Enhancing Implementing Partnership

UNHCR Annual Consultations with NGOs

13 June 2013

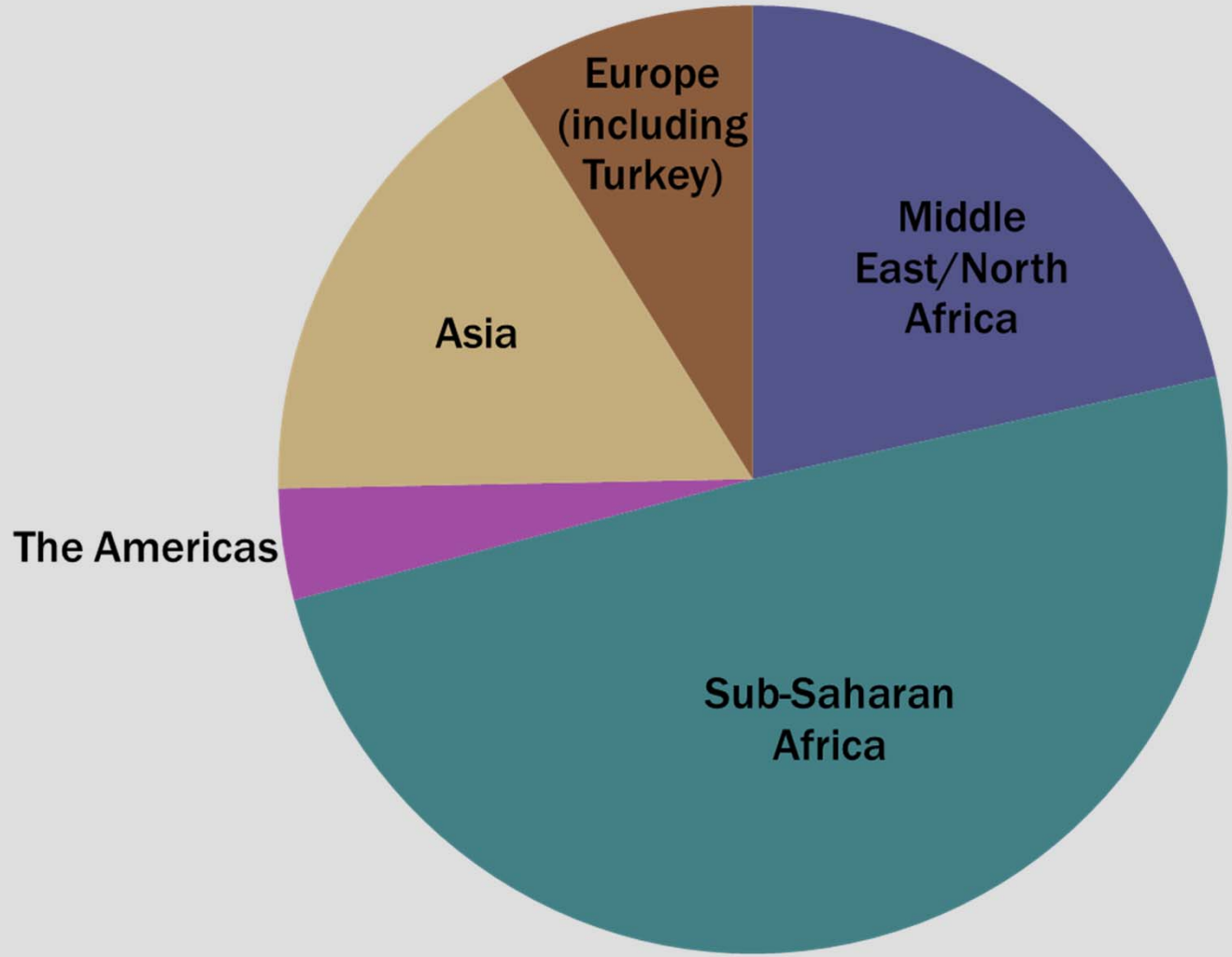
SURVEY ON UNHCR-NGO PARTNERSHIPS

June 2013

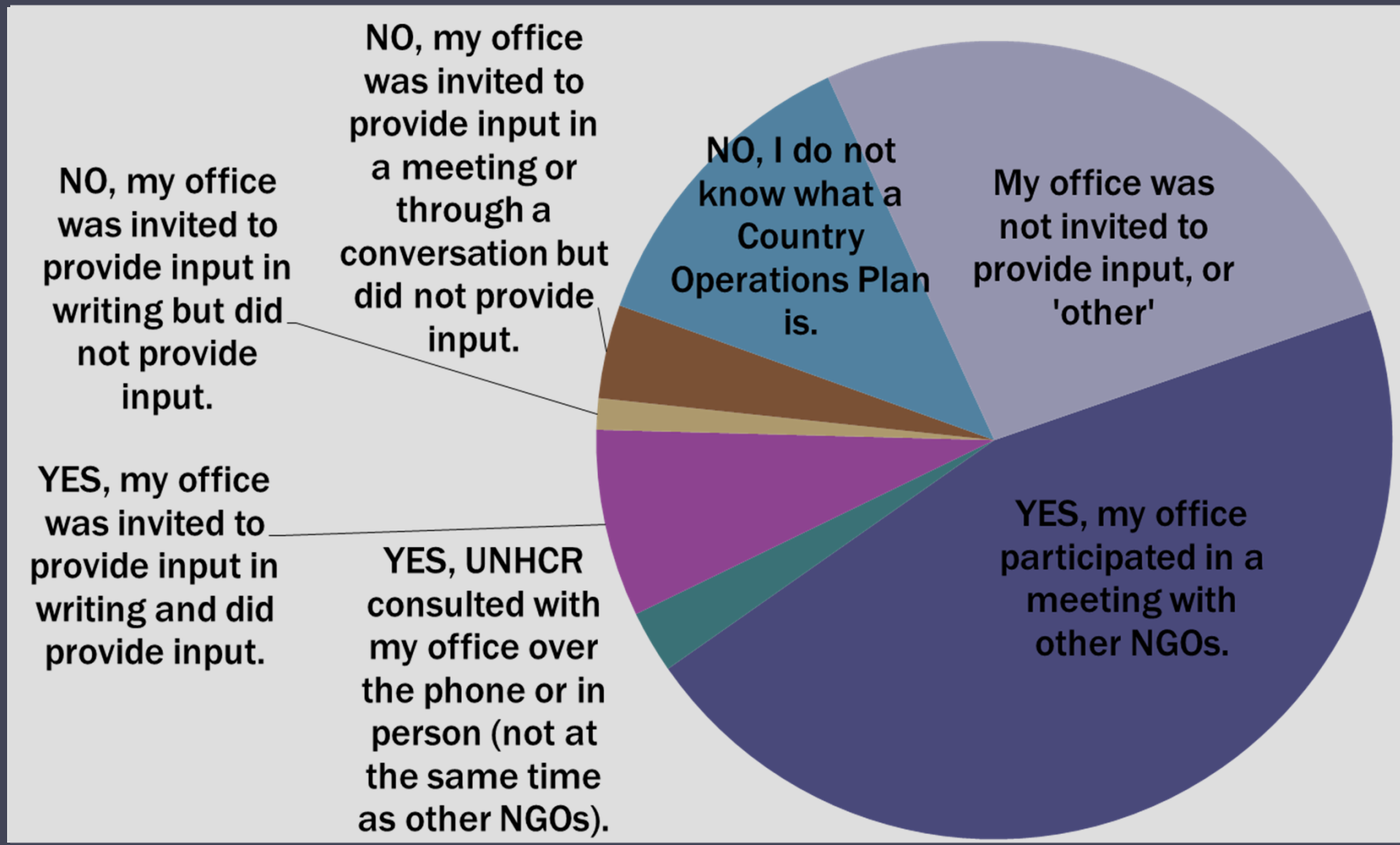
HIAS

Welcome the stranger.
Protect the refugee.

