

January 2025

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Survey

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# IMS Partnership Survey

# Executive Summary

The survey was sent to 115 partners and 49 responded, which equals a response rate of 43%. The response rate for the 2021 partnership survey was 46%. The rate of response is lower even though programme managers were engaged in follow-up, the deadline was extended, and reminders were sent to all partners. Also, the survey was translated into French and Arabic, which was expected to improve the response rate. Going forward, IMS will continue to address the low response rate to find ways to increase the number of partners responding. The profile of the respondents corresponds to the general profile of the partners and more or less to the geographic regions where IMS is present, although with a slightly lower response rate from partners in Africa. Despite the low response rate, **the sample remains representative**, and findings can provide input for further reflections and discussions.

## Positive findings

- ⊕ At a general level the partners have been very satisfied with the IMS partnership, with an average rating on 4.57 out of 5, and an impressive 74% gave a 5/5 satisfaction rating.

## Areas of concern

- ⓘ In the surveys conducted in 2020 and 2022, several partners expressed dissatisfaction with IMS' financial and administrative procedures. There has been an improvement in this area, as fewer partners reported dissatisfaction and some provided positive feedback regarding these procedures. Nevertheless, it remains a continued area of attention to ensure that the financial and administrative procedures are adequate and easy for partners to follow.

### The comments further support the partners' appreciation of their partnership with IMS.

*"The team is very flexible and provide a clear guidance when needed."*

*"We have a lot of respect for the way IMS is updated on context and work with us as true partners."*

*"Our communication with IMS is excellent. The program manager at IMS has a very good understanding of the current local situation"*

*"IMS is very responsive, rigorous and sharp in responding to partners' concerns."*

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# 1. Background

The IMS annual partnership survey has been tailored to the needs and profile of IMS, and it draws on several well-known international standard surveys such as the Keystone Partnership Survey<sup>1</sup>, and the Danida partnerships survey.

**The IMS Partnership Survey will provide feedback and documentation on:**

- Partnership relations
- Partner satisfaction with capacity development
- The effect/results of capacity development
- Input on priorities and emerging issues from partners

The survey entails an open section to capture emerging issues, which vary from year to year. In the 2024, the focus was on **localisation** aiming to get ideas and input on ways of further involving partners in programme design, strategies and

decision-making ensuring that they are in the driving seat.

The survey was conducted from mid-April to the end of May 2024. The responses were anonymous. The main focal point for the cooperation with IMS within the partner organisation was asked to fill out the survey. If needed and time allowed, the respondents were asked to gather information from colleagues within their organisation.

51% self-identified as men, 47% as women and 2% as neither man or woman. 14% were between 25-34 years old, 70% of respondents were between 35-54 years old and 12% were over 54 years old.

1: <https://keystoneaccountability.org/kps/>

## 2. IMS partners

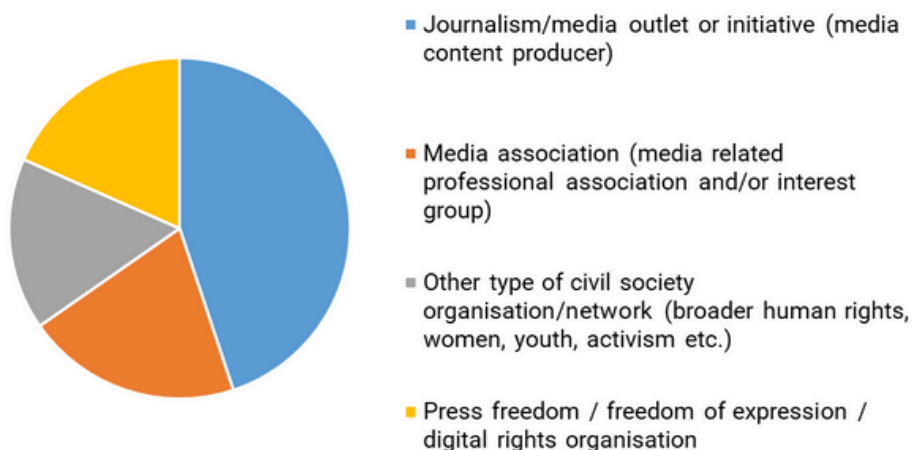
### - *Who are they? And what do they do?*

Close to 80% of partners see media law, freedom of expression, and rights-based advocacy as either their main area of work or as part of what they do, whereas only nine partners specifically categorised themselves as press freedom/freedom of expression organisations. Among the respondents, 15 partners who have a primary focus on journalism and content production also engage in media law, freedom of expression, and rights-based advocacy. This could point to partners seeing good journalism in a context of advocacy

Most of the IMS partners participating in this survey are public interest producers, 22 partners describe themselves as media outlets or documentary film producers (please see figure 1).

