

The impacts of COVID-19 on Stakeholder Engagement with the SDGs

Dr Emily Clough
Dr. Graham Long
Newcastle University



1

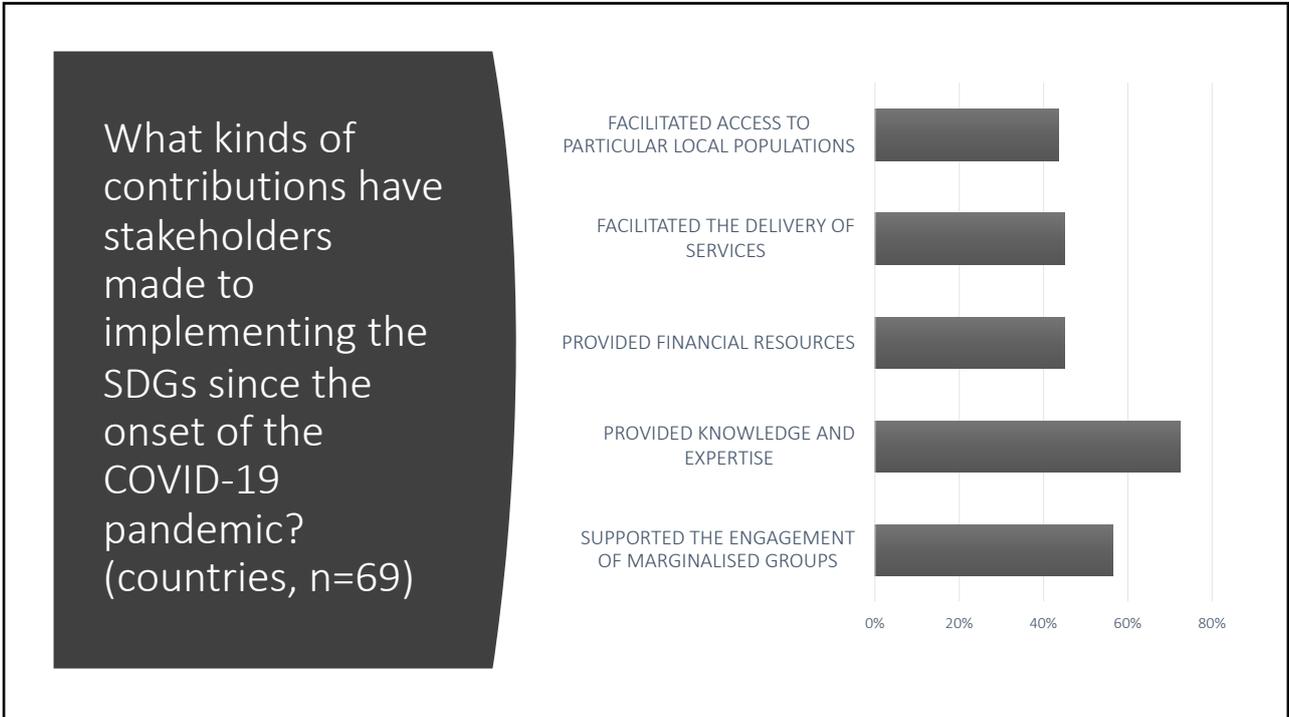
Background:
Two surveys

- Surveys conducted October 2020
- 478 stakeholders
- Officials in 41 VNR 2020 or VNR2021 countries

2

68% of government respondents perceived that the need for stakeholder engagement in implementing the SDGs will increase during recovery from COVID-19

3



4

Challenges faced by stakeholders



57% of stakeholders reported that their **ability to maintain or create partnerships** would be significantly or severely affected



65% of stakeholders reported that their **ability to ensure the participation of vulnerable or marginalized groups** would be significantly or severely affected