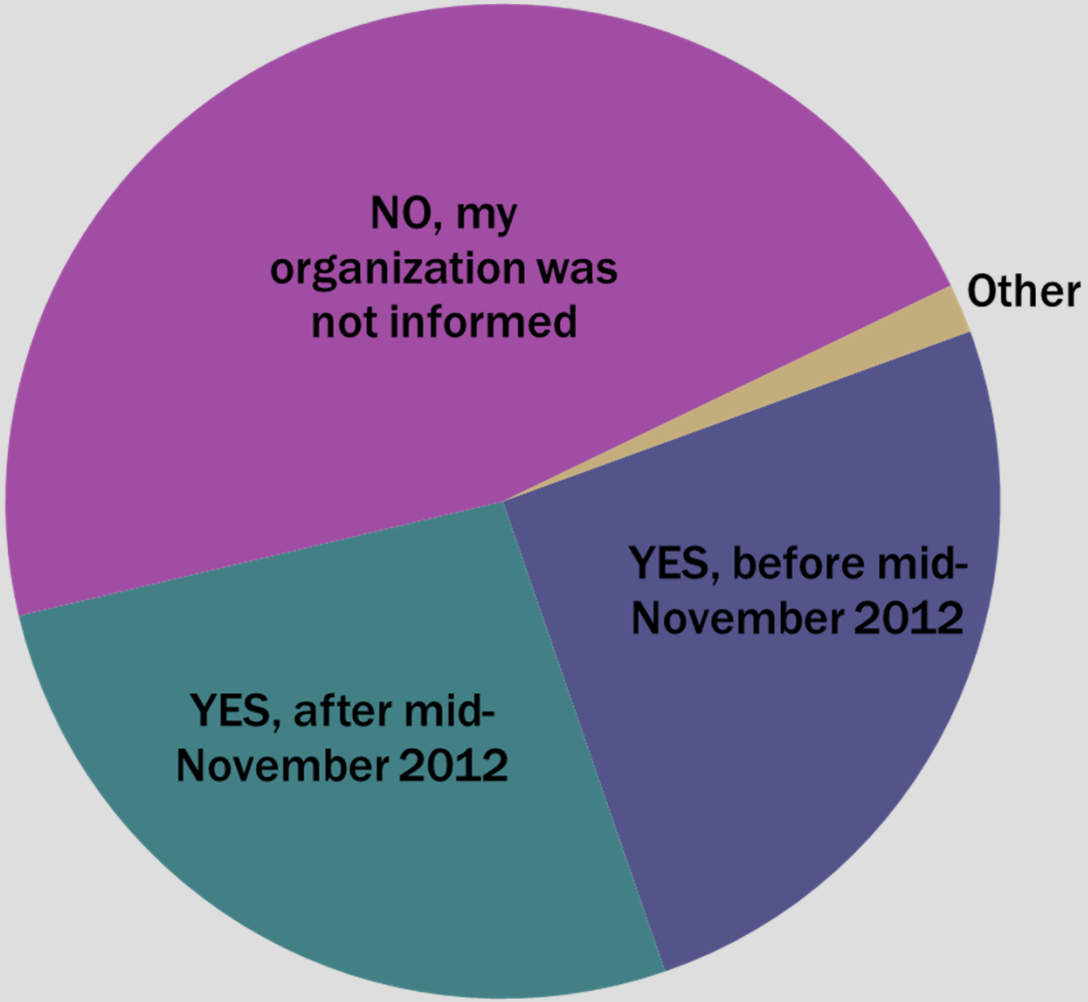
What is your office's area of operation?



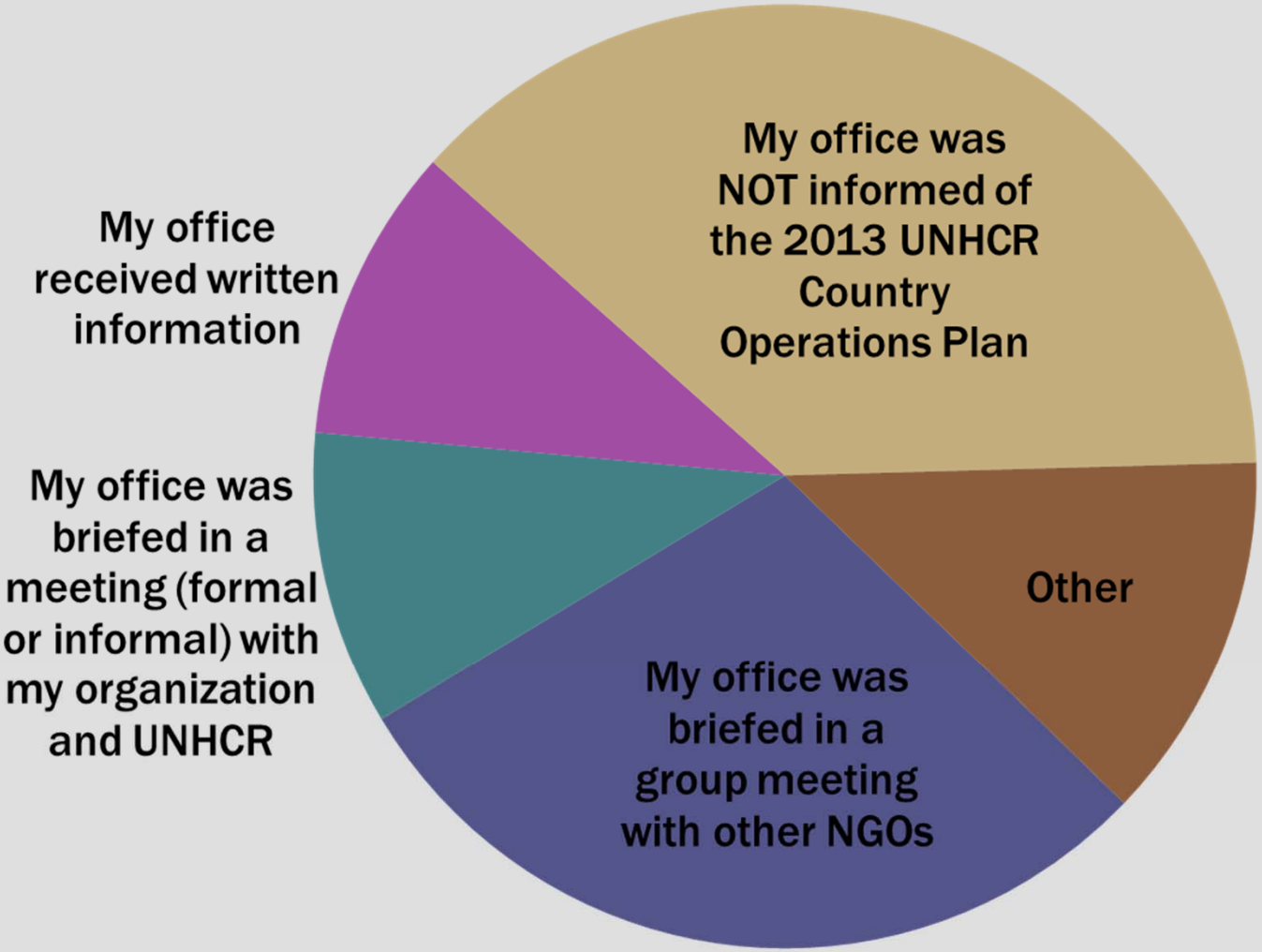
Did your office participate in 2012 in UNHCR's Country Operations Plan for 2013?



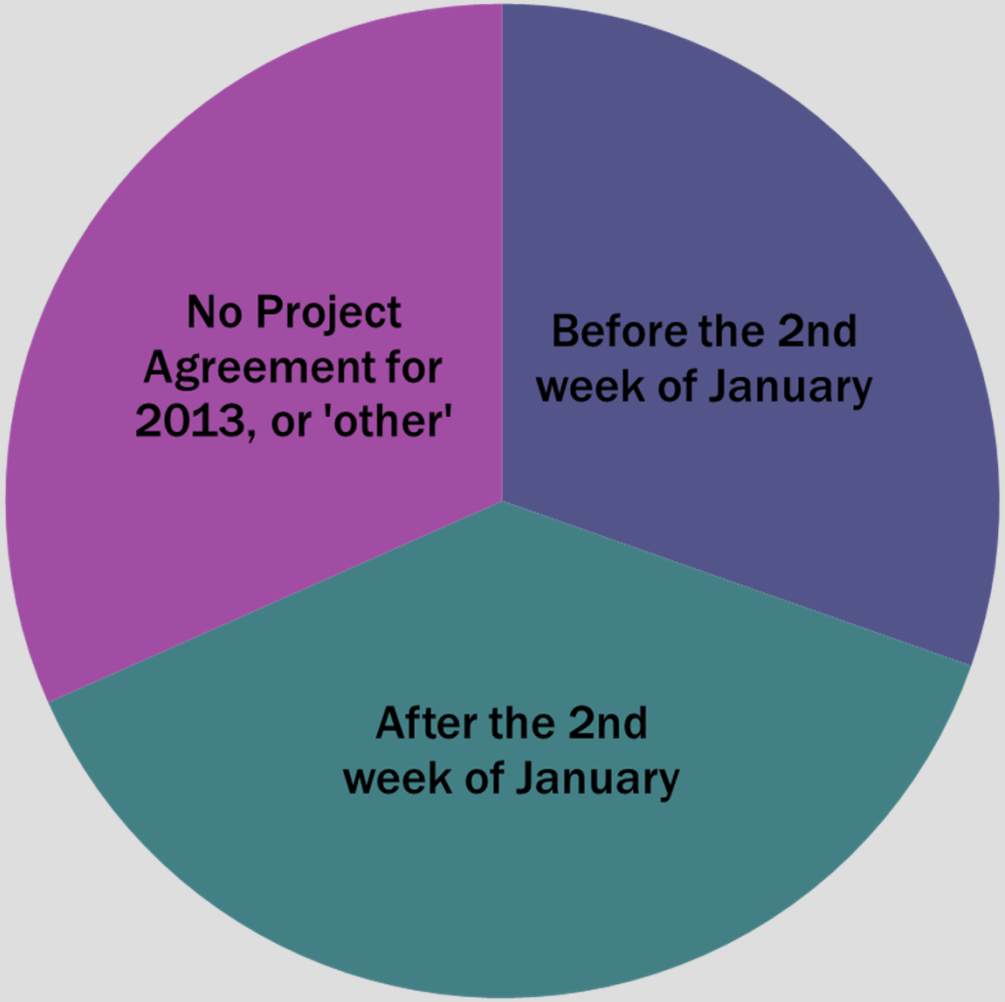
Was your office informed about the outcome of the 2013 Operations Plan?