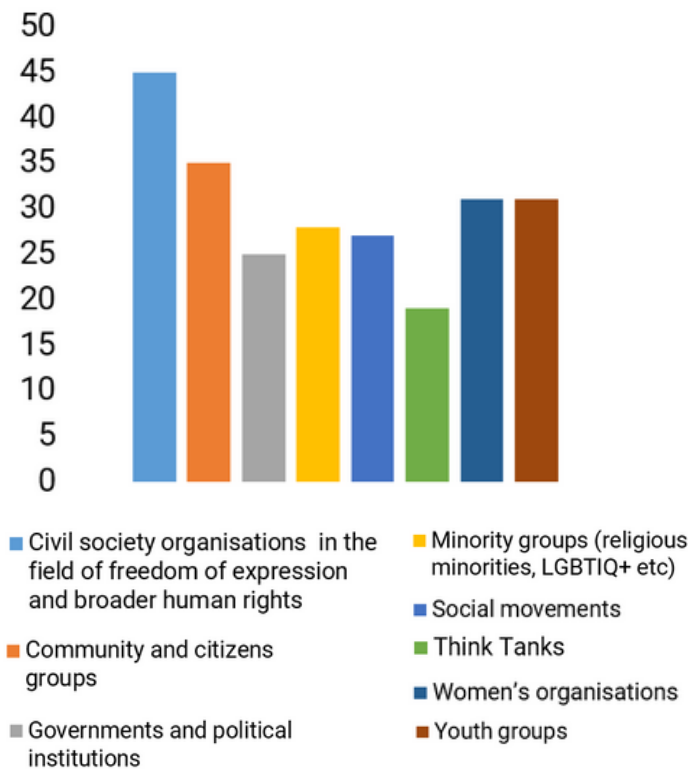
and freedom of expression, where the IMS institutional strategy has a conceptual understanding of freedom of expression and advocacy more closely linked with policy work.

One third of partners identify safety as their main area of work, and another third indicated that they also focus on safety as part of their work. This represents a significant increase from the 2022 survey, where 20% of partners indicated that safety was their main area of work. This could indicate that partners have **scaled up their focus on safety**, potentially as a response to the increasingly challenging contexts in which they operate. However, 14 out of the 17 partners who identify themselves as journalism/media outlets or initiatives (media content producers) state that safety is not part of what they do. It is important to be mindful that the division into areas of work can show some patterns, but in reality, content production, safety, freedom of expression, and advocacy work are interlinked and overlapping.



**Fig. 1: How would you define your organization?**

**Fig 2: Types of organisations partners are collaborating with**



The IMS strategy 2020-2023 has a strong focus on cooperation and coalition building. Figure 2 shows a high level of cooperation with a wide range of organisations and groups.

The type of organisations that most partners are cooperating with are civil society organisations in the field of freedom of expression and broader human rights; Community and citizens groups; Women's organisations and youth groups. IMS has a strong focus on gender, so it is worth noting that 30 out of the 49 respondents are cooperating with women's organisations. The number of partners that are cooperating with youth is 30 out of 49 partners, or 61%, compared to 52% in the 2022 survey.

The largest number of respondents have the majority of their work taking place in the **MENA region** as seen in figure 3.



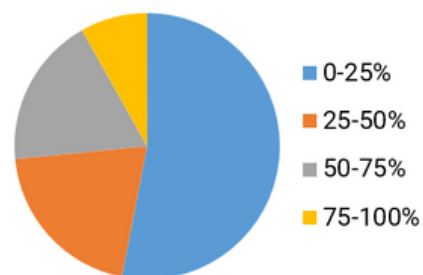
**Fig 3: Where are IMS partners located?**

Figures 4 and 5 show that close to a quarter of the partners have respectively an estimated annual budget of \$ 50,000-100,000; \$ 100,000-200,000; \$ 200,000-500,000 and over \$ 500,000. A smaller number of partners have a budget of less than \$ 50,000. More than half of the partners get less than 25% of their income from IMS and only 8% of the partners get more than 75% of their annual income from IMS.

This indicates that the **partners are not strongly dependent on IMS funding**. However, more than half of the partners that IMS has been cooperating with for more than seven years, receive more than 50% of their funding from IMS.

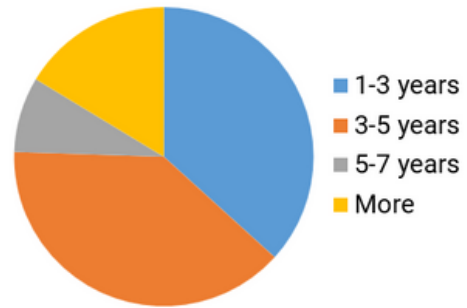


**Fig. 4: What is your total income?**



**Fig. 5: How much of your income comes from IMS?**

Three quarters of the partners have been working with IMS for less than 5 years. one quarter of the partners have been cooperating with IMS for more than 5 years. The majority of the new partners are from Eastern Europe, where IMS also has broadened its engagement during the last 2-3 years. Half of the partners that IMS has been cooperating with for more than 5 years are from the MENA region.



**Fig. 6: How long have you worked with IMS?**

## 3. Partnership and cooperation

Partners are generally very pleased with their partnership with IMS, giving an average satisfaction rating of **4.57 out of 5**.



One partner rated 1 out of 5; and **an impressive 74% gave a 5 out of 5 satisfaction rating** (35 out of 49 partners). The rating has seen a slight increase since the partnership survey conducted in 2022, in which the satisfaction rating was 4.47.

### 3.1 Contractual, administrative and financial procedures

Figure 7 show that most of the respondents are satisfied with IMS's contractual, administrative, reporting, and financial procedures. However, regarding the statement that "Support (including funding) is timely and arrives as agreed," a number of partners express dissatisfaction, with 12% either strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with the statement. This is a higher percentage than in the 2022 survey.

The majority of the partners expressing dissatisfaction either receive a large percentage of their funding from IMS or, in actual figures, receive a large amount. For these partners, receiving funds late can be especially acute and can undermine their ability to retain staff, maintain their operations, and deliver results. The timely disbursement of funds is a prerequisite for a healthy partnership.

