**LAUNCHING MULTI-YEAR AGREEMENTS**

UNHCR has introduced a new template for a Multi-Year Partnership Agreement (MYPA), as part of its 2017-2021 Strategic Directions and Grand Bargain commitments. In supporting the implementation of multi-year strategies, the intention is to support joint strategic programming, enhance efficiency, increase predictability, and facilitate attainment of longer-term outcomes.

Furthermore, in the spirit of the Grand Bargain and the World Humanitarian Summit, UNHCR is encouraging partners to enter MY partnerships, and donors to provide more multi-year funds.

This new Agreement may cover from 2 to 4 years, with the initial pilot stage being for a two-year period. Benefits of the multi-year programming include vast improvements in efficiency, stability and predictability, and improved quality of protection and other services which have a positive impact on refugees and persons of concern, and their livelihoods.

However, while UNHCR is making it both possible and preferable to sign multi-year agreements, there is at present a major dissonance between multi-year planning and multi-year funding. Commitments made under the Grand Bargain notwithstanding, multi-year funding from donors remains low, heavily earmarked and has not grown perceptibly in the past three years. UNHCR believes that it is worthwhile entering into MY agreements for better planning and stability purposes, but we should be aware that multi-year agreements do not automatically translate into multi-year funding. Currently, the funding is too minimal and too tightly earmarked.

In 2018, of the US$ 3.2 billion voluntary contributions that UNHCR received, only 2 per cent came from multi-year funding (funding longer than 2 years). The majority of MY funding so far, 51%, came earmarked for specific operations, mainly for the Afghan situation, Ethiopia and Colombia. Only 36% of MY funding received so far in 2018 is unearmarked.

**In 2017**, of the US$ 3.9 billion voluntary contributions that UNHCR received, some **12% came from multi-year funding**. The majority, **52%,** **came earmarked for specific operations** within the Syria situation. Only 1.4% of the total voluntary contributions came in unearmarked and in multi-year form. *The striking contrast between 2017 and 2018 further underscores the unpredictability of MY funding.*

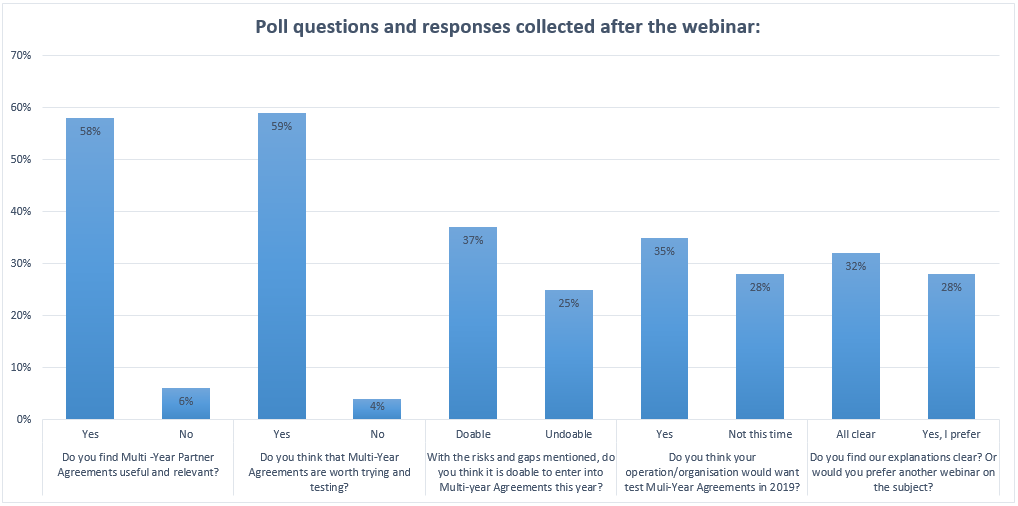
UNHCR is encouraging both our own offices and our NGO partners to enter into multi-year agreements. In this regard, UNHCR (led by DFAM/IPMS and in collaboration with DPSM, DRS, and GLC) have made efforts, including:

* Templates for MY Partnership Agreements have been developed and installed in MSRP for easy use by all operations without resorting to Headquarters.
* A step-by-step **Quick Start-up Guide and other informative materials** have also been made available in the [UNHCR intranet](https://intranet.unhcr.org/en/support-services/implementing-partnerships/partnership-agreements.html) and in the UN Partner Portal [Resource Library](https://unpartnerportalcso.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360020656373-Multi-year-Partnership-Agreement-package).
* A series of webinars have been organized featuring MY agreements, start-up guidance, and discussions on actionable plans for implementing the new approach, in which over 400 staff from UNHCR and partners, including major partners such as NRC, DRC, IRC, and SCI have participated.
* Although MY agreements were initially planned to be implemented in the 22 countries (*Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, Brazil, Algeria, Chad, Niger, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Ghana, Cameroon, Ukraine, Regional Office Northern Europe, Djibouti, Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Malawi*) with solutions capital strategies, it has been expanded to **all operations and partners that have solid multi-year plans.**
* Operations have been offered and encouraged to adopt MY agreements and convert the annual agreement with a plan to support the course of action.
* Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) from queries raised during the Webinar discussions are being formulated. Forums for sharing best practices have been established.

The webinars (held on 1, 2, 25 and 26 April, 2019) were excellent vehicles for discussing and disseminating information on the MY agreements, for receiving numerous queries on aspects of the new agreement, and in assisting in the development of the FAQs.

Reponses from the discussions showed that MY planning and partnership agreements are feasible, useful and worth the investment and trial. Continued efforts from both UNHCR and partners are needed for disseminating information, developing joint plans and entering MY agreements. Tentative action plans for undertaking the initiative, piloting, and converting the annual agreements have been discussed and outlined.

During April 2019, four webinars on this subject were held, of which 377 UNHCR and Partners staff had attended the full session. At the end of each session, instant feedback were collected. 179 attendees had responded as summarised below.



**Lists of Participants**

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**Adoption by Country Offices**

Several Offices have commenced discussions and negotiations with their respective teams and partners to identify the annual partnership agreements that could be converted into a Multiyear agreements. The following countries are first starters that have expressed interest to IPMS in taking concrete steps and converting several current annual agreements into multiyear agreements including: Kenya, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Colombia, Bangladesh, Georgia, Sweden, etc. Others are preparing for commencing with agreements in 2020.

**DFAM/DPSM**

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