If informed of the 2013 UNHCR Country Operations Plan, how was your office informed?



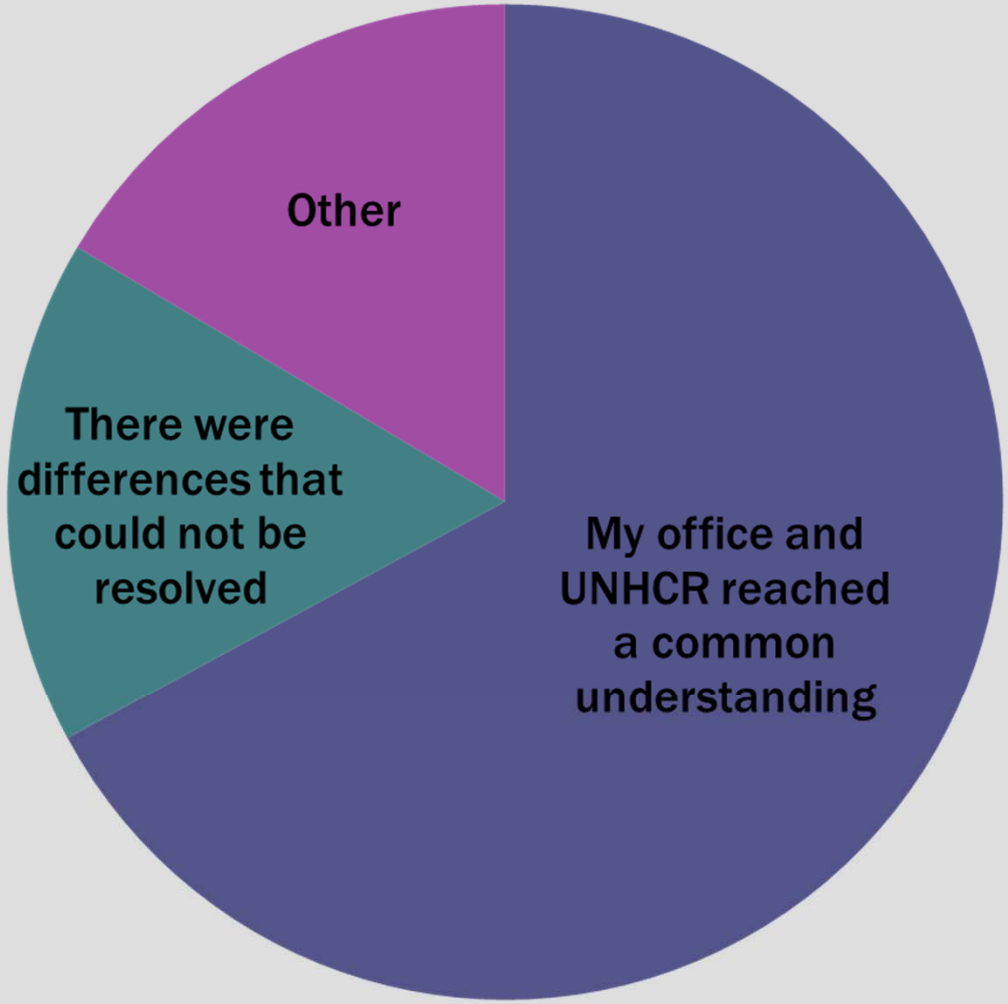
When was your Project Agreement signed with UNHCR for 2013?



If you answered ‘After the 2nd week of January,’ what were the reasons for the delay?

- “The delay was because of Bureaucratic procedure from BAFIA (Government) & UNHCR sides.”
- “Ongoing negotiations regarding programming, staffing structures, staff salaries, additional programming requests etc.”
- “The reason for the delay… was the need for revision of scope of work and giving enough time for corrections, extensive investigation and reviews of project plans, estimation, schedule and quality.”
- “[The delay] was mainly due to extraneous circumstances borne of a host government position that has forestalled signing of the traditional tripartite agreement.”
- “No specific response except "it is in the process."”
- “Delays were due to UNHCR changing proposal package requirements, lack of clarity on budget ceiling… lack of consistent messages between different levels within UNHCR e.g. contradictory feedback from UNHCR in the field and UNHCR in the capital city.”
- “Funding was not available.”

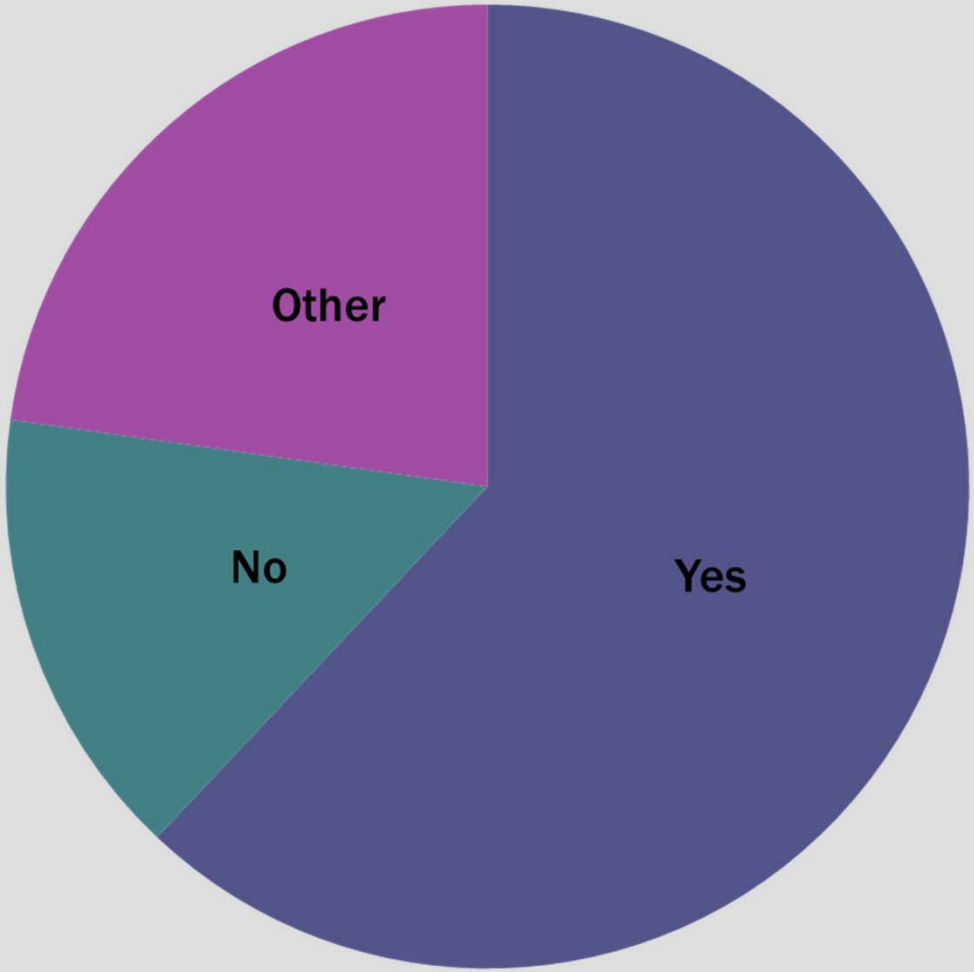
Were UNHCR and your office able to reach a common understanding during the negotiation process which led to the 2013 Project Agreement or were there differences that could not be resolved?



If you answered ‘there were differences,’ please explain.

- “We did not agree on the continuation of a 7-year project.”
- “UNHCR does not have adequate funding to support implementing partners. We bring in additional support "match funding" to make them possible.”
- “UNHCR only agreed to a four month budget for a year of programming which makes planning very difficult.”
- “We had differences on staff medical insurance and salary scale.”
- “We were requested to conduct an NFI distribution to targeted beneficiaries in a shorter time than what we felt was appropriate for the security situation and to ensure the correct beneficiaries were targeted. We ultimately agreed on the UNHCR timeline because we wanted to implement the project and felt a responsibility to distribute NFIs as best we could.”

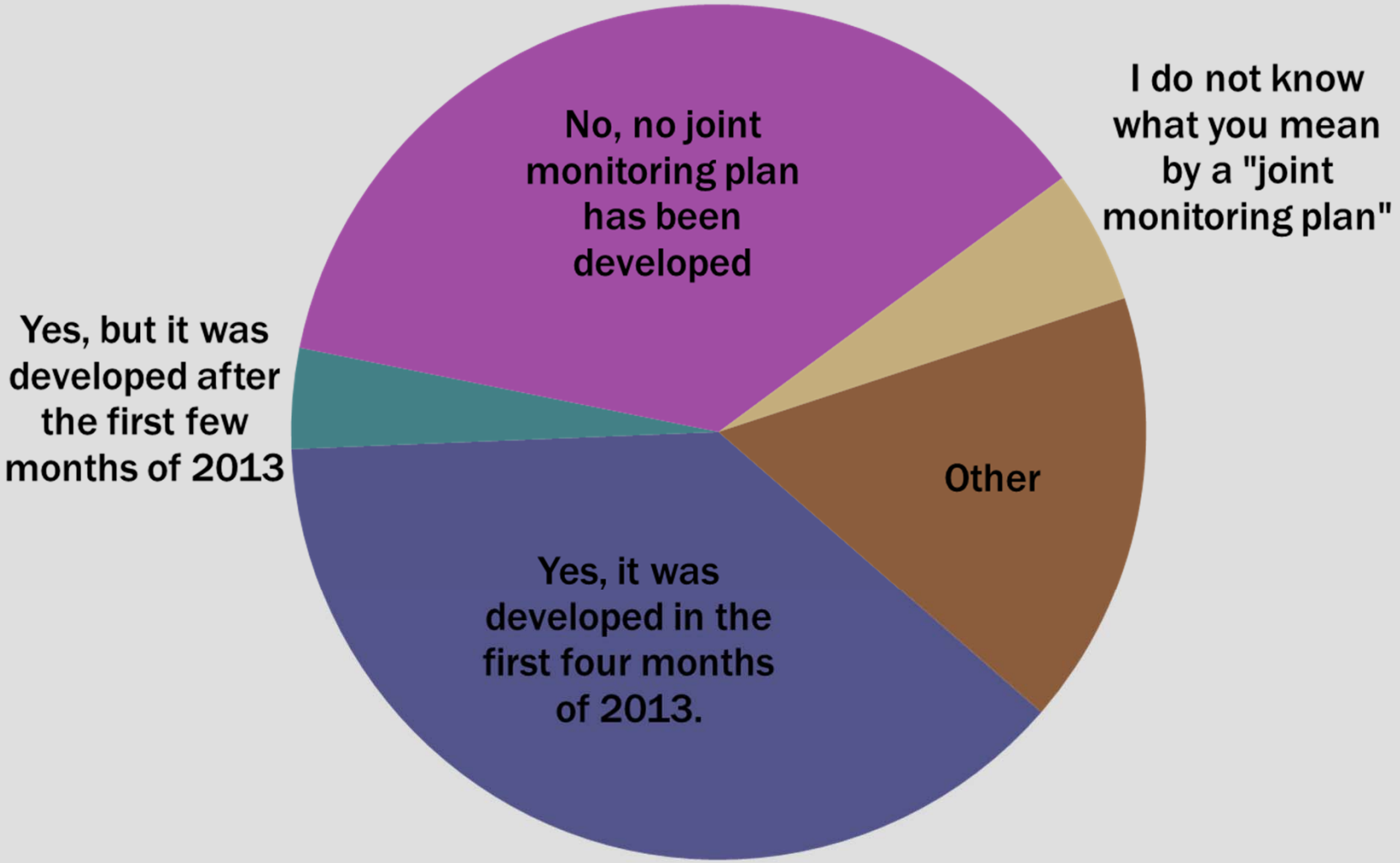
So far, has UNHCR released funds as promised and on schedule for 2013?



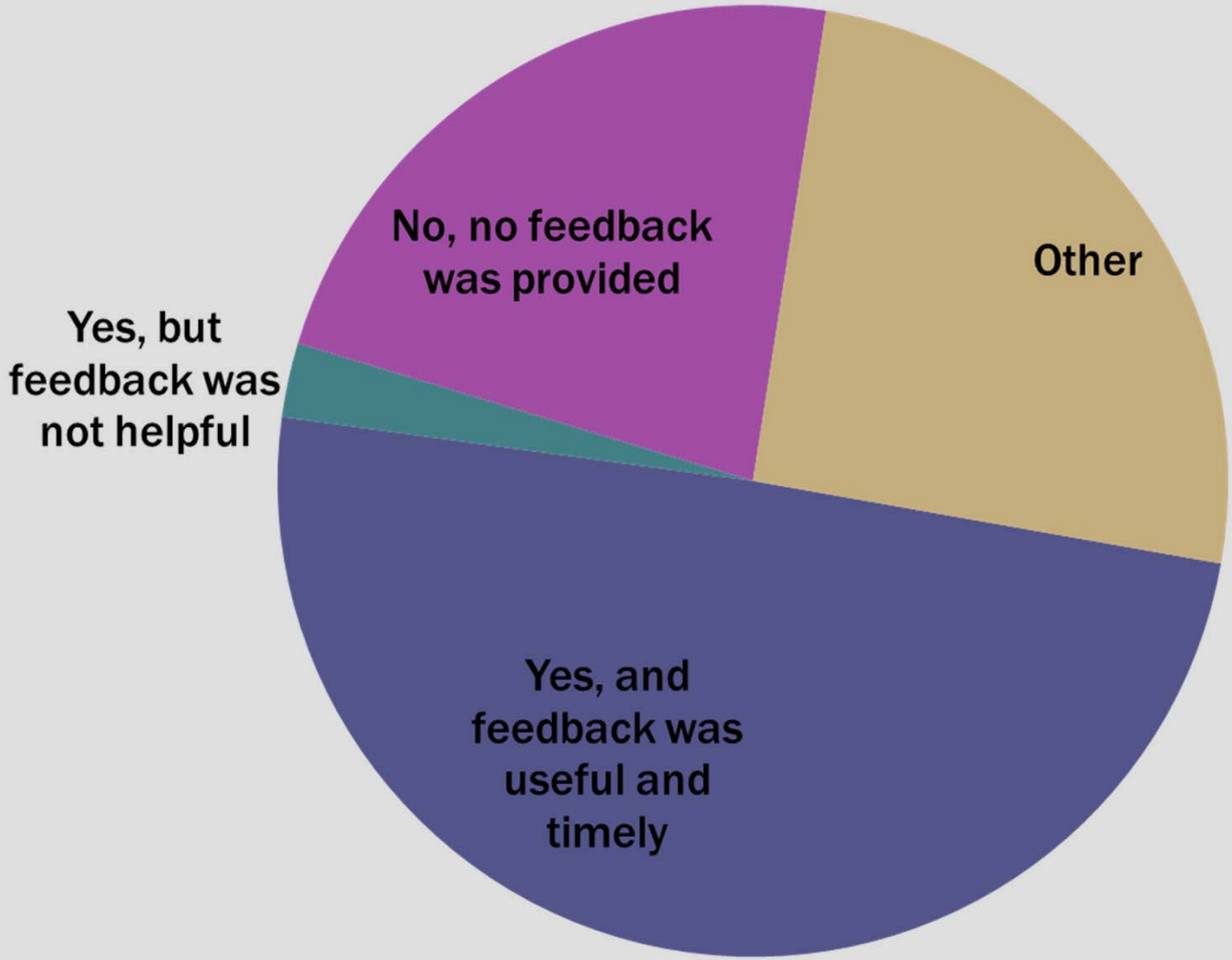
If you answered ‘no,’ please explain the reason(s) for the late release of funds.

- “I don't know. We never get funds [on] time.”
- “Due to the delayed signing of the agreement and the transfer of the assistant Programme Officer of UNHCR to another operation.”
- “No specific reason given except ‘it is in the process’.”
- “We had to do a significant amount of pre-financing due to the delays surrounding the new camp. Would have made more sense if we had moved forward with the original agreement and the scheduled release of funds and simply to a budget realignment for the new camp in April/May. But UNHCR didn't see it that way.”
- “Ask UNHCR.”

Did UNHCR and your office develop a joint monitoring plan for the project?



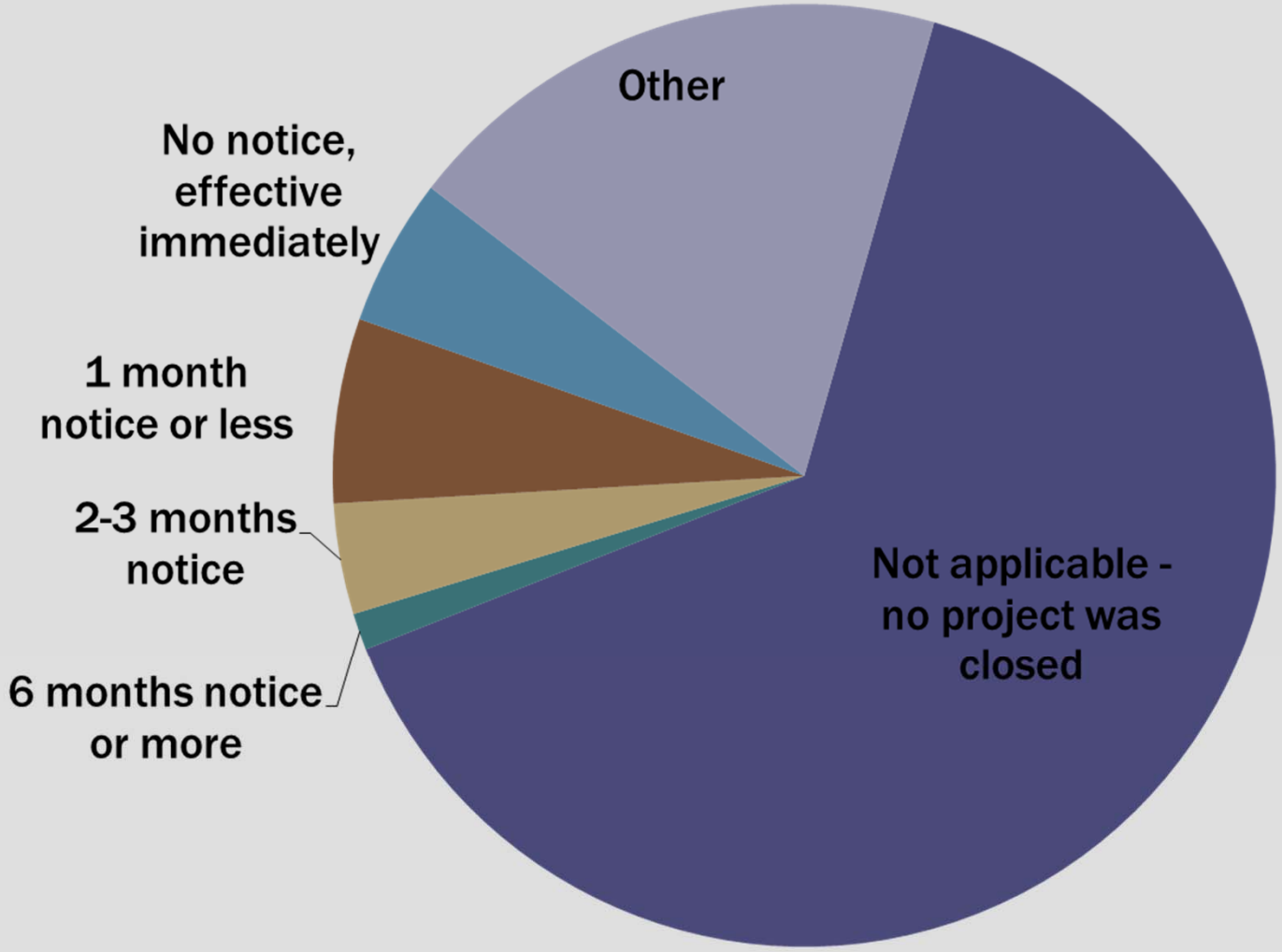
Did UNHCR provide feedback on financial and program reports in 2012?



If you answered 'Yes, but feedback was not helpful,' please explain.

- "Our [finances] are in good standing- appears that they are looking for something to report on!"
- "Feedback was confusing, lacked clarity and contained mistakes."
- "The feedback given by UNHCR is basically only to highlight wrongs, errors and mistakes – no constructive feedback or discussions at all."

If one or more of your projects was closed and did not continue in 2013, how much notice were you given to close the project after a final decision had been made?



Sample explanations for ‘other’ responses

- “This was not a mistake at all on UNHCR's part--they included us in all negotiations and it was a mutual decision to end the project in the last month of the project. This was a smooth, inclusive experience that was much appreciated by our team.”
- “Projects not closed but Staff posts [were] taken and no prior notice given.”
- “One project was closed in April 2013 despite funding being promised in writing for the full 12 months.”
- “Project ended as scheduled and it was agreed a new project would begin in January 2013, but this is still "in the works", owing to delays on the part of UNHCR.”

What aspects of your UNHCR-NGO partnership reflect good partnership practices?

- "The UNHCR partner is always available even for ad hoc meetings. This shows us the interest UNHCR has to well collaborate with us… Last year UNHCR invested a lot in order to boost the capacities of our national staff."
- "Opportunity to discuss daily problems with an open discussion attitude."
- "In general, we are treated as equal partners and are respected for our advice and input."
- "Synergies with other projects from other donors are maximized in agreement and with the support of the UNHCR."
- "Guidance by UNCHR team in financial matters, involvement and support in procurement process for transparency reflect good partnership practices."

What aspects of your UNHCR-NGO partnership reflect good partnership practices?

- “Good dialogue at the beginning of the design phase.”
- “All the statements about the programmes have been decided and developed in common agreement and in a transparent way on both parties.”
- “Most of the needs of beneficiaries are addressed in a timely manner.”
- “Some UNHCR staff in the field sites were collaborative and helpful but this is personality based.”
- “Our willingness to understand UNHCR's difficulties and our willingness to forgive its weaknesses. Likewise, UNHCR's frequently stated in public appreciation for us--its long-standing implement partner.”

What aspects of your UNHCR-NGO partnership reflect good partnership practices?

- “Open Information sharing, central coordination of activities within the camps and other benefits such as World Vision staff benefiting from UNHCR security training.”
- “Recognition of efforts and the work done by operational partners.”
- “UNHCR work together with their implementing partners/collaborating as a team and understanding of the challenges facing implementing partners, information-sharing and consultation.”
- “The UNHCR staff are supportive with implementation issues, though there is a disconnect between the field and head offices.”
- “Clear understanding of the shared goals, objectives, strategies, timeline, roles, and responsibilities.”

What aspects of your UNHCR-NGO partnership should be improved, and how?

- “Not much interest and monitoring has been shown in what and how we do our projects within the camps/settlements of Uganda from the UNHCR side. I would have appreciated an initiative on communication between partner to partner and not only engage all other stakeholders as a collective group to communicate to.”
- “The negotiation process needs to be improved and the donor office needs to understand the field reality. Also, if a budget cut needs to be incurred, we suggest that it should not be on the salary and benefits of staff.”
- “To be accepted as partner. More reliability. More accuracy.”
- “Would like more information in advanced in a consistent manner.”

What aspects of your UNHCR-NGO partnership should be improved, and how?

- “UNHCR should do a better job of sticking to agreed upon frameworks.”
- “Planning activities and budget together, instead of applying top-down approach. UNHCR should apply more of a 'partnership approach' rather than treating NGOs as contractors.”
- “It is recommended UNHCR seeks more active input from all partners in developing Country Operational plans. That will create more ownership and further strengthen partnerships.”
- “Coordination by UNHCR between the field office and head office would have improved coordination immensely. Also, more timely feedback from UNHCR field level and country level staff would have lessened delays.”

What aspects of your UNHCR-NGO partnership should be improved, and how?

- “Holding periodic meeting with HCR team would be beneficial to share information, update progress and also strengthen the partnership.”
- “Significant financial delays and lack of transparency led to internal (and personal) conflict amongst the organizations.”
- “It would be good if UNHCR could keep the partners updated on the status of the project proposals.”
- “Clearer and quicker decisions about the non-continuation for funding or reduction in budgets. Funding and agreements being annual and predictable rather than four month budgets which make it very difficult to manage. Feedback on reports would be appreciated.”

Status Update

Fatima Sherif-Nor, UNHCR

Welcome and thank you

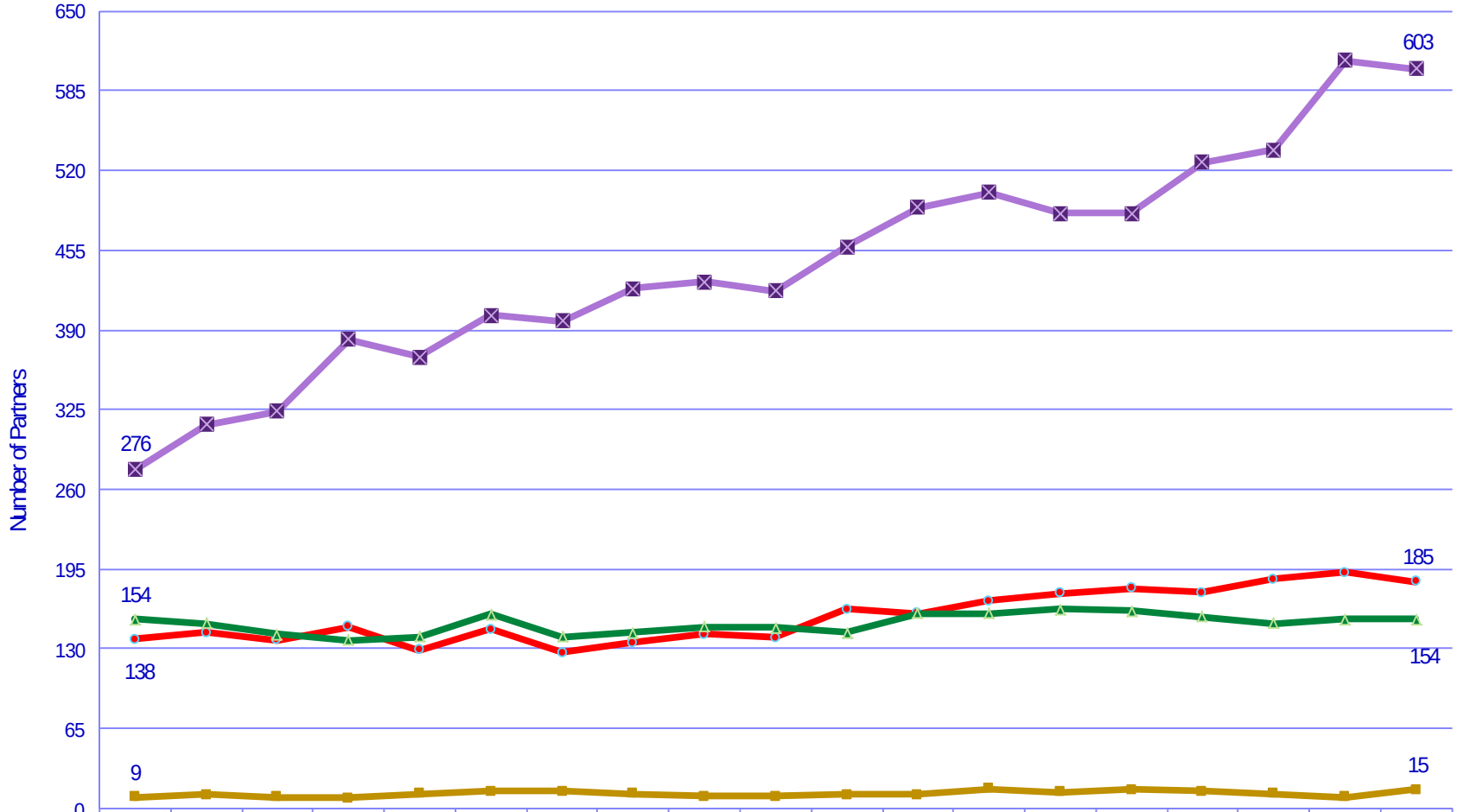
Trend of the Partnership

- Most essential
- Strategic significance
- Presence
- Growing in number and size
- Rainbow and rich

1 family torn apart by war is too many.

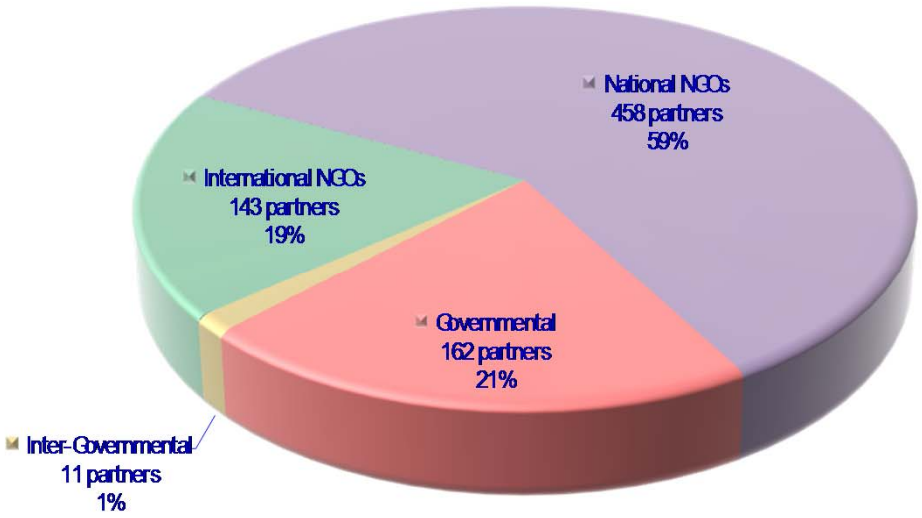
UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Number of UNHCR Partners by category
1994 - 2012

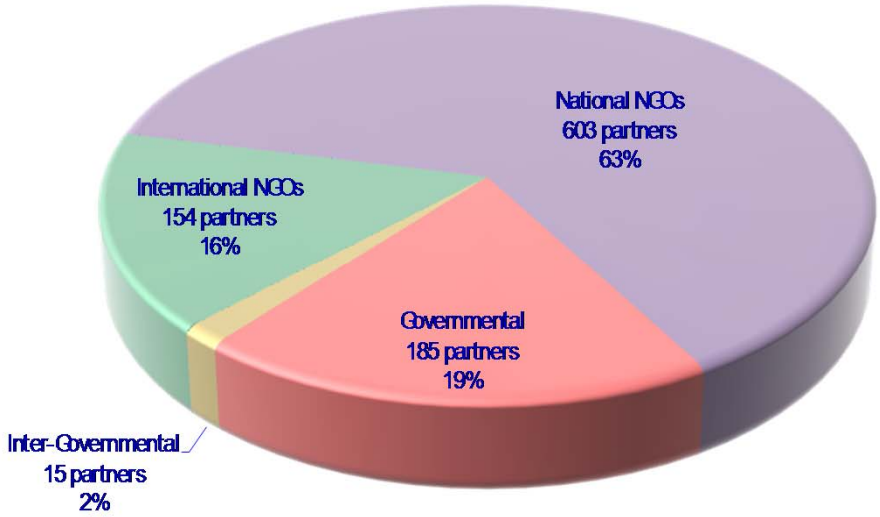


	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Governmental	138	143	137	148	129	146	127	135	142	139	162	159	169	175	179	176	187	192	185
Inter-Governmental	9	11	9	8	12	14	14	12	10	10	11	11	16	13	15	14	12	9	15
International NGOs	154	151	142	137	140	158	140	143	148	147	143	159	159	162	161	156	151	154	154
National NGOs	276	313	324	382	368	402	397	424	429	422	458	490	502	485	485	527	537	610	603

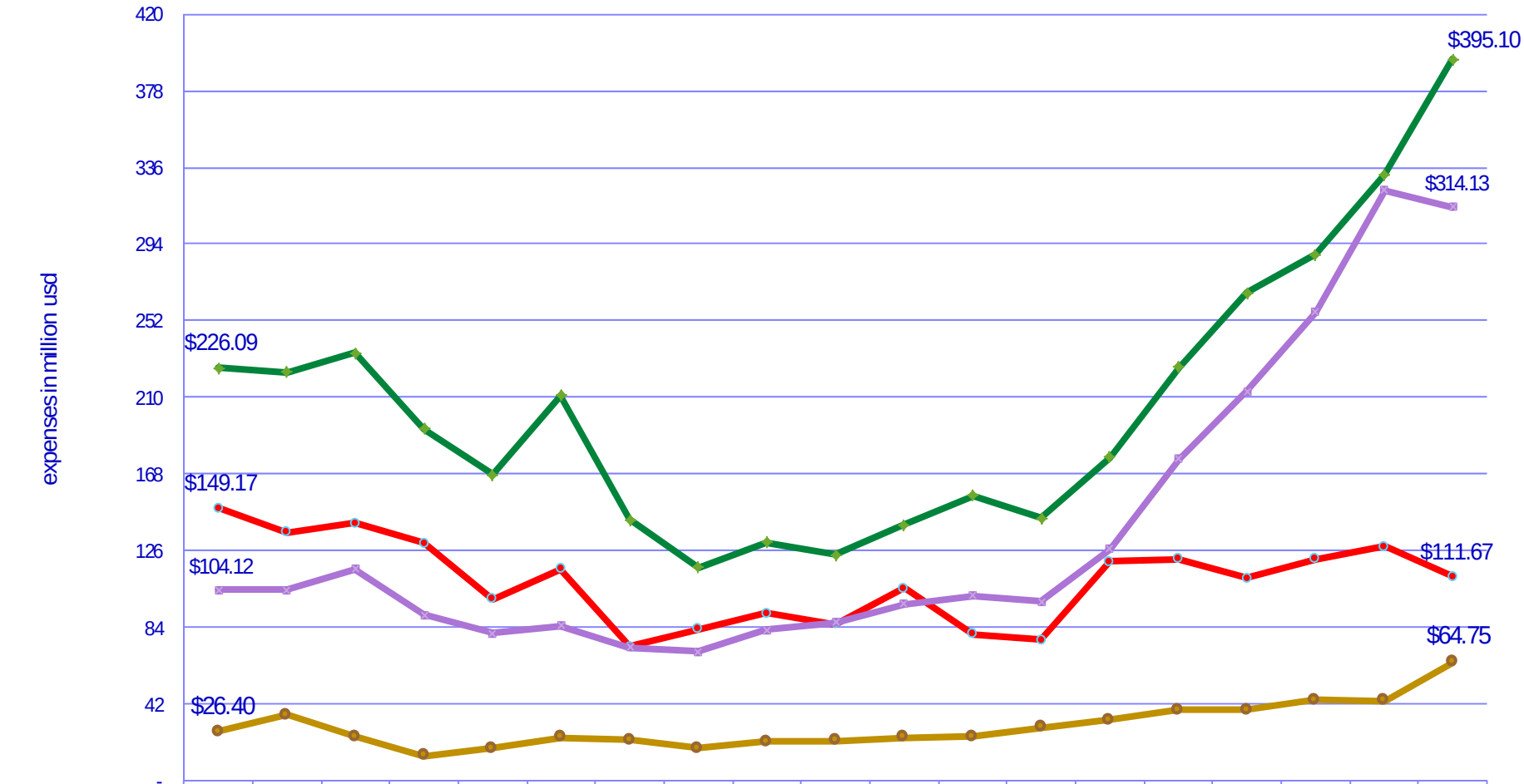
UNHCR signed 1183 agreements with 774 partners in 2004