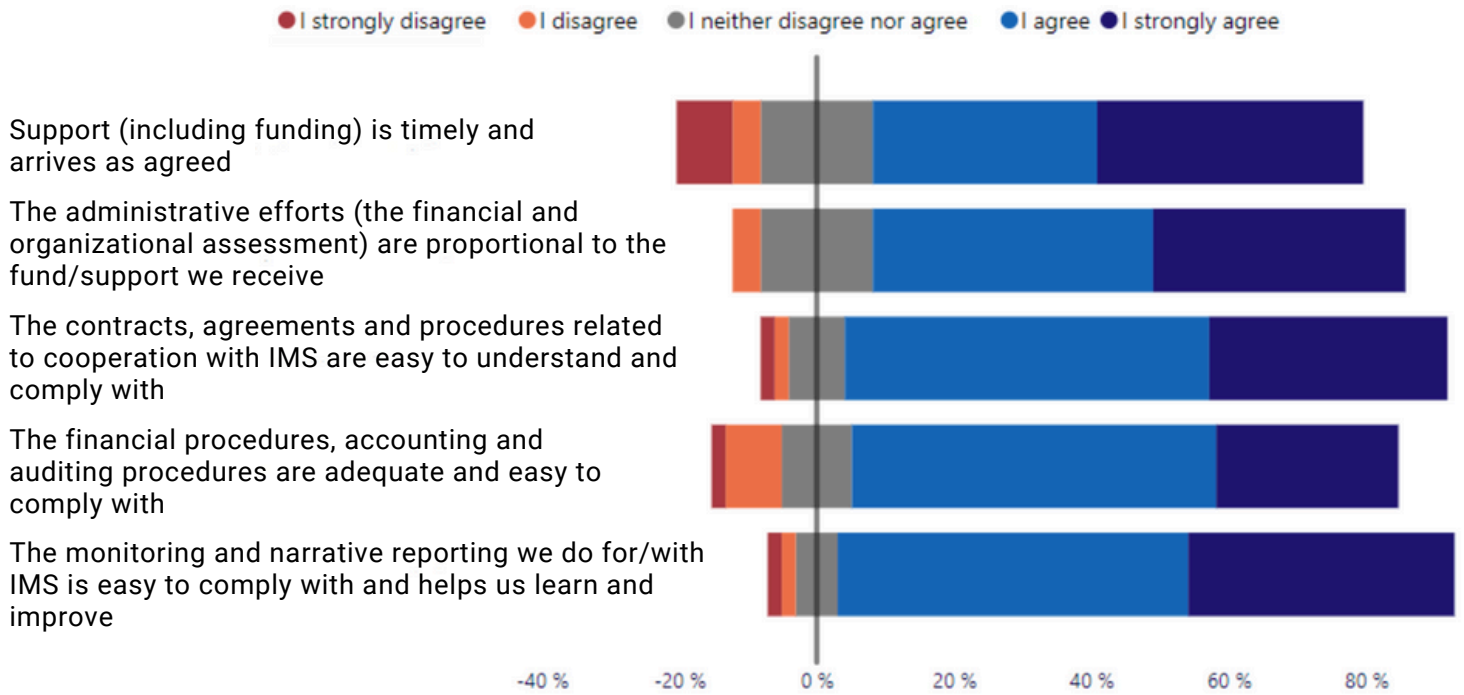
A total of 18% of the partners (nine partners) expressed criticism of one or more of the administrative and financial topics listed below. These partners are from various regions, with the fewest from Eastern Europe. Looking at the partnership survey over the years, administration and financial issues are the areas where the highest number of partners express dissatisfaction and have critical remarks. However, compared to the 2022 survey, there are fewer partners in the 2024 survey that disagree or strongly disagree with the statement: "the administrative efforts (the financial and organisational assessment) are proportional to the fund/support we receive."

The comments further support the appreciation by the partners of their partnership with IMS.

*„The collaboration with IMS has been open and easygoing. The expertise and dedication of the program team have significantly contributed to achieving our goals.“*

*„Working with IMS has been a good experience based on understanding, addressing imbalances and providing solutions to the difficulties facing the work.“*





**Fig. 7: Partners statements on contractual, administrative, and financial procedures**

There are some critical remarks from partners on administrative and financial procedures:

- *Administrative requirements have become increasingly burdensome over the years. The financial complexity of managing multiple back donors should be managed internally within IMS' financial department rather than pushing this onto partners who have a less resources.*
- *IMS financial and administrative procedures should be revised and contextualized according to the local partners that IMS is working with*
- *Sometimes the communication with IMS regarding contracts and administration is very slow*

However, the number and the tone of the critical remarks on administrative and financial issues, are less critical than the previous years, and there are also positive remarks such as:

