

# DATA ON DIVERSITY: HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

October 2019



This paper is part of Humanitarian Advisory Group's *Diverse Leadership* research project.

HUMANITARIAN  
ADVISORY GROUP



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# WHY DATA ON HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP

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“Variety is the spice of life; to bring together characters that would not normally work as a team, each bringing with them their culture, language, background, brings a new dimension to working and new ways of looking at things, new approaches. Diversity brings with it excitement and beauty.”<sup>1</sup>

This report presents findings drawn from the ‘State of Diversity’ survey on the diversity and inclusiveness of humanitarian leadership globally.<sup>2</sup> It provides data on who fills humanitarian leadership roles and the impact that has on organisational performance. It represents a first step in a research process designed to unpack the relationship between diverse and inclusive leadership and effective humanitarian action.

The following five key findings that emerged from data analysis are explored in the report.

**Most humanitarian staff perceive that leadership teams are not diverse or inclusive**

**Humanitarian leadership teams that are more diverse and inclusive perform better**

**International staff are 1.5 times more likely to fill the most senior humanitarian leadership roles than local staff**

**Women are under-represented in the most senior humanitarian leadership roles**

**Persons with a disability are under-represented in both the humanitarian sector and humanitarian leadership**

These research findings enable us to shift the discussion from potentials and possibilities to realities and facts. They give an understanding of the current composition of humanitarian leadership teams and their impact, allowing the sector to reflect on how we recruit and compose leadership teams, how we measure their success, and how we give teams the skills and tools to ensure inclusive leadership.

# HOW WE DID IT

The data presented in this report was gathered via an online survey and key informant interviews. Humanitarian Advisory Group staff developed the methodology and tools in collaboration with key humanitarian partners.<sup>3</sup> A methodology workshop brought together stakeholders from multiple humanitarian organisations to identify and define the research imperative, scope and approach. We used SPSS to analyse the survey data and determine the statistical significance of the findings. For more information about the methodology, refer to Annex A.



## A note on definitions

**Diversity** is all the ways we differ.<sup>4</sup> It includes differences according to gender, age, disability, cultural background, sexual orientation, social and economic background, profession, education, work experiences and organisational role.<sup>5</sup>

**Inclusion** occurs when diverse people feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organisation.<sup>6</sup> Both diversity and inclusion are needed to generate organisational success.

**Humanitarian leadership:** leaders of humanitarian organisations who provide a clear vision and objectives for humanitarian action (whether at the program, organisational or system-wide level).<sup>7</sup>

**Most senior humanitarian leadership:** in this report, this term refers to those who selected “Senior and executive level leadership (e.g. CEO/country director/Humanitarian Coordinator/members of Humanitarian Country Teams)” as the response option that best describes their position.

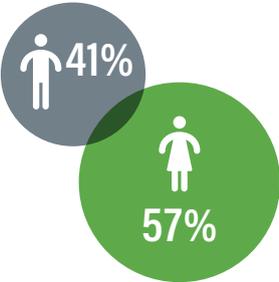
**Humanitarian leadership:** in this report, this term refers to those who selected any of the following response options to best describe their position.

- ▶ Senior and executive level leadership (e.g. CEO/country director/Humanitarian Coordinator/members of Humanitarian Country Teams)
- ▶ Organisational leadership (e.g. Humanitarian Directors, HR/Finance Directors, management with multiple teams)
- ▶ Program and/or technical leadership (e.g. management of multiple programs or projects/management of multiple technical staff or teams)
- ▶ Project Leadership (e.g. management of individual humanitarian projects)

Photo: Traditional paper lanterns hanging from sticks in Hoi An, Vietnam. Konstantin Yolshin / Shutterstock

# WHO WE HEARD FROM

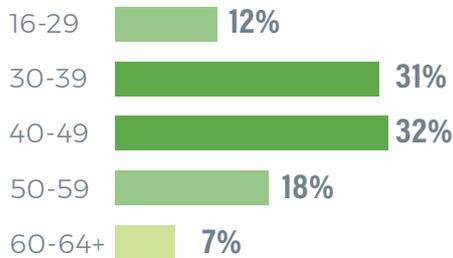
## Gender



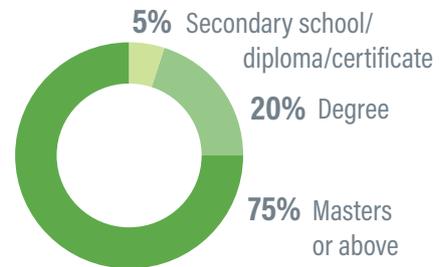
1% Prefer not to say  
1% Queer

4% identified as a person with a disability

## Age



## Highest level of education



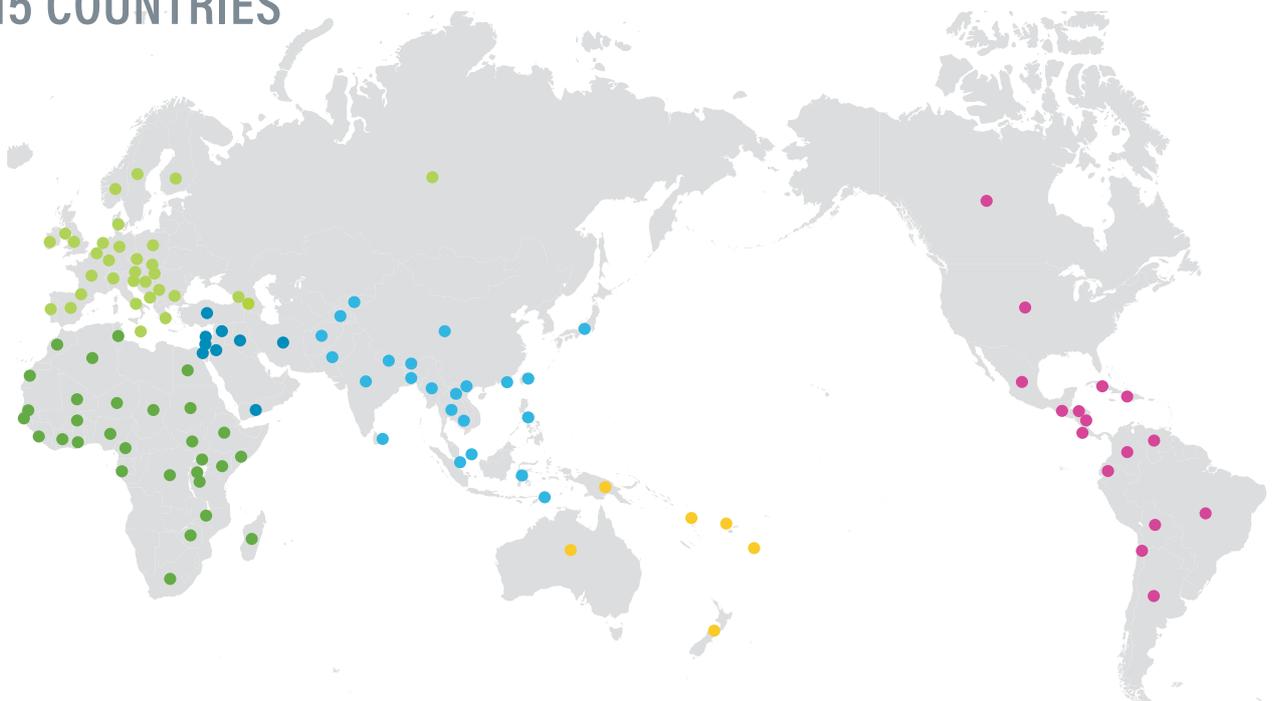
## Type of organisation



## Position



## 115 COUNTRIES



# WHAT HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP LOOKS LIKE

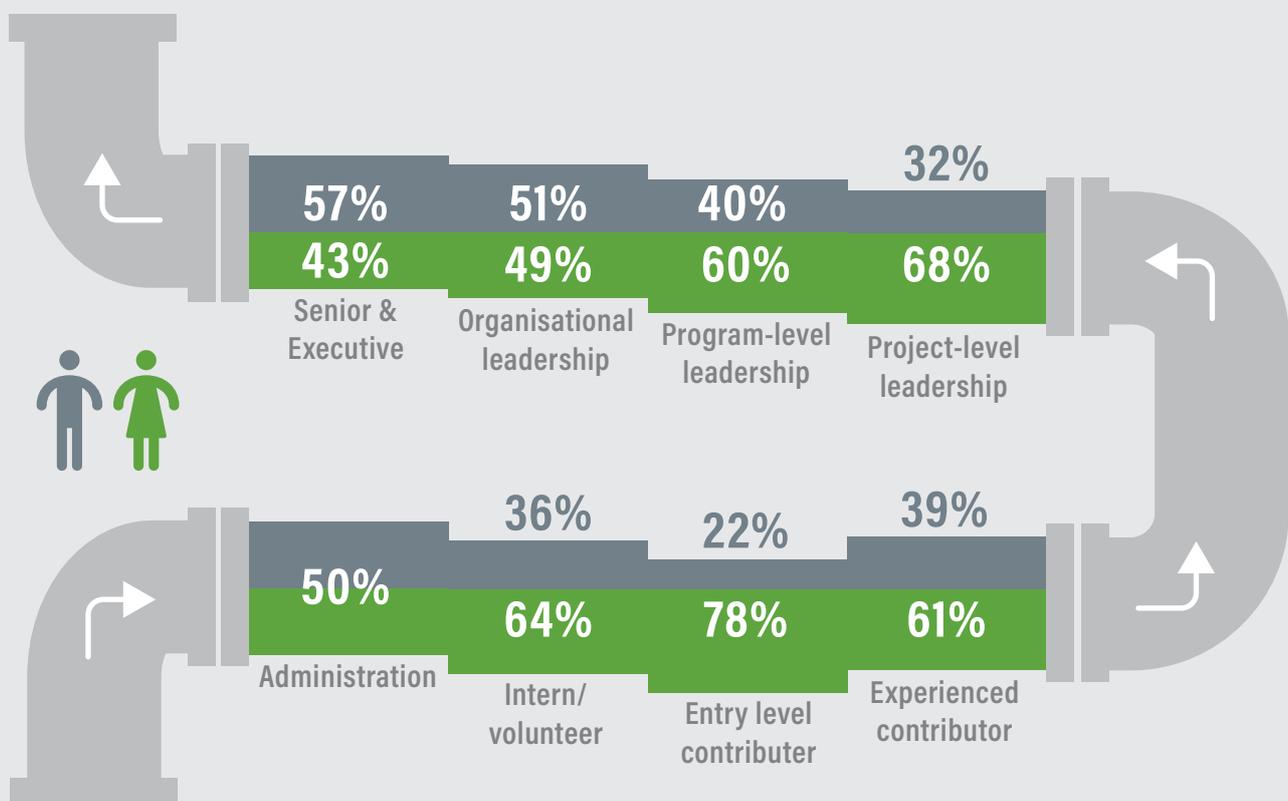
There are significantly more men than women at the most senior level of humanitarian leadership.<sup>8</sup>



Fifty-seven per cent of the most senior leadership positions in the surveyed organisations are occupied by men, and 43% by women.<sup>9</sup> However, women are over-represented in project-level leadership, occupying 68% of positions. This gradually declines with seniority, as highlighted in infographic 3.

“[Women] are typically in roles not seen as operational and so not seen as having experience in the core part of business.”<sup>10</sup> (UN actor)

Infographic 3: Pipeline for men and women into leadership roles in the sector



## The gender composition of humanitarian leadership is more heavily male-dominated in countries with a high or extreme security risk.<sup>11</sup>

“It seems unfair that on someone’s whim that women cannot be hired for a mission due to it being too risky or due to women in that culture having no standing.”<sup>12</sup> (Independent consultant)

Security issues can reduce women’s representation in humanitarian leadership. In high and extreme security risk countries, men dominated leadership positions, filling 60% of leadership positions. In countries with high and extreme security risk, men fill 69%<sup>13</sup> of the most senior leadership positions, 55% of project leadership positions and 56% of program leadership positions. Interviewees feel that high security risk contexts often lead to the exclusion of women.<sup>14</sup>

“Security issues can counter diversity but they do not have to... my team was doing field visits on motorbikes, but many women did not know how to ride a motorbike or felt uncomfortable doing so. This naturally prevented females being hired as field officers.”<sup>15</sup> (INGO actor)

“Women do bear more risks. Issues of violence and particularly sexual violence in conflict zone is a major concern.”<sup>16</sup> (INGO actor)



### ENABLERS AND BARRIERS FOR WOMEN PROGRESSING INTO HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP ROLES

A significant number of interviewees stated that their organisation has targeted activities which aim to break down barriers that prevent women from progressing into humanitarian leadership roles. Activities include internal staff surveys to understand the barriers women face specific to their organisation, recruitment quotas, women’s networks, and increased professional development opportunities.<sup>17</sup> The most crucial initiative identified is thinking, planning and building a pipeline for women (and other diverse groups) to fill roles and grow within the organisation. Interviewees feel that a focus on the pipeline reflected commitment not only to diversity, but to inclusion.<sup>18</sup>

**“We are asking ourselves how we grow internally and intentionally, creating structures such as affinity groups, and strategies on valuing high performing diverse talent.”<sup>19</sup> (INGO actor)**

There are still areas for improvement. Cultural bias, inequality, lack of policies, as well as male-dominated decision-making are all identified as critical barriers that need to be addressed to improve the representation of women in senior humanitarian leadership.<sup>20</sup>



## THE SECURITY OF AID WORKERS WITH DIVERSE SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY/EXPRESSION, AND SEXUAL CHARACTERISTICS

Research on humanitarian workers who identify as having diverse sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, and sexual characteristic (SOGIESC) has identified several challenges in the sector, particularly in relation to career development.<sup>21</sup> Our survey did not collect data on sexual orientation, due to ethical considerations and challenges associated with designing a question that was cross-cultural and applied globally, across five languages.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, the global scope of humanitarian work means there are many contexts in which particular sexual behaviours or gender representations are highly stigmatised and/or illicit, hampering or preventing the deployment of diverse SOGIESC staff. Humanitarian organisations must consider how to balance staff safety with equal opportunity.<sup>23</sup> Organisations should take every step to ensure that disclosure will not harm career opportunities; they should also be clear that deployment decisions will be based on up-to-date information and made in consultation with the employee.<sup>24</sup>

**“...by allowing diversity, operations may be taking a risk in countries where gay relationships are prohibited by law. When it comes to allowing for a gay partner to join recruit in a family duty station, it would be quite risky for the organisation, because we are committed to respecting the laws of the country within which we operate.”<sup>25</sup> (INGO actor)**

## Persons with disabilities are under-represented in both the humanitarian sector and humanitarian leadership.<sup>26</sup>



**4% OF HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP ROLES ARE OCCUPIED BY PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS HAVING A DISABILITY.**

Global data indicates that approximately 15% of the world’s population have a disability.<sup>27</sup> Our survey data indicates that persons with disabilities make up just 4% of humanitarian leadership roles, highlighting a significant lack of representation of persons with disabilities.

“We do not have a very strong track record around hiring people with disabilities.”<sup>28</sup>

(Red Cross movement actor)

“Different parts of different identity intersect, but what about a woman from a developing country in leadership, or a disabled woman? More than one diverse identity can make you even more excluded.”<sup>29</sup>

(UN actor)

## The most senior humanitarian leadership roles are more likely to be filled by internationals than locals.<sup>30</sup>



Senior humanitarian leadership roles are 1.5 times more likely to be filled by international staff than local staff. 60% of the most senior humanitarian leadership roles are filled by international staff, and 40% are filled by local staff, despite the fact that 93% of humanitarian field personnel are local staff.<sup>31</sup>

“There is a tendency to give each other jobs; hiring ‘international consultants’ means they can argue that there is no need for advertisement. Therefore, unless you have access to these [jobs], it is a barrier.”<sup>32</sup>  
(UN actor)

Several barriers prevent local staff moving into senior humanitarian leadership. These include different expectations of senior national staff versus international staff, a lack of training and development opportunities, an aversion to risk, and limited support.<sup>33</sup> These barriers often lead to a narrow pipeline for national staff to move into leadership roles.

“If you are a ‘pure’ expat and a Country Director, you have a level of flexibility – but for a national, there is a higher-level expectation.”<sup>34</sup> (INGO actor)

“During large scale crisis, you have a standard international system that is imposed not necessarily adapted to the local context or led by the people who were there before involved in preparedness”<sup>35</sup>  
(UN actor).



### BEYOND GENDER

A number of interviewees noted that diversity and inclusion conversations most often focus on gender diversity. Other forms of diversity such as cultural, linguistic and ethnic background and socio-economic status are often overlooked.<sup>36</sup>

**“In many country contexts, there is greater willingness of government/local leadership to include women than there is to have other variations of diversity such as race, ethnic groups.”<sup>37</sup> (INGO actor).**

**INGOs have a significantly higher percentage of local staff in the most senior humanitarian leadership positions.**



**AS MANY LOCAL STAFF IN SENIOR POSITIONS IN INGOs COMPARED TO UN AGENCIES.<sup>38</sup>**

International non-government organisations (INGOs) employ twice as many local staff in senior humanitarian leadership positions as United Nations (UN) agencies. Fifty-two per cent of INGO respondents who work in the most senior humanitarian leadership position are local staff. Only 36% of UN respondents who work in the most senior humanitarian leadership position are local staff.



#### **THE IMPACT OF THE LOCALISATION AGENDA**

The localisation agenda has influenced INGOs' approach to national staff.<sup>39</sup> Participants from INGOs noted a recent increase in discussions about and prioritisation of recruiting and retaining local staff within their organisations. There is an increasing focus on training local staff to move into positions once expatriates move on.<sup>40</sup>

**“We are having discussions to reduce international staff in programs and have national staff run programs. National staff are often more qualified and international staff are expensive.”<sup>41</sup> (INGO actor)**

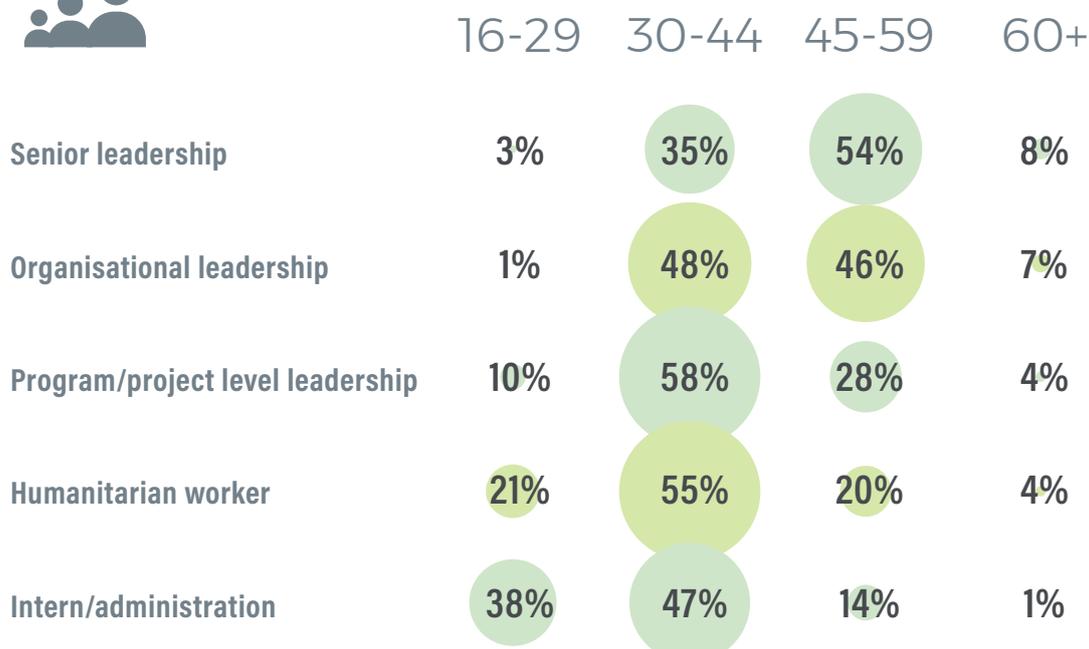
## The most senior humanitarian leadership roles are filled by people aged 45–59.

Fifty-three per cent of the most senior humanitarian leadership roles are filled by individuals in the 45–59 age bracket; of that group, 61% are men. Stakeholders felt that this reflected the importance that the sector places on years of experience in the recruitment process.

“I think that we place a lot of store on number of years of experience – compared to other sectors so people in leadership would be slightly older.”<sup>42</sup> (UN actor)

Infographic 4 shows the expected increase in age with seniority. There are surprising anomalies, with some people in the youngest age category occupying the most senior leadership positions. All those respondents in the youngest category (16-29) occupying the most senior positions are women, including some in high or extreme security risk countries.

Infographic 4: Increase in age with seniority



**Low socio-economic status can be a barrier to entering into the humanitarian sector.<sup>43</sup>**

**90%** OF HUMANITARIAN STAFF HAVE AN UNDERGRADUATE OR MASTERS DEGREE.

“Our requirement for educated people, who are western language speakers ...means that the lens through which we see a humanitarian response is an “elite lens”...we have to find ways to mitigate this bias to ensure that we are not elitist in our beneficiary selection and response.”<sup>44</sup> (INGO actor)

69% per cent of respondents across all positions in the sector have a Master’s degree as their highest level of education. 21% have an undergraduate degree as their highest level of education. The survey also asked about the educational status of parents as a proxy indicator for socio-economic status;<sup>45</sup> across all positions in the sector, 57% of parents had either a university degree or higher.

Stakeholders reflected on the fact that socio-economic background is one of the most defining features of the pipeline in the humanitarian sector. As the sector has become more competitive it has zeroed in on a group of people with specific educational backgrounds.<sup>46</sup>

“Socio-economic background among international staff [is important] because looking at how we are recruiting now I see a very homogenous group of young people typically from [one] graduate institute.”<sup>47</sup> (Red Cross Movement actor)

“I think even when you have geographic diversity, if you probe into educational background many of those individuals have been to the ivy league or red brick institutions.”<sup>48</sup> (UN actor)





## THE IMPACT OF BIAS IN RECRUITMENT PRACTICES ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Unconscious bias and familiarity bias are common in employee recruitment. Unconscious bias refers to the factors that unknowingly influence every decision you make, such as education, social background and gender. Familiarity bias occurs in recruitment practice, manifesting as the person/s who are making recruitment decisions being more likely to hire applicants who are similar to them.

**“There is a tendency to recruit people from similar cultures or who are similar to you and there is no conscious effort to create diverse teams.”<sup>49</sup> (INGO actor)**

**“Even if they embrace diversity, they are limited by familiarity bias.”<sup>50</sup> (INGO actor)**

A substantial number of interviewees had witnessed or experienced familiarity bias in their organisation’s recruitment processes.<sup>51</sup> However, there is evidence to indicate organisations are taking steps to address this problem. These include gender-balanced recruitment panels/teams,<sup>52</sup> training on unconscious bias,<sup>53</sup> blind recruitment skill testing,<sup>54</sup> CV evaluation frameworks,<sup>55</sup> and advertisement of roles on non-traditional platforms.<sup>56</sup>

**“When advertising for local staff, I advertise on social media and through networks. I advertise via a range of different institutions such as universities, institutes and community leaders. It does cost more and is more time-consuming but if you are not deliberate about creating diversity, it will not happen.”<sup>57</sup> (INGO actor)**

# THE IMPACT OF DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

The following text outlines the respondents' perceptions of their leadership teams. It includes statistically significant associations between perceptions of diversity and inclusion and perceptions of humanitarian leadership performance. Key performance areas analysed were decision-making, risk management, innovation promotion, listening and acting on the views of colleagues, and listening and acting on the views of the community.

Respondents were asked to describe the diversity and inclusiveness of the leadership team whose decisions most directly affects their day-to-day work (noting they may be part of that leadership team).<sup>58</sup>

**Most respondents perceive that humanitarian leadership teams are not diverse or inclusive.**



There is a clear relationship between diversity and inclusion. Humanitarian leadership teams that are perceived as diverse are 3.4 times more likely to also be perceived as inclusive.

There is an interesting gender difference in the perceptions of humanitarian sector leadership teams. Men have a significantly more positive perception of the diversity and inclusiveness of their leadership teams than women. Fifty-four per cent of surveyed men think their leadership team is mostly or very diverse; only 28% of women think the same. Fifty-two per cent of men think their leadership team is mostly or very inclusive, but only 32% of women think the same. Perceptions of diversity and inclusion also vary between types of organisations. National NGOs are the only type of organisation with a majority of respondents who feel their leadership team is mostly or very diverse and inclusive (62% reported that teams are mostly or very diverse).

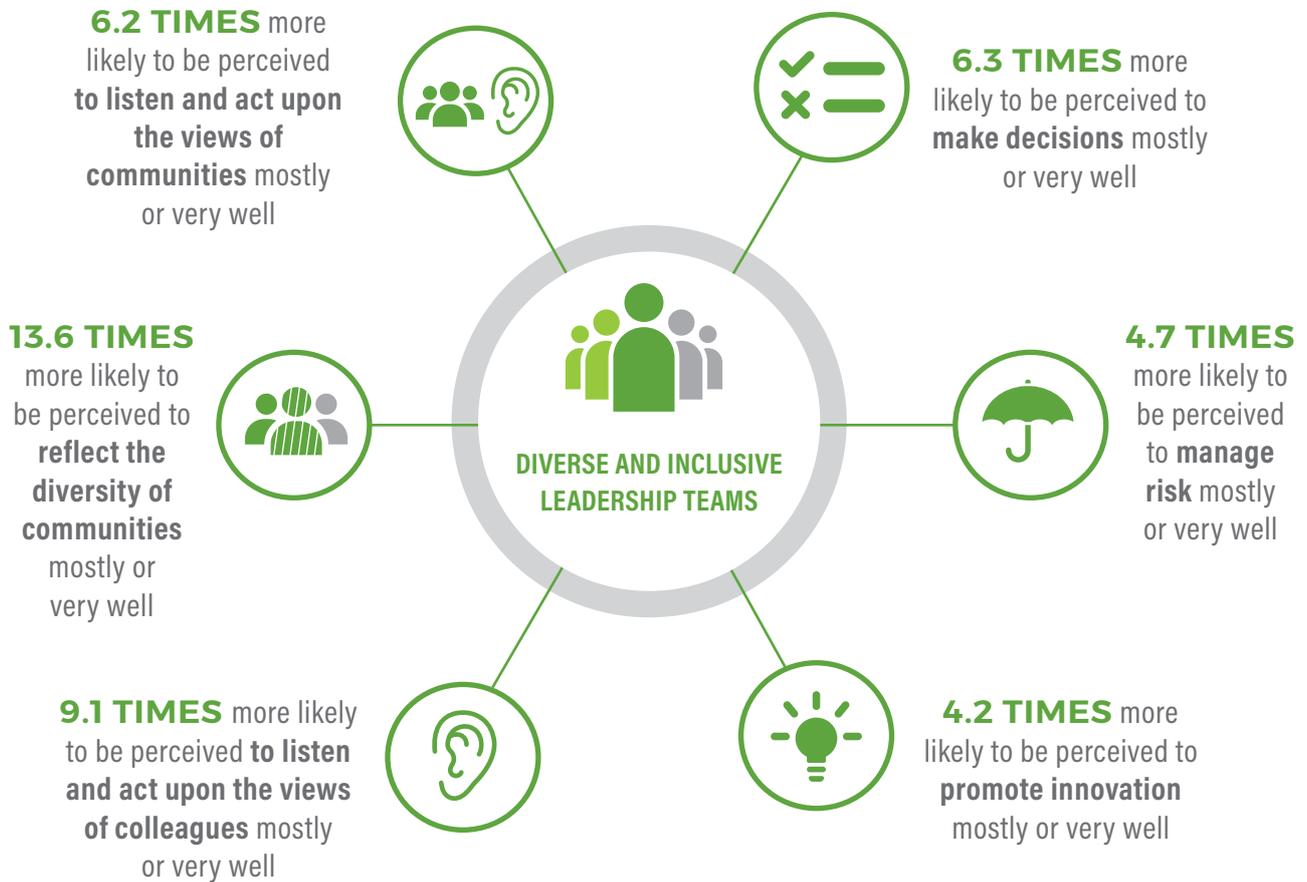


% of respondents that perceive their leadership team to be **diverse**<sup>61</sup>

% of respondents that perceive their leadership team to be **inclusive**<sup>62</sup>



**Humanitarian leadership teams that are more diverse and inclusive perform better.**



“Clearly having diverse teams is the goal as there are many benefits.”<sup>63</sup> (INGO actor)

“Having diverse teams means that more ideas and different perspectives can be brought to the table.”<sup>64</sup> (INGO actor)

“Not having diverse teams, or less diversity results is being less effective and efficient. There is a greater acceptance with society and community relations are greatly enhanced.”<sup>65</sup> (INGO actor)

## Humanitarian leadership teams that are diverse and inclusive<sup>66</sup> are perceived to make decisions well.



OF RESPONDENTS WHO PERCEIVE THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO BE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ALSO PERCEIVE THOSE TEAMS TO MAKE DECISIONS MOSTLY OR VERY WELL.

"A good balance (of diversity) means different opinions are shared and that has helped us in middle management teams and at senior leadership level. When you have operational decisions to make, you want a small group and different perspectives."<sup>67</sup> (INGO actor)

## Humanitarian leadership teams that are diverse and inclusive<sup>68</sup> are perceived to manage risk well.<sup>69</sup>



OF RESPONDENTS WHO PERCEIVE THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO BE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ALSO PERCEIVED THOSE TEAMS MANAGE RISK MOSTLY OR VERY WELL.

"When we are less diverse, our risk monitor doesn't quite work as well as it might – either we take a risk that if we had been listening to marginalised voices we might have avoided – or we are too risk averse. Because we are not as inclusive as we need to be – we miss out."<sup>70</sup> (UN actor)



Manila, Philippines - Jun 25, 2016. Thousands of people join "Metro Manila Pride," Watsamon Tri-yasakda / Shutterstock

**Humanitarian leadership teams that are diverse and inclusive<sup>71</sup> are perceived to better promote innovation.<sup>72</sup>**



**OF RESPONDENTS WHO PERCEIVE THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO BE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ALSO PERCEIVE THOSE TEAMS TO PROMOTE INNOVATION MOSTLY OR VERY WELL.**

“One example of the impact of not having diverse leadership means there is no innovation or improvement in advocacy or programming.”<sup>73</sup> (INGO actor)

“We are potentially less innovative and creative in what solutions look like. We are less valuing of the others perspective so we miss that input.”<sup>74</sup> (UN actor)

**Humanitarian leadership teams that are diverse and inclusive<sup>75</sup> are more likely to be perceived to listen and act upon the views of colleagues well.<sup>76</sup>**



**OF RESPONDENTS WHO PERCEIVED THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO BE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ALSO PERCEIVED THOSE TEAMS TO LISTEN AND ACT UPON THE VIEWS OF COLLEAGUE MOSTLY OR VERY WELL.**

**Humanitarian leadership teams that are diverse and inclusive are more likely to be perceived to reflect, listen and act upon the views of the communities with which they work.<sup>77</sup>**



**OF RESPONDENTS WHO PERCEIVED THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO BE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ALSO PERCEIVED THOSE TEAMS TO REFLECT THE DIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITIES MOSTLY OR VERY WELL.**



**OF RESPONDENTS WHO PERCEIVED THEIR LEADERSHIP TEAM TO BE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ALSO PERCEIVED THOSE TEAMS TO LISTEN AND ACT UPON THE VIEWS OF COMMUNITIES MOSTLY OR VERY WELL.**



#### **THE HUMANITARIAN IMPERATIVE, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

The magnitude and scale of humanitarian response operations can have a powerful influence on the diversity and inclusion of humanitarian teams and their leadership. In a large rapid response, organisations need to recruit large numbers of staff quickly and often rely on surge teams.

In this context balancing the humanitarian imperative with creating diverse and inclusive teams is a challenge if the recruitment pool, including surge rosters, is not itself diverse and inclusive.

**“Due to the nature of the response, what tends to happen is that corners are cut, first cut is diversity and you go with the tried and tested [staff] who can deliver.”<sup>78</sup> (INGO actor)**

Interviewees feel that during responses organisations hire the same pool of qualified and known staff, justifying recruitment decisions on the basis of meeting the humanitarian imperative in the most efficient timeliest manner.

**“You get the same people being recycled from crisis to crisis. We have no luxury of time for a three-month induction, we have three days if we are lucky. It comes down to who you know and who you can trust.”<sup>79</sup> (INGO actor)**

The sector’s challenge is to increase the diversity in the pool of candidates for surge and other teams.

# WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

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The evidence is mounting – diverse and inclusive leadership teams improve organisational performance and response effectiveness. But where to now?



## How can organisations use this report?

**Raise awareness:** A good place to begin is to use the report as a basis for discussion. The facts and figures are intended to provide an opportunity for humanitarian organisations to start to have conversations to raise staff awareness about the importance of diverse and inclusive teams. Statistics themselves won't alter people's behaviour – but they can be used as a basis to encourage reflection and shift assumptions.

**Reflect on teams:** The growing evidence provides an opportunity for organisations to reflect on the current composition of their leadership teams. How diverse and inclusive are leadership teams? What influence do recruitment process, culture, and unconscious bias have on the make-up leadership teams?

**Advocate:** A shift to more diverse and inclusive leadership teams can lead to improved leadership practice. The data in this report can be used as a basis for advocacy to prioritise diversity and inclusion. The diversity and inclusion agenda is an important part of improving organisational performance, including increased accountability to affected populations.



## What next for the research?

The next phase will take an action research approach with partner organisations to further unpack the relationship between diverse and inclusive leadership and effective humanitarian action. The research team will test some of the findings of this report such as whether diverse and inclusive teams approach risk differently using examples such as prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse; or how diverse and inclusive teams generate more innovative solutions. It will further identify best practice in relation to building and maintaining diverse and inclusive humanitarian teams that can inform and inspire change in recruitment and leadership practice.



## Want to be a partner?

If you are interested in improving your organisation's understanding of the impact of diverse and inclusive leadership on organisational performance and humanitarian action we would love to hear from you.

Please contact

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Pip Henty – [phenty@hag.org.au](mailto:phenty@hag.org.au)

# ANNEX A: METHODOLOGY

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## **Designing the research**

This phase of the research was designed at a methodology workshop held in April 2019. It convened a range of representatives from international non-government organisations, the United Nations, the Red Cross Movement and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). Participants were invited to discuss the challenges and opportunities for diverse and inclusive leadership, and to co-create ideas for a research approach for measuring the impact of diverse leadership.

The workshop participants agreed on conducting research to measure the current state of diversity in the humanitarian sector, including the development of a sector-wide survey.

## **Designing the tools:**

The Research used a mix of qualitative and quantitative research tools to capture information.

### ***Survey:***

The State of Diversity survey tool was developed to capture quantitative data on the diversity and inclusiveness of humanitarian leadership. A draft tool was developed by Humanitarian Advisory Group and Palladium and was tested and reviewed by the workshop participants and diversity and inclusion experts. Feedback was incorporated and the survey was finalised.

The survey was designed to be global in scope and as accessible as possible, including being translated into multiple key languages (French, Arabic, Spanish and Bangla); concise; as culturally appropriate as possible and; easily completed. The survey included strong, clear definitions of key terms, such as 'diversity', 'leadership' and 'inclusion.'

The survey was designed to capture both demographic data on age, gender, and location, as well as perceptions data regarding the current diversity and inclusiveness of leadership teams and key performance measures. The survey was hosted on SurveyMonkey and collected 1479 responses. The survey included an introduction which included confirmation of anonymous data collection and voluntary participation, and stated that by proceeding with the survey participants were acknowledging their informed consent to participate.

See Annex B for survey tool.

### ***Key Informant Interviews (KII)***

22 KII's were used to generate data from a number of diverse stakeholders from the humanitarian sector. Interviewees included HR and recruitment staff, gender equality and social inclusion leads, humanitarian leaders, and response staff. Interviewees were from INGOs, UN agencies, Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, and independent consultants. Guiding questions were used to understand what the barriers and enablers to increased diversity in leadership are, and what are organisations already doing to address diversity and inclusiveness. See Annex B for guiding questions.

Plain Language Statements were provided to all interviewees outlining the purpose of the research, how information would be used and how confidentiality and privacy would be protected.

## Promoting the survey

The survey was launched on May 22 2019. Humanitarian Advisory Group used conference platforms, social media, emails, and blogs to invite humanitarian organisations world-wide to participate in the survey. The survey was promoted through a number of networks. A number of INGO's and UN agencies also sent the survey out from their international headquarters.

## Analysing the survey results

Once the data was collected and translated, a statistics teams was engaged to clean and back code the data.

The data collected from our survey was analysed using IBM SPSS statistics. The whole respondent pool was 1479 respondents, but the majority of analysis in this report used data only from humanitarian sector organisations such as INGOs, Red Cross/Crescent societies, UN agencies and National NGOs, with a total of 1186 responses.

All statistical significance testing was done using a simple chi-square goodness-of-fit test, in which the proportions of certain subcategories of respondents (e.g. men and women) were tested against expected proportions drawn from the whole dataset. In a comparison of two groups, a p value of less than 0.05 was considered to represent a statistically significant difference, indicating that it was very unlikely to be due to chance. