



NASCSP

# 2021 ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 20-23

CSBG CARES STATE LESSONS LEARNED

ENGAGING COMMUNITY,  
EMBRACING DIVERSITY



# Welcome!

- Joining us today for this panel discussion on **CSBG CARES State Lessons Learned**:
  - Anna Sainsbury—CSBG Contract Manager, Wisconsin Dept of Children and Families
  - Ditzah Wooden-Wade—Assistant Manager, Community Services Programs, MA Dept of Housing and Community Development
  - Jaimi Clifford—CSBG State Coordinator, Maine Department of Health and Human Services

# Methodology

## NASCSP conducted:

- two surveys (December 2020 and May 2021) of state CSBG directors focused on the allocation and spend-down of CARES funds
- three focus groups of various CSBG state directors to gather more in-depth information about the challenges faced and responses made to the COVID crisis
- several one-on-one follow-up interviews.

# Immediate Challenges

- Adjusting to remote work
- Revision of standard operating procedures
- Hiring freezes, staff furloughs and/or staff reassignments
- Establishing new norms and work to keep staff engaged
- Multiple layers of review for approvals
- Distribution of funds
- Ensuring uninterrupted services to individuals/families
- Pandemic required ramped-up services
- Number of people requiring assistance swelled overnight
- Required quickly pivoting from pre-Covid plans and re-configuring priorities
- Spend-down of funds

# How did States respond?



## Acted with urgency

Meant that leaders jumped into the fray without all the information they would have liked. They took quick action to stem the worst impact, not waiting until the situation became clearer



## Communicated with transparency

Meant providing honest and accurate descriptions of reality—being as clear as humanly possible about what they knew, what they anticipated, and what it meant for people



## Took responsibility and focused on solving problems

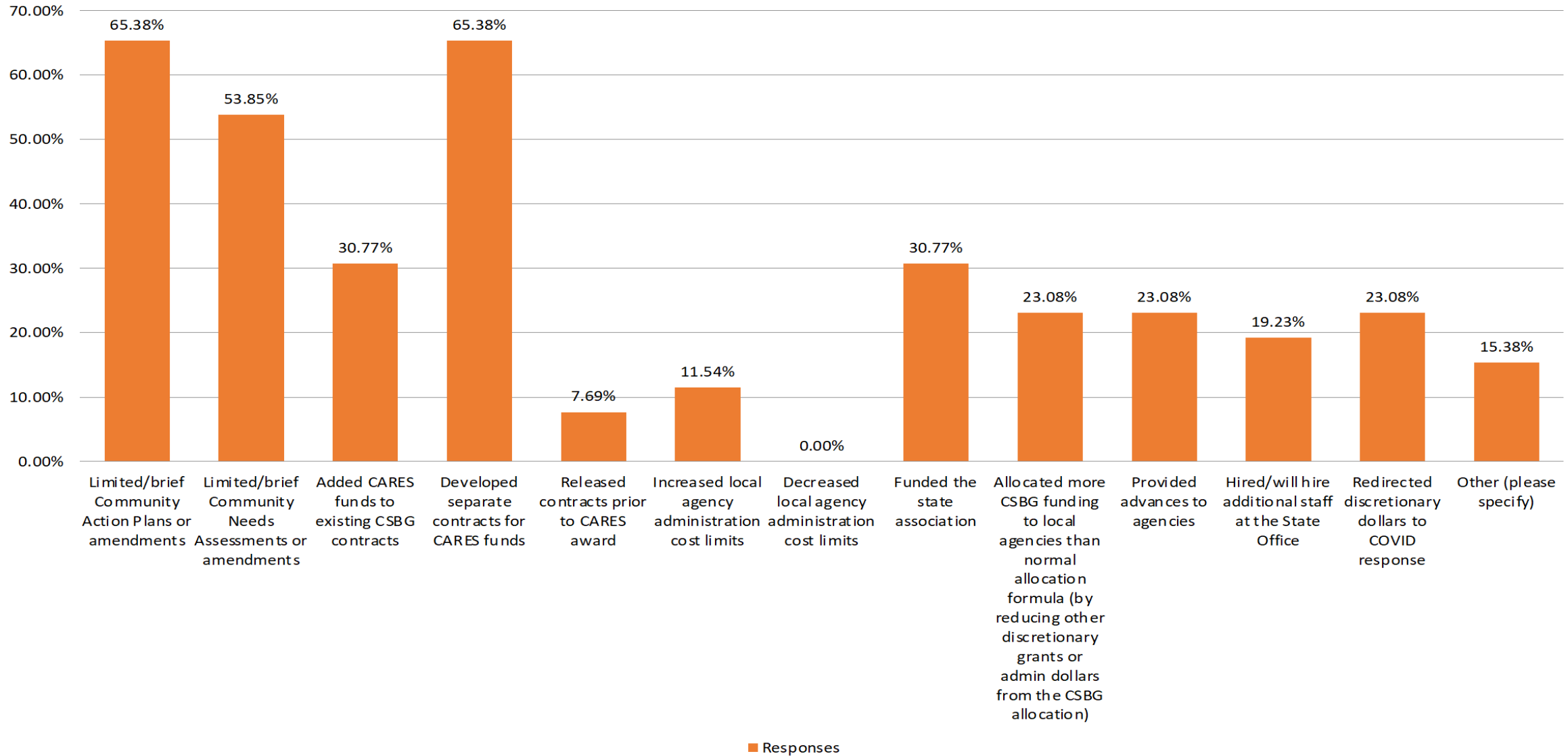
Inevitable missteps will happen. Leaders set clear objectives, stayed focused on those objectives and “looked ahead to continue solving the next and most pressing problems



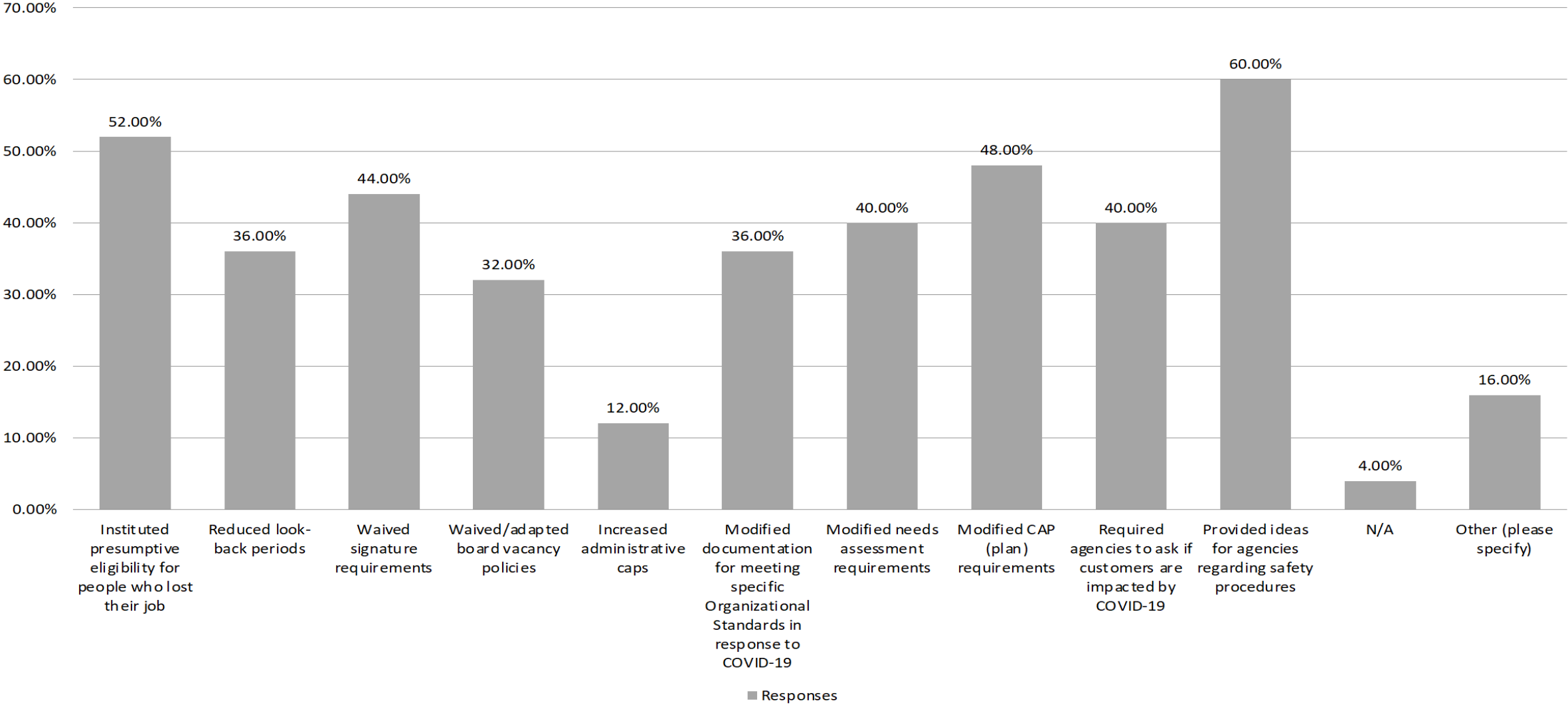
## Engaged in constant updating

Constantly updated their understanding of prior probabilities, even daily, deliberately using strategies to solicit new information and learn rapidly as events unfolded and new information came to light.

## Which of the following did the state enact as it pertains to CSBG CARES Act funds?



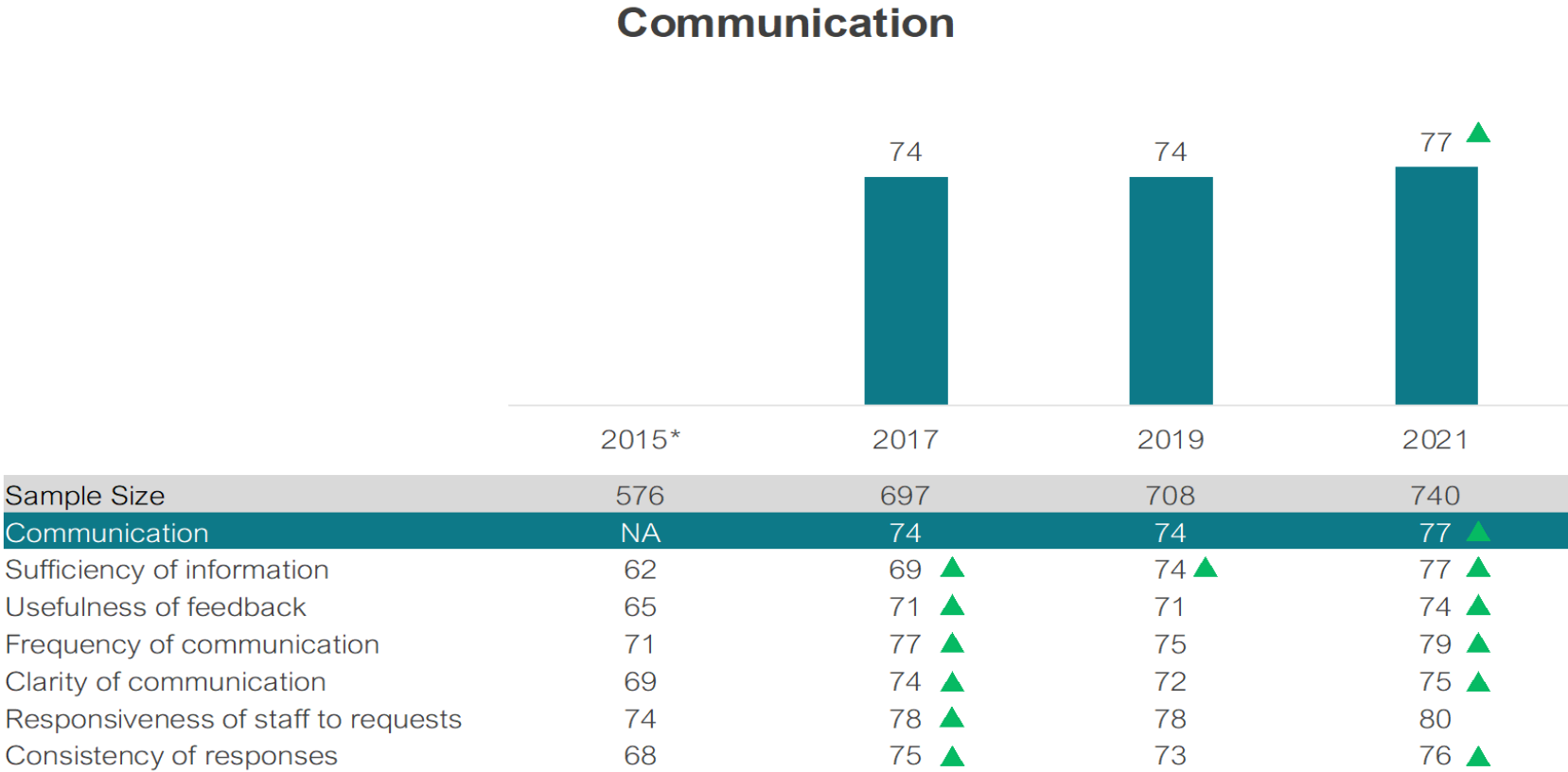
How have state office practices or policies changed in relation to COVID-19?



# Communication

Impact = 2.3

- Communication received the highest satisfaction score in 2021 (77) and remained the highest impact driver. It is considered a strength.
- All related attributes for this driver experienced improvement in 2021; all but one is up significantly compared to 2019.



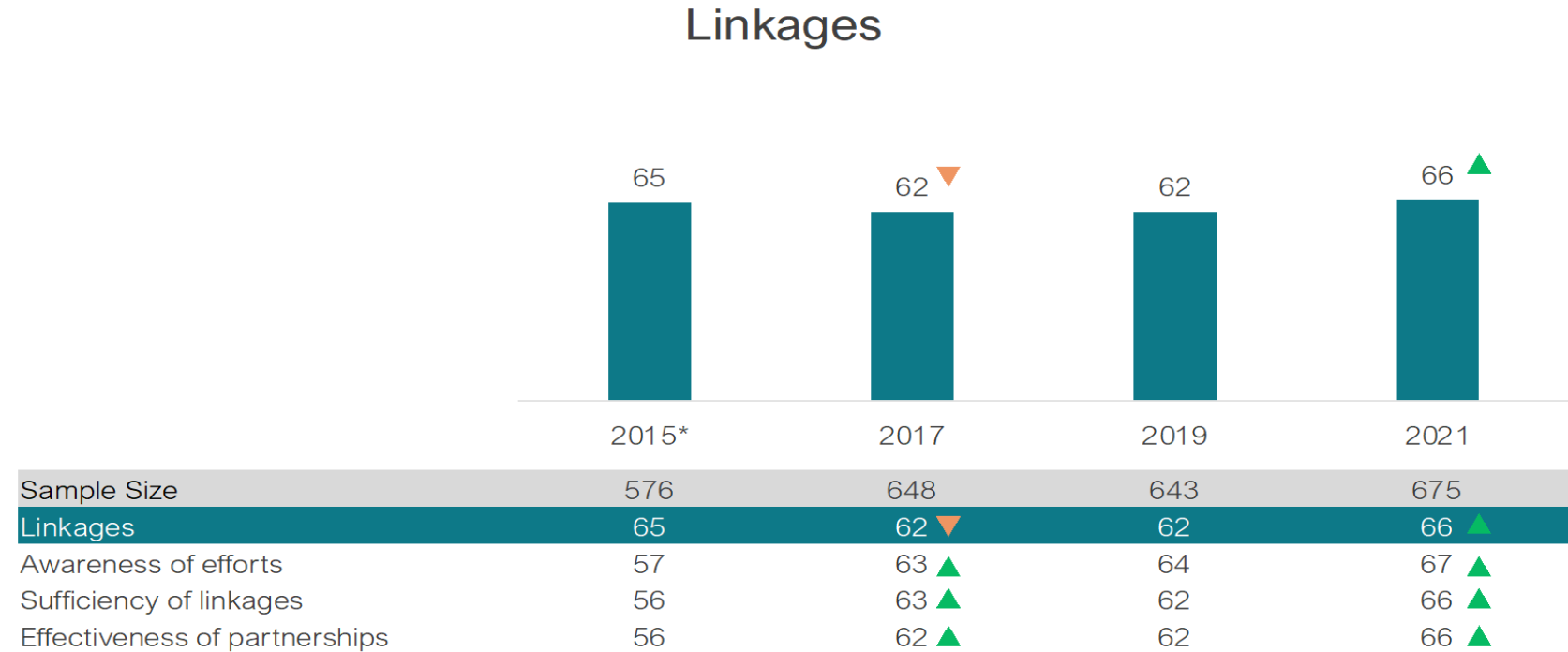
*\*In 2017 and 2019, attributes related to Linkages were used to calculate a Linkages component (or driver score) apart from the Communication driver. Linkages and Communication were combined in 2015 (score displayed as Linkages (slide 30) in reporting).*



# Linkages

Impact = 0.6

- The score for Linkages experienced a significant increase of four points to 66 in 2021.
- All attributes related to Linkages achieved significant increases as well, each up three or four points as compared to 2019.



*\*In 2017 and 2019, attributes related to Linkages were used to calculate a Linkages component (or driver score) apart from the Communication driver. Linkages and Communication were combined in 2015.*

*"We use quarterly dashboards. A verbal review occurs often with the agency staff. We also conduct monthly check-ins with the subrecipients via email/phone. This allows subrecipients to share concerns, challenges, discuss strategies."*

*"We continuously monitored their progress on spending their CSBG CARES Act funds and provided technical assistance for those agencies that had issues developing services and programs with the CARES Act funding."*

*"We are doing quarterly monitoring and providing dashboards by CAA and statewide to assist in addressing spending challenges."*

*"Some of the things learned we will be able to include in our emergency plans, which may be helpful during natural disasters."*

*"The State continues to utilize lessons learned from COVID-19 to develop additional online and remote opportunities for our entities and customers."*



# Thank You!

Anna Sainsbury—CSBG Contract Manager  
WI Dept of Children and Families

[anna.sainsbury@wisconsin.gov](mailto:anna.sainsbury@wisconsin.gov)

Ditzah Wooden-Wade—Assistant Manager  
Community Services Programs, MA Dept of Housing  
and Community Development

[ditzah.wooden-wade@state.ma.us](mailto:ditzah.wooden-wade@state.ma.us)

Jaimi Clifford—CSBG State Coordinator  
ME Department of Health and Human Services

[Jaimi.Clifford@maine.gov](mailto:Jaimi.Clifford@maine.gov)