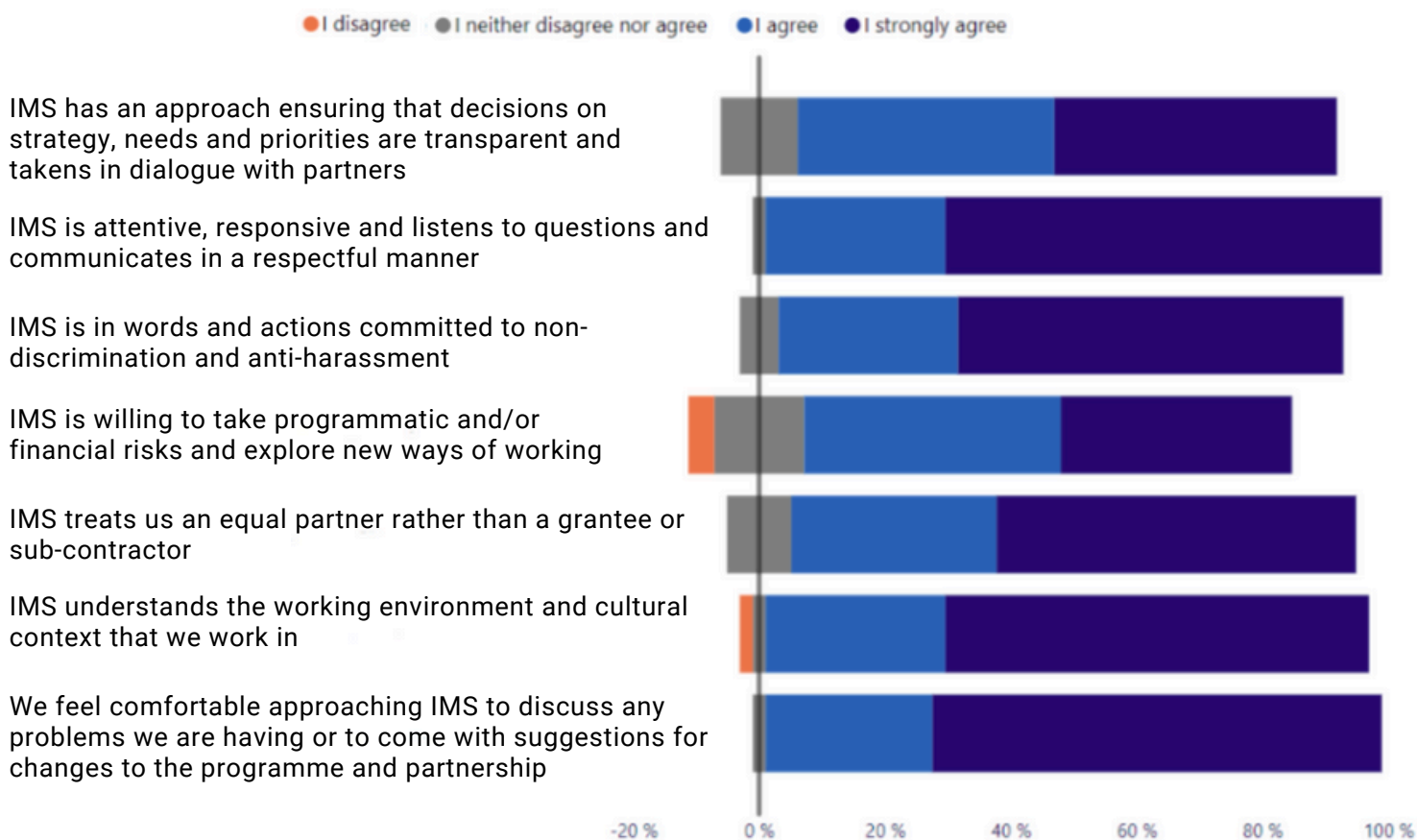
- The financial support is flexible for partners.
- The administrative and financial procedures are understandable and easy to implement.

2024 (49 respondents)						
The statements in this section cover the contractual, administrative, and financial procedures and financial and narrative reporting	I strongly agree	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I strongly disagree	Not relevant/I dont know
The administrative efforts (the financial and organisational assessment) are proportional to the fund/support we receive	37% (18 partners)	42% (20 partners)	17% (8 partners)	4% (2 partners)		1
The contracts, agreements and procedures related to cooperation with IMS are easy to understand and comply with	35% (17 partners)	53% (26)	8% (4)	2% (1)	2% (1)	1
Support (including funding) is timely and arrives as agree	39% (19)	33% (16)	16% (8)	4% (2)	8% (4)	4
The financial procedures, accounting and auditing procedures are adequate and easy to comply with	27% (13)	53% (26)	10% (5)	8% (4)	2% (1)	1
The monitoring and narrative reporting we do for/with IMS is easy to comply with and helps us learn and improve	39% (19)	51% (25)	6% (3)	2% (1)	2% (1)	1

2022 (93 respondents)						
The statements in this section cover the contractual, administrative, and financial procedures and financial and narrative reporting	I strongly agree	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I strongly disagree	Not relevant/I dont know
The administrative efforts (the financial and organisational assessment) are proportional to the fund/support we receive	41% (37)	47% (43)	3% (3)	6% (5)	3% (3)	2
The contracts, agreements and procedures related to cooperation with IMS are easy to understand and comply with	46% (43)	49% (45)		3% (3)	2% (2)	
Support (including funding) is timely and arrives as agree	38% (35)	43% (40)	10% (9)	7% (6)	2% (2)	1
The financial procedures, accounting and auditing procedures are adequate and easy to comply with	32% (29)	47% (42)	12% (11)	7% (6)	2% (2)	3
The monitoring and narrative reporting we do for/with IMS is easy to comply with and helps us learn and improve	44% (39)	47% (42)	8% (7)	1% (1)		4

**Table 1 and 2: Partners statements on contractual, administrative, and financial procedures compared accross years**

## 3.2 Communication, understanding of context and responsiveness



**Fig. 8: Partners statement on IMS’ communication and responsiveness**

The survey responses were **very positive regarding communication and responsiveness**, with no partners disagreeing on five out of the seven statements. On the two statements that are especially important to IMS, namely *“IMS is in words and actions committed to non-discrimination and anti-harassment”* and *“IMS treats us as an equal partner rather than a grantee or sub-contractor”*, 90% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree, and no partners disagree with the statements. The two statements are closely related to the IMS partnership policy, the gender equality policy, and localisation, and it is thus of key importance that partners respond positively to this. There are several statements from partners that support these findings, indicating that **partners feel IMS understands the context in which they work, communicates in a respectful manner, and that the partnership is perceived as equal**. 4% (or 2 partners) disagree with the statement that *“IMS is willing to take programmatic and/or financial risks and explore new ways of working.”*

The comments from the partners, point to smooth communication and good partnerships:

- *“The collaboration with IMS has been open and easygoing.”*
- *“IMS keeps open communication through different communication channels, the team is very flexible and provide a clear guidance when needed.”*
- *“Our communication with IMS is excellent. The programme manager at IMS has a very good understanding of the current local situation and that helps with communication.”*

# 4. Capacity development

## 4.1 Effect and themes

Below is an overview of the responses on the effect of the capacity development in the 2022 survey and the 2024 survey:

How would you rate the effect of the capacity development provided by IMS in 2023?	2024				2022			
	Positive	Moderate effect	Limited effect	Didn't receive this kind of support	Positive	Moderate effect	Limited effect	Didn't receive this kind of support
Media content	56% (15)	37% (10)	7% (2)	22	76% (42)	20% (11)	4% (2)	38
Media viability (Business models, income generation, etc.)	36% (10)	39% (11)	25% (7)	21	50% (22)	25% (11)	25% (11)	49
Understanding and growing audiences	50% (14)	39% (11)	11% (3)	21	57% (31)	26% (14)	17% (9)	39
Safety	33% (10)	47% (14)	20% (6)	19	65% (33)	24% (12)	1% (5)	43
Advocacy	44% (13)	36% (11)	20% (6)	19	55% (27)	27% (13)	18% (9)	44
Organisational development	64% (21)	30% (10)	6% (2)	16	63% (30)	23% (11)	14% (7)	45
Financial and administrative management	52% (19)	30% (11)	18% (7)	12	71% (37)	17% (9)	12% (6)	41
Gender equality	51% (20)	36% (14)	13% (5)	10	70% (38)	17% (9)	13% (7)	39

**Table 3: Partners assessment of the effect of the capacity development across years**

Capacity development has broadly been viewed by partners as having a positive effect, with the vast majority (between 75–94 %) seeing a positive or moderate effect from the capacity development. Comparing the previous surveys (2020 and 2022) with the 2024 survey, the percentages of partners seeing a moderate effect has increased, while the percentages seeing a positive effect has decreased.

The area where the highest number of partners saw a positive effect was in **organisational development**. This is a change from the earlier surveys, where support for organisational development was the area where the fewest partners saw a positive effect. The area where the highest percentage of partners see a limited effect from the capacity development relates to business viability.

Many partners are working in fragile states and in markets where an organisation's financial viability is difficult to maintain, where "seeing a positive effect" may not resonate with many partners. On the question related to sources of income, most partners saw an increase in income from international organisations and donors. This is mainly seen among partners from MENA and Eastern Europe. Partners saw a decrease in income from advertisements, whereas the sale of products saw a slight increase.

- ! Some comments point to potential improvements related to capacity development:  
*“The general capacity-building support we received was confined to establishing our organization and developing standard operating manuals. However, no further assistance was provided after the contract ended, hindering our organization's full functionality due to resource constraints.”*  
*“The time frame for the capacity building be longer according to the topic. The time to implement the knowledge we receiving from the consultant.”*  
*“The tools provided should be properly explained, and the analysis and discussion should be facilitated by the consultant to produce much more effective results.”*

An important aspect of localisation is understanding partners' needs and existing capacities, and ensuring that partners are involved in the design of the capacity development support. Close to 80% of IMS' partners feel that they have been involved in the design and implementation of the capacity development, and 90% feel that the capacity development being offered has corresponded to their needs and capacities. Furthermore, 73% of partners found that the time and resources they spent on capacity development were worth the effort/value for money.

Close to 75% of the partners replied to the open question: on *“What was the most useful knowledge, skill or tool you picked up during your partnership with IMS in 2023?”* The answers indicate that IMS has successfully tailored its support to the different partners by focusing on their specific needs and contexts, building on thorough research and needs assessments to ensure interventions were targeted and effective.

The most useful tools that partners picked up can be grouped in the following way:

- Tailored capacity development related to media content, such as journalism training for local elections, AI integration, and specific content development.
- Broader capacity development, such as enhanced skills in lobbying, and safety as well as research methodologies.
- Programme implementation support, organisational development, monitoring and evaluation, strategic planning and improved financial management (e.g., QuickBooks) as well as proposal writing.

Asked what the partners would choose if they could choose any type of capacity development, several partners mentioned: fundraising and financial sustainability; programme cycle management and MEL; various journalism skills and digital disruption; and how to engage with dominant tech companies. For example, one partner mentioned: *“Business development through proper savvy experts. Not capacity building but it would be beneficial if IMS has contacts with advocacy networks that can be activated when partners are targeted.”*

General comments on capacity development were both positive as well focus on what could be improved:

- *„We are extremely satisfied with the development support obtained. It's an experience we really appreciate.”*
- *„Media development interventions were thoroughly research-based, with needs assessments conducted before implementation to ensure targeted and effective interventions aligned with identified requirements and goals.”*

It is worth noting that there has been a **significant increase** in the number of partners reporting that they have received capacity development on gender, compared to the previous survey. Seven of the partners, who identify journalism and media content production as their main area of work, did not receive capacity development on any of the three topics related to media content, i.e., media content, media viability, and understanding and growing audiences. Four of these partners have been working with IMS for 1-3 years. It's important to stress that capacity development is needs-based and defined in dialogue with the partners, and thus not a prerequisite for any partner.

In this survey, IMS applied a very broad definition of capacity development beyond training and consultancy, including ongoing mentoring and dialogue. That the partners express a high general satisfaction with the partnership, the dialogue and engagement with IMS staff, could point to the questions directly on capacity development not fully reflecting the reality of the partnership. IMS will look further into this and adjust the survey questions.

## 4.2 Approach and design

	<b>Satisfied or very satisfied</b>	<b>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied or very dissatisfied</b>	<b>Didn't receive this support</b>
Dialogue and sparring with IMS programme and administrative staff	88% (38)	5% (2)	7% (3)	6
Mentoring/advice by thematic or technical experts (IMS advisers and/or external experts)	80% (31)	10% (4)	10% (2)	10
Training provided by IMS staff or consultants	78% (25)	19% (6)	3% (1)	17
Access to tools and knowledge products	65% (20)	26% (8)	9% (2)	18
Facilitation of exchanges and peer-to-peer cooperation with other partners	83% (29)	11% (4)	6% (2)	14
Inclusion in international networks, platforms	76% (26)	18% (6)	6% (1)	15

**Table 4: Partners satisfaction with the various approaches/ways of delivering the capacity development**

The questions in this section are to gain insight into the delivery of our capacity development. Proximity with the partners has been key to IMS' approach to partnerships and the primary avenue of engagement is through IMS' programme managers (PMs). This is well reflected in 88% of the partners being satisfied with the dialogue and discussions with IMS programme and administrative staff. Also worth noting is the **exchange** and **peer-to-peer cooperation**, with which 83% of the partners are satisfied.

Access to tools and knowledge products is the area where the fewest have received support and has the lowest satisfaction rate. This mirrors findings from the surveys in 2022 and 2021.



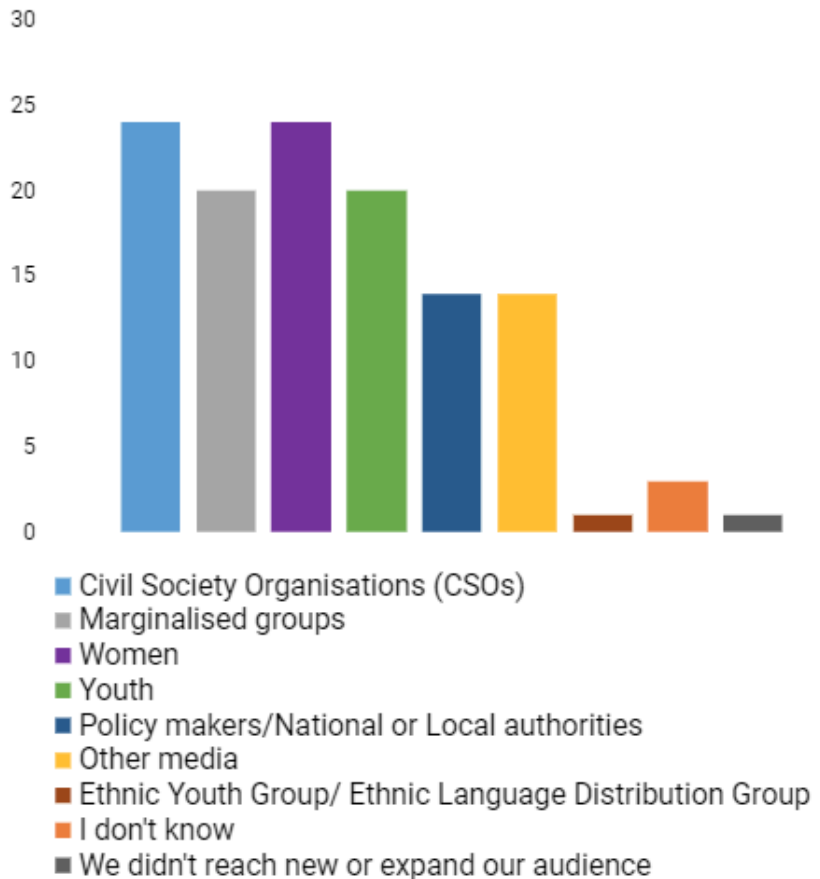
- „I'm not aware of any structured capacity development completed. Therefore, I highly recommend and suggest creating (if not available) a partnership capacity development process and a plan; where it would identify partner's needs, agree on areas for improvement based on the needs and priorities, and forms of capacity development (trainings, mentorship, coaching, etc.).”
- „Since this support is a kind of urgent for us, it will be much more useful if the support is provided/conducted in an intensive and timely manner. The tools provided should be properly explained, and the analysis and discussion should be facilitated by the consultant to produce much more effective results.”

## 4.3 Media content and audiences

59% of the content producing partners found that their content improved as a result of capacity development from IMS. 75% found that their content had improved as a result of financial support from IMS. A large majority of partners (87%) found that IMS had not interfered in the editorial line. Few replied that they didn't know. This question was offered in order to test and understand if the funding relationship with IMS had interfered with the editorial independency of partners.