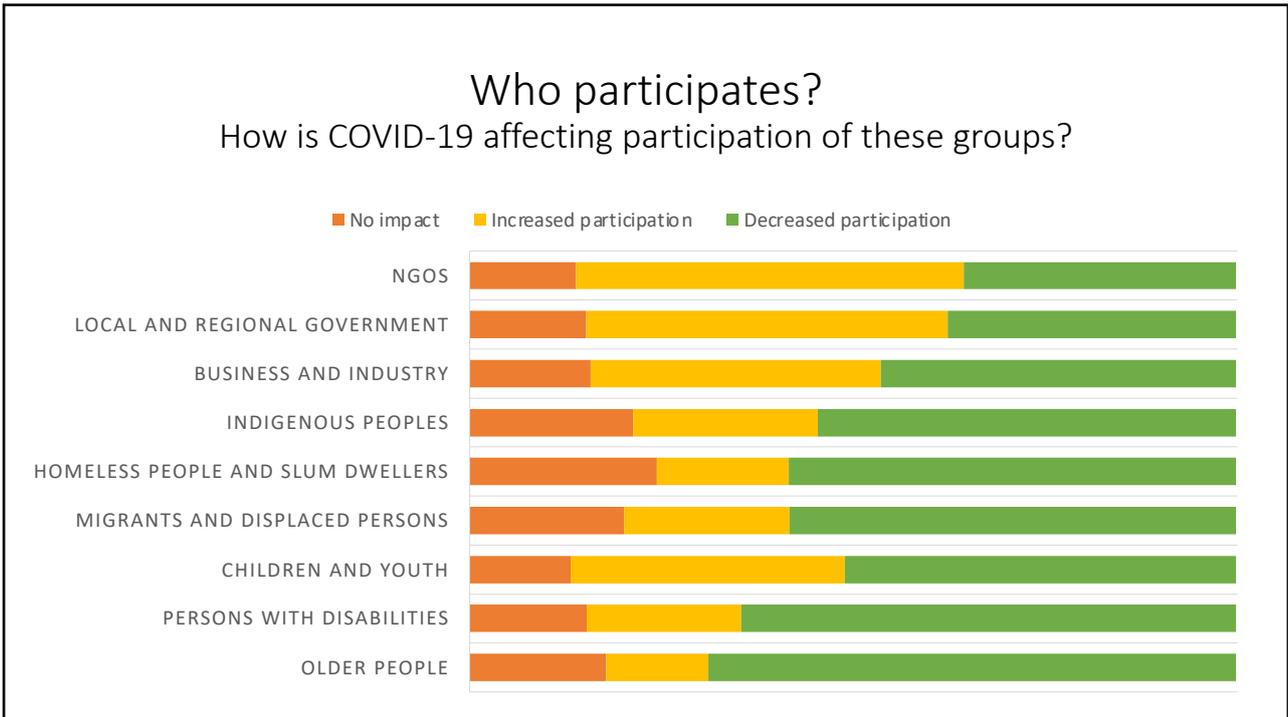
75% of stakeholders reported that their **ability to mobilize funds for SDG activities** would be significantly or severely affected

5

How to engage with stakeholders in the COVID-19 context?

- 94% of countries reported increasing their use of online conferencing
- Innovative solutions:
 - Partnerships across civil society, state and private sector to increase digitalization and access to digital services, for instance Mexico and Finland
 - Engaging at the regional and local level, translating local ideas and solutions to the national level, such as Uganda

6



7

Looking ahead...

(1) General impacts of Covid-19 crisis:
 Reported as falling heavily on mechanisms for inclusive and meaningful engagement:

- efforts to include left behind groups (77% of stakeholder respondents)
- mechanisms for partnership (75%)
- stakeholder involvement in decision making (75%)

(2) Impacts of moving to online engagement:
 easier to reach certain stakeholders, to hold larger events, to share information, but:

- how to involve groups that find online engagement challenging
- challenges for dialogue, partnership- and network- building in online settings

8

Looking ahead...

(3) Impacts on the partnership 'ecosystem'

- Who partners, on what issues? COVID impacts (e.g. health, digital services, education) perceived as priorities for partnerships.
- what issues, which groups, are left behind by these changes?