnerships with relevant stakeholders; prepare and/or adapt analytical findings to the specific country context, particularly to inform country-level policymakers; feed country-level inputs and evidence-based analysis back to global development processes; and keep the focus on recipient countries. Some foresaw a stronger role for UNDP's country offices or suggested setting up local Global Partnership chapters in-country, which would promote the Partnership's work through development education, dedicated workshops and other kinds of national outreach in close collaboration with the Joint Support Team. A few respondents also suggested that the Steering Committee be more proactive in linking with their constituencies on the ground.

On a regional level, several respondents saw platforms/organisations such as the African Union, SEGIB², WACSOFF³, etc. **as instrumental in mainstreaming aid and development effectiveness in their respective regions**. As such, they could be invited to Steering

² SEGIB is the Ibero-American conference.

³ WACSOFF / FOSCAO is the West Africa Civil Society Forum.

Committee meetings. In addition, respondents were keen to see these platforms engage with emerging development actors **through the promotion of best practices and knowledge sharing** initiatives on South-South and Triangular Co-operation. The Global Partnership's support to regional platforms was also considered critical in contributing to reforming development financing frameworks.

Globally, many respondents underlined the **need to clarify how the Global Partnership collaborates with the UN Development Co-operation Forum** to dispel perceptions of unnecessary overlap between the two fora. More broadly, there were calls for **more concerted efforts to feed into UN processes** - including the post-2015 development agenda, Financing for Development, and the outcome of the Independent Experts Advisory Group's work on data revolution – as well as the UN Conference on Trade and Development and the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Respondents also considered it a priority for the Global Partnership to **engage with the BRICS and other major Southern providers**.

Additional global organisations or networks that the Global Partnership should approach more systematically according to some respondents are the International Labour Organisation, the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, United Cities and Local Governments⁴, the G20 Development Working Group, the OECD for its work on multinational enterprises, the Open Government Partnership, and the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

IEWS ON INTERNAL WAYS OF WORKING AND STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

All respondents participated in the first High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership, which took place in Mexico City on 15-16 April 2014. Overall, **they gave a positive assessment of the conference**, which they found to be well organised, allowing for diverse representation from the main constituencies and acknowledging the role played by stakeholders like local and regional governments, trade unions, youths, civil society organisations and middle-income countries. To many another success factor was the **attendance of senior-level speakers**, who engaged in well moderated, high-quality discussions on some of the issues most relevant to developing countries. Respondents also appreciated the networking opportunities offered by the knowledge and innovation marketplace stands.

Suggestions for future High-Level Meetings pointed to the **need for stronger monitoring data; a more transparent consultation process on the communiqué; and better coordinated voluntary actions or initiatives**. While there was a sense that the first High-Level Meeting succeeded in focusing the attention on action needed on the ground, several respondents found that **future gatherings should do more to advance concrete aid and development effectiveness commitments**. Similarly, while many respondents appreciated the quality and variety of the focus discussions, they would have **preferred fewer sessions with stronger linkages to the plenary discussions**. In the future there should also be fewer speakers per session to allow for more in-depth conversations and free interaction with the audience. The planning process should rely on a more balanced multi-stakeholder approach across meeting sessions.

Logistically, it was suggested that future **meetings be set further in advance** to avoid last-minute confirmations, challenging visa procedures and increased travel costs. Financial support was also mentioned as a determining factor by a few respondents from recipient countries.

⁴ Some of these organisations are Steering Committee members, e.g. UCLG.

On the Steering Committee's ways of working

Ownership of the Steering Committee agenda by developing countries was regarded as a top priority. The majority of respondents also called again for **more transparent, regular dialogue with their Steering Committee representatives**, whose mandate and responsibilities should be further clarified. Several asked Steering Committee members to gather inputs from their respective constituencies in the lead up to meetings and be ready to report back on their progress in leading the implementation of development effectiveness commitments after the meeting. These respondents were eager to engage, including on the Global Partnership's monitoring work. Some recommended that Steering Committee members reach out to relevant policy-makers in their constituency at country and regional level, for example by holding regional meetings.