94% of all media content partners reported growth in their audiences in 2023. Almost half report having high engagement with their audiences, while close to half report having medium engagement. Engagement is mainly done through comments on social media, but focus groups, community events, and other forms of direct engagement are also used by a number of partners. Additionally, contributions from audiences (such as readers' letters, participatory journalism, etc.) are mentioned by many partners. Only two partners report having little engagement with their audiences, attributing it to either a lack of designated staff or an inability to engage audiences due to the context in which they work.

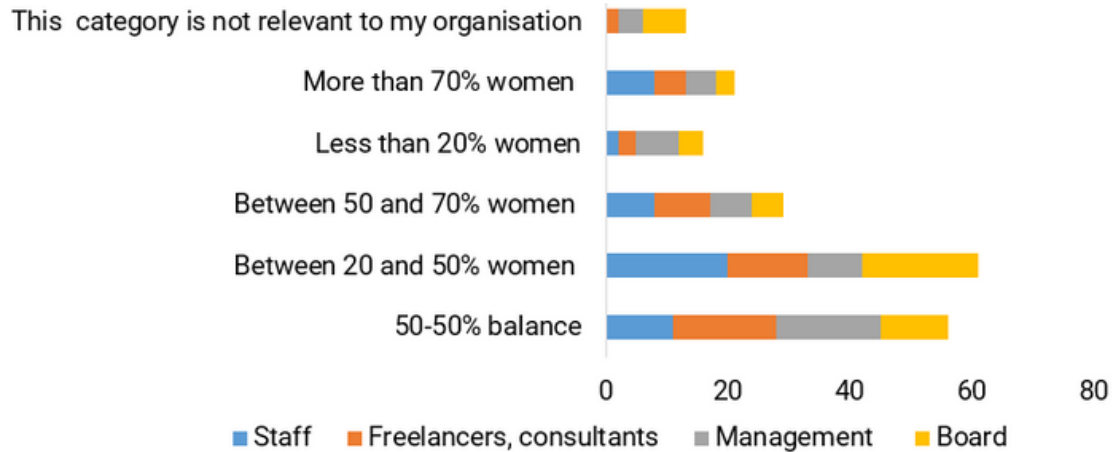
While many media organisations have some difficulty reaching out to youth, women, and marginalised groups, the survey shows that IMS partners are successfully engaging with these demographic groups. In response to an open question about the top priority or most important theme, several partners indicated a **focus on marginalised groups, youth, and women** (see more in section 6.0).



**Fig. 9: Did you reach new or expand your audiences in one ore more of the following groups during last year?**

# 5. Gender

88% of respondents have a gender strategy or are in the process of developing one. Around 70% have reached the halfway point or more in the implementation of their gender strategies. Partners with a gender strategy are mainly from larger organisations with a budget of more than \$ 200,000.



**Fig. 10: Percentage of women across different staff categories**

There seems to be no correlation between organisations having a gender strategy and how long they have been partnering with IMS or how large a percentage of the funding the partners get from IMS.

The gender distribution within partner organisations is fairly equal across all staff categories. However, what stands out is that 15% of the partners, have less than 20% women in management. These organisations are a mix of larger and smaller organisations. The large majority of organisations have between 20-70% women on their board, with most having a 50/50 balance. Only four organisations have boards with less than 20% women on the board, and three organisations have boards that are more than 70% women. There is a strong correlation between organisations with strong representation of women on their boards and a high representation of women in management. Among staff, the distribution is fairly equal; however, 16% of partners have more than 70% women among staff.

When comparing the answers to gender-related questions with the gender category of the respondent, no significant bias can be identified.



## 6. Partners priorities and emerging issues

The safety of journalists is a key priority among the partners who chose to answer the open section asking their top priority or most important theme or issue at the moment. In the **2020 partnership survey**, the main priority of the partners was **media viability**. In **2022**, **safety** was seen as an almost **equally important theme**. Compared to the two previous surveys, several partners mentioned the **inclusion of marginalised groups, gender, and youth**, which had not been mentioned in the prior surveys. Here are examples of what partners wrote:

*"Inclusion and development of marginalised social groups."*

*"Strongly capacity and support to youth journalist, marginalised group, citizen journalist."*

*"Community engagement."*

*"Making people's marginalized marginalised voices loud."*

**Fundraising** and **financial sustainability** are also issues mentioned by several partners, as are **AI** and **digital awareness**, on which partners e.g. wrote:

*"Incorporating AI into our media content programming.";*

*"Regulation of the digital space in a context of security crisis and political transition hostile to the issue of human rights."*

*"The creation of legal instruments to counter disinformation and propaganda."*

The answers from some partners bear witness to the challenging context they are operating in, where securing the **continued existence** is the **immediate priority**. One partner wrote: *"Insufficient funding to expand programmes, rare human resources, electricity and internet access."*

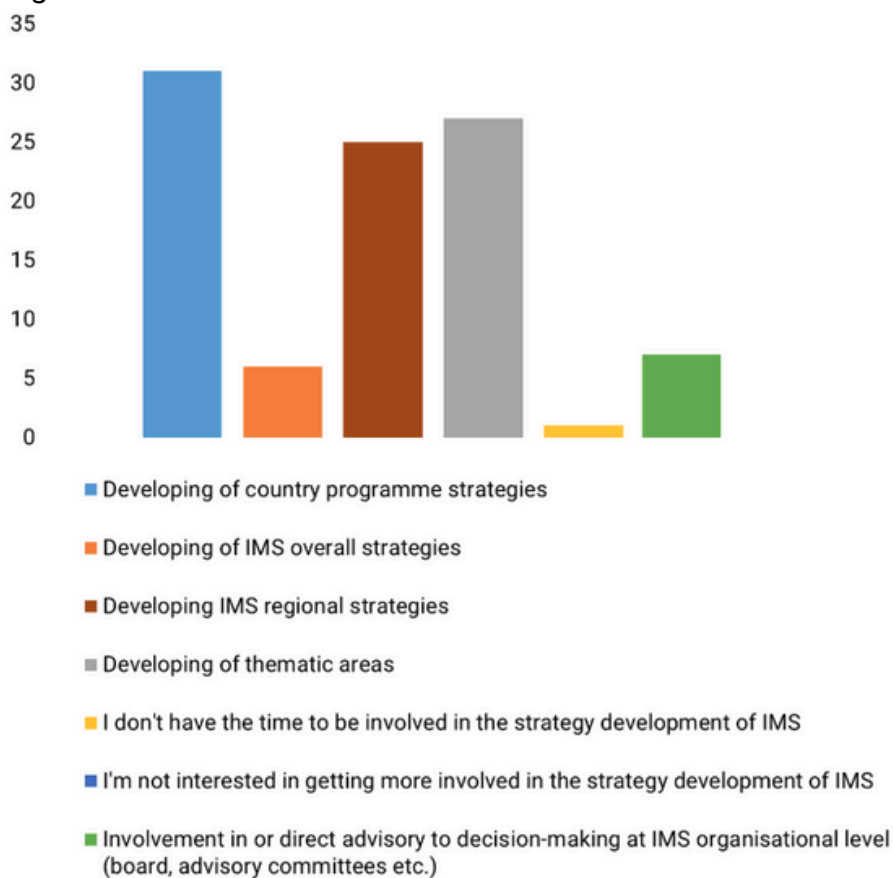
## 6.1 Localisation

The open section in the partnership survey was dedicated to localisation and how we could put partners in the driving seat.

**Country programmes** were the area where most partners expressed interest in being further involved. **Developing thematic areas** was the second most popular choice, followed by **regional strategies**. Fewer partners wanted to engage in the overall IMS strategy and in advisory boards.

This suggests that **the closer the involvement is to the partners' immediate realities, such as country programmes, the more interest partners have in participating.**

Three partners indicated that they were not interested in getting more involved or that they didn't have the time for it.



**Fig. 11: Are there areas where you would like to be more involved in the strategy development of IMS?**

Regarding the degree to which the partners feel they have been involved in the design of their partnership with IMS – such as programme descriptions, capacity development, activities, budgets, contracts, and MoUs – 65% percent answered to a large extent, and 35% percent answered somewhat. No one answered to a lesser extent. However, at the same time, **90% answered that they feel the partnership with IMS is as equal partners and not as a sub-contractor.** The highest percentages of partners that answered that they feel closely involved in the design of their programme are from MENA, then followed by Africa. The relatively highest number of partners that felt somewhat involved compared to the total number of respondents from that department are from Eastern Europe.

For the open question, on areas where partners would like to be more involved, a number of partners mentioned **country strategies** – in line with the question and graph above. Here are examples of where **partners** would like to be **more involved**:

*"We would like to be more involved with the identification of other partners in the country we work in."*

*"Expressing an opinion regarding the distribution of grants and amounts of money to partners."*

*"Training of trainers. Inviting foreign experts to the country for training sessions."*

**57% of partners** would like to have more **collaboration with partners** from **other countries and regions**; 13% would like to strengthen the collaboration with partners at the country level and 23% were satisfied with the existing level of partner-to-partner collaboration. Three partners answered that collaboration would not be possible due to security issues.

Of the 33 partners who would like to have more collaboration with other partners, eight answered in the section on capacity development that they had not received this support and two were dissatisfied with the support on peer-to-peer collaboration that they had received so far. The partners who would like to have more collaboration with other partners are evenly divided across the departments in relation to the overall sample.

Regarding the **themes for partner-to-partner collaboration, climate, AI and gender are mentioned by several partners**. Some of the partners have capacities they want to offer to others, e.g.: *“We have developed the world's most comprehensive safety set up. We would like to offer advice to other partners that work on journalists' safety.”* Other partners want to learn from peers: *“Connect with experienced partners to benefit from their expertise.”* Physical meetings were the preferred form for peer-to-peer collaboration.

Partners shared some general comments on localisation:

*“There is a need to enhance dialogue between IMS and partners on development of IMS strategic plan. This will enable local partners to have their meaningful role in the process.”*

*“The process is better once there is focal points/ programme manager in the country.”*

Partners were also asked to share their feedback on the **IMS partner portal**<sup>2</sup> that is presently being developed and rolled out. The priorities of the partners related to the portal were more or less equally divided across categories related to access to IMS key policies, partners' own contract and reporting and tools and learning materials, as well as inspiration from other partners. Security was mentioned as a key concern. Several partners saw the portal as way to simplify communication and access and pointed to the importance of a simple, user-friendly interface and access.

## 7. Next steps and follow-up

IMS sees the partnership survey as an important feedback and accountability mechanism for partners. However, the low response rate is a challenge, and still needs attention. In order to ease the burden on the partners and hopefully increase the response rate, the survey will be shortened. Furthermore, in the next survey to be conducted in 2026, more open text sections will be included to get more qualitative input and feedback from partners.

2: The partner portal is intended to make the management of partnership easy and transparent with access to agreements, contracts and reporting as well as guidelines, policies and templates. Furthermore, the partner portal is also envisaged to be a broader communication channel between IMS and partners, as well as a platform for sharing between partners.