UNHCR signed 1497 agreements with 957 partners in 2012

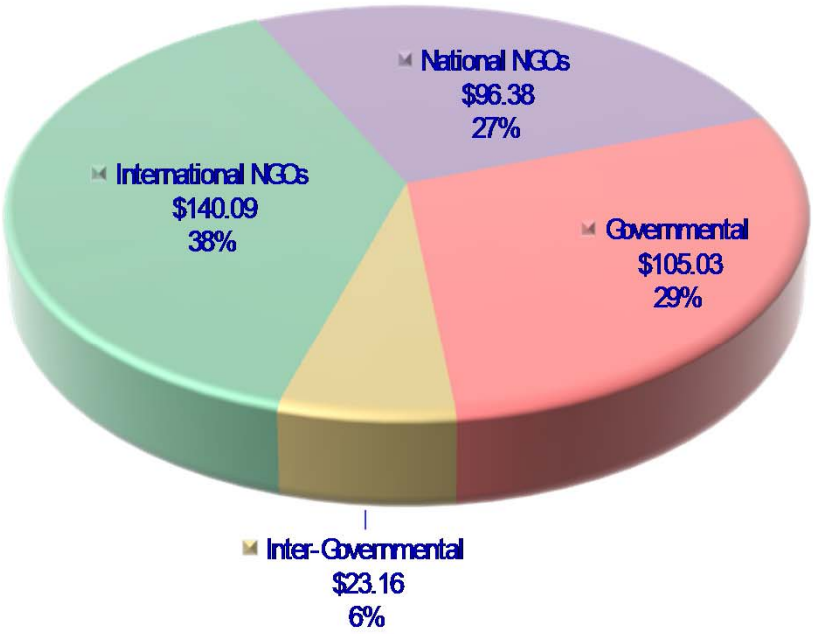


UNHCR expenses through Partners
1994 - 2012 in million USD

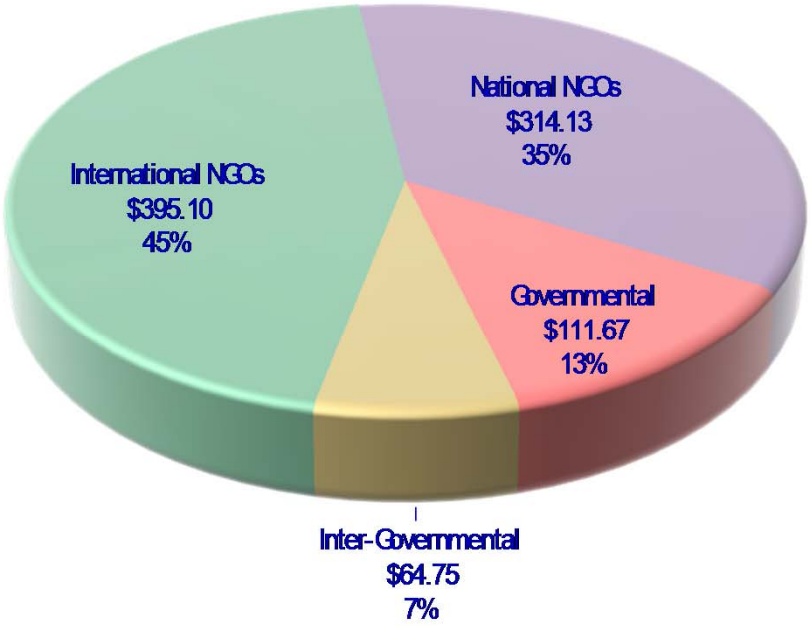


	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Governmental	$149.17	$135.74	$141.06	$129.81	$99.22	$115.81	$73.35	$82.66	$91.61	$85.47	$105.03	$80.02	$76.74	$119.91	$121.44	$110.80	$121.05	$128.29	$111.67
Inter-Governmental	$26.40	$35.93	$23.70	$13.35	$17.39	$23.18	$21.89	$17.42	$21.19	$21.75	$23.16	$23.98	$28.77	$33.17	$38.53	$38.52	$43.98	$43.32	$64.75
International NGOs	$226.09	$223.58	$234.18	$192.45	$167.61	$211.05	$142.87	$116.63	$130.39	$123.70	$140.09	$155.90	$143.56	$177.24	$226.54	$267.33	$288.33	$331.97	$395.10
National NGOs	$104.12	$104.14	$115.90	$90.54	$80.35	$84.81	$72.93	$70.53	$82.24	$86.36	$96.38	$101.07	$98.05	$126.61	$176.36	$213.11	$256.64	$323.44	$314.13

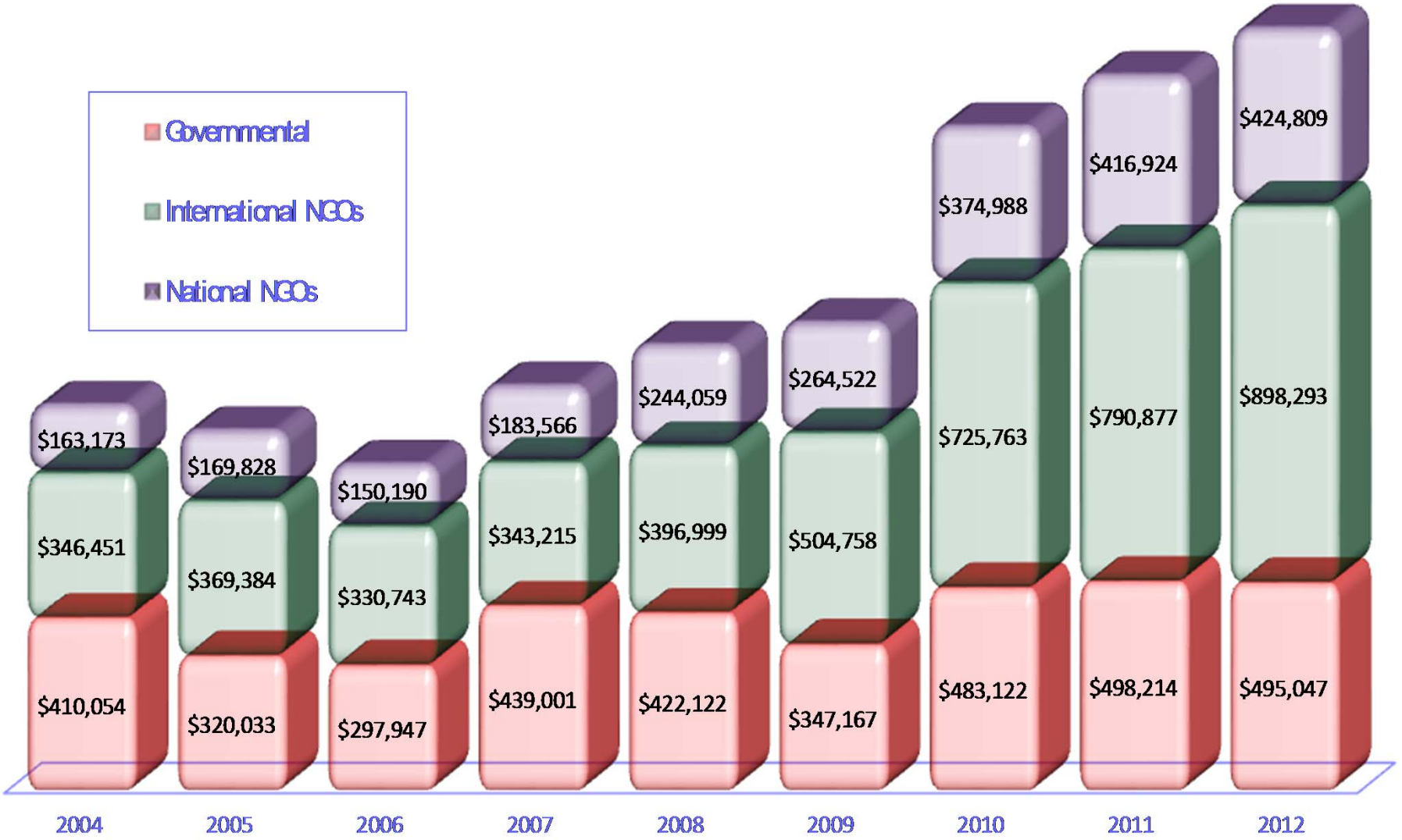
UNHCR expenses in 2004
365 million US$ through 774 partners



UNHCR expenses in 2012
US$ 885 million through 957 Partners



Average value of projects 2004-2012



Status update on the Framework

- Review and systematic improvements - multifaceted approach
- Selection and retention policy and guidance (Steven)
- Bipartite project partnership agreements (later)
- Joint monitoring (Zainab)
- Project Audit (shift to risk-based)
- Procurement
- Capacity development

1 family torn apart by war is too many.

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Partner Portal

Partner Profile

- Self introduction and maintenance
- Takes into account the difference between entities that work in multiple countries versus entities working in one country

Accessibility and administration

- Partners have access to only their own information
- Partners have ability to self-manage their own user access

Calls for Expression of Interest

- Viewable by all to encourage opportunity to respond by all partners interested by submitting concept notes in response to UNHCR call
- Partners have ability to submit and solicited concept note to UNHCR for innovative project ideas
- Flexibility

Hub for Information

1 family torn apart by war is too many.

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

Thank you

Field Reference Group Efforts

Selection and Retention of Partners for Undertaking Project Agreements

Steven Muncy, Executive Director
Community and Family Services International

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Field Reference Group Participation

- Half UNHCR, half NGOs (Partners of UNHCR)
- Mix of NGOs (size, age, location, etc.)
- Field oriented/focused individuals
- Mix of little to many years experience as Staff Member of UNHCR or partner of UNHCR
- Various levels within organization (both UNHCR and NGOs)
- Willingness to devote time/energy/resources to this participatory development process over time

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Recommendations of NGO Participants in Field Reference Group

- **Principles of Partnership** should inform all efforts
- Invite networks of NGOs (e.g., ICVA, Interaction, regional groupings, etc.) to participate in the overall implementing partnership enhancement process, enabling broader representation as well as additional input
- Recommendations accepted by UNHCR, with the latter including the conduct of Network Organization Workshops

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Consultation Process

- Discussions about selection/retention in the FRG workshops were open, frank, and generally constructive
- Drafts that emerged before/during/after workshops were routed for comments and revised
- Revised documents were then posted/widely distributed **for comment** before finalization
- Proposed selection/retention process and tools were piloted by UNHCR in 20 countries from late 2012 and surveyed in April 2013—albeit **without a mechanism for obtaining feedback from partners**
- Guidance Note for selection and retention is considered **essentially finished** with a commitment to obtain/track feedback over the next two years

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Objectives of Selection/Retention Process

- Due diligence and transparent process to mitigate operational and reputational risks
- Meet project requirements in the context of the operating environment
- Build on partnership principles and complementary advantages (select "**most suitable**"/"**best fit**" **partner**")
- Demonstrate transparency, objectivity, and accountability
- Demonstrate sound stewardship of funding

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Criteria for Selection by UNHCR

- Sector expertise and experience
- Project management capacities
- Local experience, presence, and community relations
- Contribution of resources (financial or in-kind)
- Security risk management
- Cost effectiveness
- Experience working with UNHCR
- Unique advantage/added value

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Procedure for Selection

- NGOs register on UNHCR Partner Portal **(Partner Profile)**
- Ideally, **NGOs participate in Country Operations Planning**
- UNHCR country offices establish "Implementing Partnership Management Committee" (IPMC)
- Expression of Interest (EOI) for two year programme period
    - UNHCR initiated-call for EOI
    - **Partner initiated**
- **Concept Note ("unique advantage"/"added value")**
- Review and decision by the Committee, followed by proposal preparation for first year of implementation
- Feedback to all Partners who submitted a Concept Note
- Complaints mechanism

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Key Elements of Concept Note

- Description of unique advantage/value added of Partner
- Project Goals and Envisaged Outcomes
- Methodology and Approach
- Resources (required from UNHCR as well as to be contributed—financial and/or in-kind)
- Technical Capacity
- Expectations of Partner of UNHCR
- Another other relevant information

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Expected Timeline for Partner Selection*

- Mar/Apr — Assessment and Planning (ideal)
- Jul/Aug — Country Operations Plan (COP) development, following Mid-Year Review
- Sep/Oct — Decisions announced as part of Resource Allocation
- Summary — Maximum of Three Months from Call for Expressions of Interest

*** Provision made for situations in which process cannot be completed during this time frame (e.g., onset of emergencies, security concerns)**

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Procedures for Retention

- Assessment of Partner's performance, operation continues and funds available for year two of implementation
- After two implementation cycles, IPMC must undertake a review to determine whether it is in the best interest of the operation to retain selected Partner for an additional two implementation cycles
- Complete (open and wide) selection process must be undertaken by UNHCR no less frequently than every four years

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Factors Considered for Retention Decisions

- Performance of the Partner
- Impact on resources and the persons of concern
- Risk of loss of UNHCR's contribution to the capacity development of the Partner
- **Contribution of Partner (financial or in-kind)**
- Availability of alternative partners

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Expected Timeline for Retention Decisions

- Mar/Apr — Assessment and Planning (ideal)
- Jul/Aug — Country Operations Plan (COP) development, following Mid-Year Review
- Sep/Oct — Decisions announced as part of Resource Allocation

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Tools/Templates

- Terms of Reference for the Implementing Partnership Management Committee
- UNHCR Call for Expression of Interest Template
- Concept Note to be Submitted by Partner Template
- Partner Declarations Form
- UNHCR Partner Selection Decision Form
- UNHCR Decision for Retention Form

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Capacity Development Issues

- Informing/training UNHCR and Partner Staff Members on the new Selection/Retention Processes
- **UNHCR expectation that Partners are "registered" by/with National authorities**
- Internet access limitations
- **Public information/"marketing" capacities for some Partners wishing to submit Concept Notes**
- **Partner contributions (financial/in-kind)**
- **Performance monitoring and evaluation**
- Processes for tracking/refining/improving the Selection/Retention Processes over the next two years

CFSI
Rebuilding Lives
Community and Family Services International

Project Partnership Agreement

Review of existing agreements

- Need for review
- Agreements with UN agencies and governments being undertaken separately
- Consultative process undertaken
- Research of other UN and like agency agreements
- Research of leading practices in agreement management

Agreement – striking a balance

- Legally Binding +
- Review seeks to address:
  - Enhanced accountability
  - Balance mutual partnership
  - Higher ethical standards
  - Operational requirements
- Scope and the constraints of rules and regulations
- Views and prospective (Partners/UNHCR)
- Streamlining size and frequency ☹

Draft agreement – striking a balance

- Mutual partnership (embedding PoP throughout)
- Performance and competencies
- Institutionalizing consultations and joint reviews
- Clarity and transparency
- Addressing risks and heightened accountability
- Higher ethical standards and redlines
- Acknowledgement and visibility for both parties
- Participation of the Intended Population
- Information and Personal Data Protection

1 family torn apart by war
is too many.

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Draft project agreement – next steps

- Feedback on draft project agreement can be sent to epartners@unhcr.org
    - Deadline 15 July 2013
    - Draft available on the UNHCR Annual Consultation website
- UNHCR Legal Advisory Service for review and comment
- UNHCR senior management approval
- Knowledge transfer to UNHCR and Partners during Fall 2013
- Use of revised Project Agreements for 2014 projects

1 family torn apart by war is too many.

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Thank you

Please send feedback to epartners@unhcr.org

JOINT MONITORING OF UNHCR-NGO PROJECTS

Presented By:

Ms. Zainab Raza Jafri

SHARP - Society for Human Rights and Prisoners' Aid

Annual UNHCR NGO Consultation, Geneva June 2013

Key Contents of the Presentation

- Introduction/ Background
- Key Objectives of Joint Monitoring
- Key Outputs of Joint Monitoring
- Scope of Joint Monitoring
- Methodology & Approach
- Team Composition & Frequency
- Tools/ Materials/ Resources

Introduction/ Background

- Important & Essential Practice
- Initiative of Field Reference Group
- Incorporates Various Perspective & Expertise
- Build ownership and commitment for follow up actions and resolutions
- Strengthens collective ownership and shared responsibility
- Support UNHCR Offices and partners when planning and conducting joint monitoring activities.

Key Objectives

- To ensure efficiency and effectiveness
- To impact on key project parameters
- To address weaknesses as well as promotion of best practices and strengths
- To involve participation of persons of concern
- To strengthen project risk management

Key Outputs

- Verification, validation, documentation and dissemination of outcomes of project
- Provision of feedback
- Provision of recommendations
- Strengthening collective ownership of project/programme
- Sharing of best practices

Scope of Joint Monitoring

- The multidisciplinary nature of Joint Monitoring
- Covering of all high impact interventions
- Utilize the core parameters in Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM)
- Focus on the specific project objectives and strategies as outlined in the Project Agreement

Methodology & Approach

- All key parties to the Project Agreement should be well informed
- Well-structured check list
- Balance between monitoring processes and results
- All the relevant primary sources of information are consolidated and availed
- Include both review and analysis of relevant reports
- Recognized community/beneficiary leadership structures are actively engaged
- Convenience of time for all parties
- Necessary Precautions

Team Composition & Frequency

- Inclusion of external expertise – Need based
- Representation of UNHCR - MFT
- Representation of IP(s) Staff
- Representation of the Person of Concerns (PoCs)
- Representation of the host Government
- Twice a year is the recommended minimum frequency of joint monitoring for projects

TOOLS/MATERIALS/RESOURCES

- Complete monitoring plan
- Well-designed check list
- Adequate supplies and materials
- Thematically generated and up-to-date baseline information for each high impact intervention.

THANK YOU

Thank you

Please send feedback to epartners@unhcr.org