Many responses pointed to additional ways to increase the diversity of the Steering Committee. They included a call for the Steering Committee to adopt a human rights-based approach, as well as the proposal to nominate a non-executive Co-Chair of the Global Partnership on a rotating basis. Responses also recalled that all Steering Committee members should be treated on equal footing. Others hoped the Steering Committee would take more into account geographical, linguistic and other differences among members. Several respondents solicited a stronger focus on action and results, including through the work done by the Building Blocks and the Voluntary Initiatives. **The Co-Chairs and Joint Support Team were seen as critical in providing information** on upcoming Steering Committee meetings and in **clarifying what each constituency can bring to the table and what kind of decisions the group will be expected to make.** There was broad support for using guiding questions as a useful tool to orient the discussion. Furthermore, a few recommended holding Steering Committee meetings in a Francophone country; and focusing on specific regions, like the Indo-Pacific and the African continent.

On Steering Committee meetings

21% of respondents were Steering Committee members. As such, they replied to additional detailed questions on how to improve the Committee's ways of working – particularly the timing, format and content of its meetings.

Most respondents were happy with the frequency of Steering Committee meetings so far. They recommended holding future meetings **twice a year**, possibly with Global Partnership outreach events in between. People were also open to the possibility of holding Steering Committee meetings **back to back with other relevant gatherings**, such as the Development Co-operation Forum, as a way to foster dialogue, provided that this option does not impact on the timing, duration and high-level attendance of the meetings.

The vast majority would appreciate receiving Steering Committee **documentation one month before the meeting.** Respondents also called for **more clarity, conciseness and better time management** in drafting Steering Committee agendas. Steering Committee members should have more opportunities to solicit specific agenda items; discuss any agreement reached or joint initiative launched between meetings; share good and bad experiences with other members; and track and support the implementation of an agreed Global Partnership work plan.

Half of the respondents found Steering Committee meetings to be of satisfactory length; the other half found them too short. Most people also thought previous discussions had usually been **too focused on process** and that the **meeting format could be more dynamic and flexible.**

On participation in Steering Committee's meetings

Overall, **respondents⁵ were in favour of inviting 'observers' to Steering Committee meetings** to promote transparency and inclusiveness in the way the Global Partnership operates. At the same time, **many people suggested specific conditions or criteria** for selecting these invitees. For example, they requested more information on the observers' role and tasks; or prior approval of the observer's participation by the full Steering Committee; or the observers' commitment to make a concrete contribution to the meeting through constructive suggestions on substance, process and communications. While some respondents would like to set a limit of 2-3 observers per meeting to maintain efficiency, others would prefer to invite all interested external stakeholders in light of the voluntary nature of the Global Partnership.

Another option suggested was to **avoid calling these stakeholders 'observers' to prevent institutionalising their role**. Rather, they could be considered 'guests' invited for outreach or briefing purposes. Suitable candidates for this role could include regional organisations and the BRICS. A few respondents suggested that external stakeholders should have no decision-making or veto power and might be excluded from certain Steering Committee discussions if necessary.

About a third of the respondents were in strong favour of live-streaming Steering Committee meetings, arguing that it fosters inclusiveness and dynamism and that it can be a cost-effective alternative to travel. Others noted that while live-streaming is a useful information tool, it does not allow for genuine participation. Alternative options included sharing selected highlights after the meeting, thereby leaving room for closed discussions, or not webcasting the meeting at all out of concern that the live-streaming might prevent a frank and informal exchange.

Additional suggestions for ensuring inclusive participation of the broader Global Partnership in Steering Committee meetings included circulating written statements to other Steering Committee members, if unable to participate; organising a structured consultation process in the lead up to the meeting, for example via conference calls; inviting key groups like the Building Blocks to present their work and highlight linkages with the overall Partnership's activity plan; circulating Steering Committee summaries as soon as possible; and to holding regional meetings.

On this last option Steering Committee respondents also pointed to **other Global Partnership meetings**, like the annual workshop hosted by Korea, **as further opportunities for peer learning and exchanges**. Some recommended organising Global Partnership meetings back to back to other relevant international events to hold in-depth discussions on the SDGs, Financing for Development and the post-2015 development agenda.

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from the survey findings. For ease of reference they are summarised in a concise set of recommendations to the Steering Committee at the top of this document. Steering Committee members are also invited to consult the survey's full data set on the community space to complement this summary and draw their own conclusions from the survey.

Offering Global Partnership stakeholders further opportunities to express their views through this kind of surveys can be useful to gather fresh inputs on the Partnership's future direction and ongoing improvement.

⁵ This section of the survey was again accessible to all Global Partnership stakeholders.

Annex 1. Brief description of the Global Partnership's survey

The survey consisted of open and multiple-choice questions on the respondents' profiles; their views on Partnership's added value and future direction; their feedback on its communication, outreach and engagement activities; and their suggestions on the Global Partnership's internal ways of working and strategic considerations as it moves forward, with a specific section filled by Steering Committee members only. Annex 1 visualises a few selected responses from the survey. The detailed data set will be available on the [Global Partnership's community space](#)⁶ by early January 2015 and will not be for external circulation.

⁶ Respondents had the option of filling the survey anonymously. To preserve confidentiality the data set that will be made available on the community space will omit personal identity information. The data set will also only feature feedback from respondents who have given their consent to share their submissions on the community space.

Figure 1. Which of the following best describes your organisation?

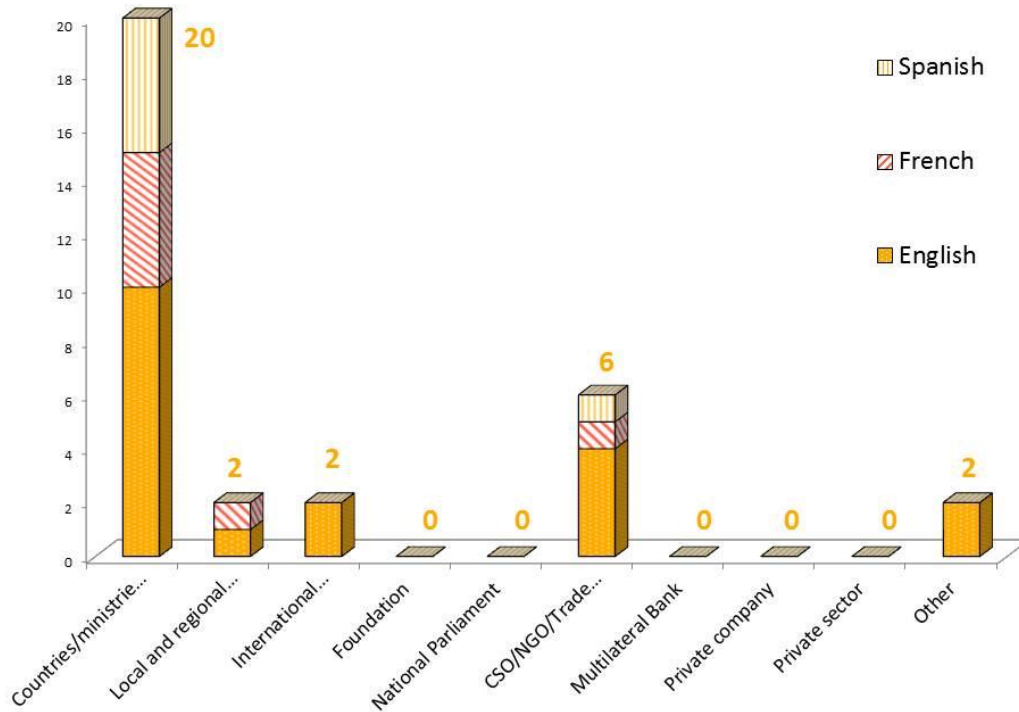


Figure 2. Do you see your views on the Global Partnership's added value reflected in its vision and activities?

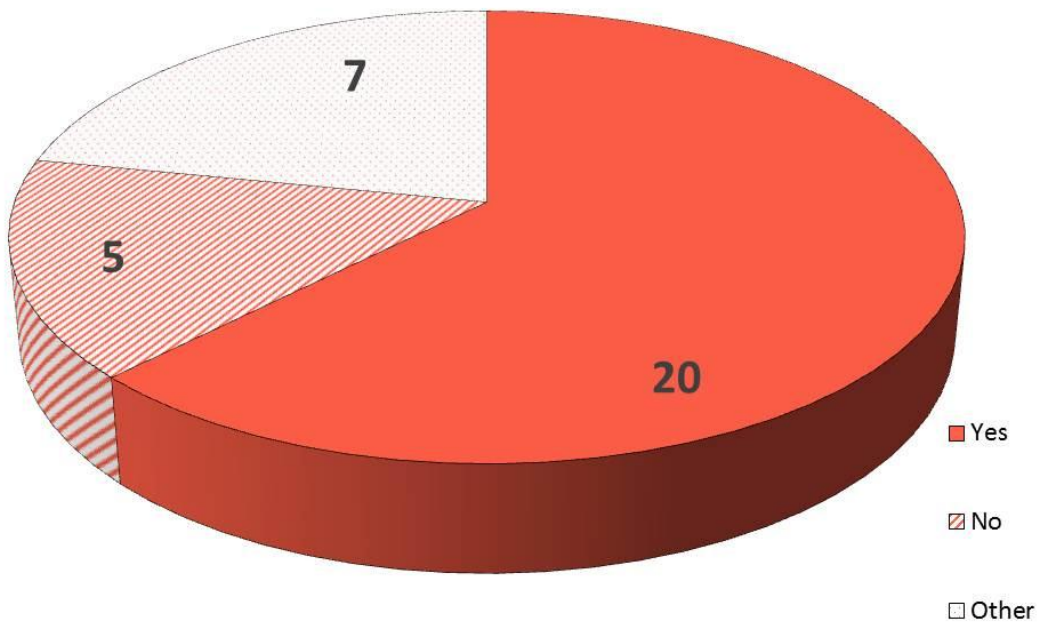


Figure 3.a. Do you see your views on the added value of the Global Partnership reflected in its vision and activities?

If yes, please explain



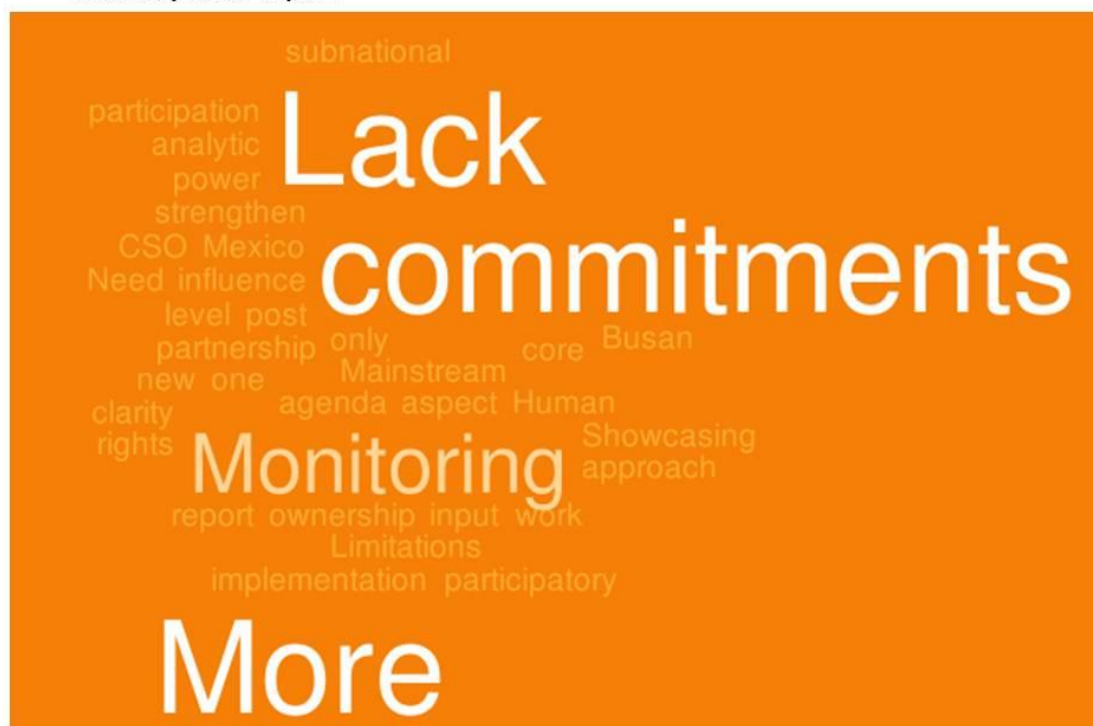
Figure 3.b. Do you see your views on the added value of the Global Partnership reflected in its vision and activities?

If no, please explain



Figure 3.c. Do you see your views on the added value of the Global Partnership reflected in its vision and activities?

If other, please explain



Note: the bigger and whiter the word in each cloud, the more frequently it occurs in the respective comments section.

**Figure 4. How to you keep up to date with Global Partnership news and events?
How do you prefer to receive information on the Global Partnership?**

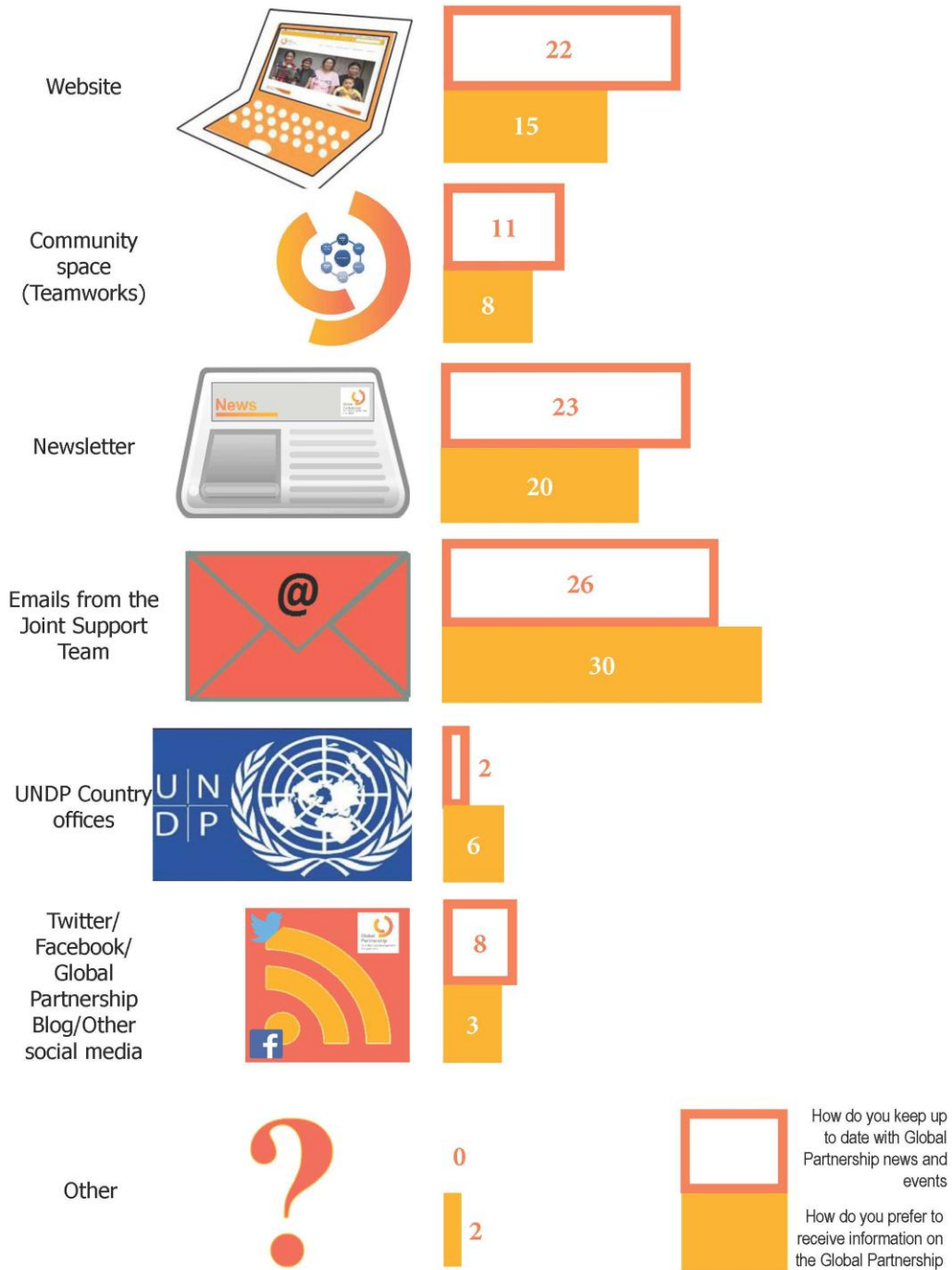


Figure 5. How did you find the level of communications with other members of the Global Partnership and the Joint Support Team?

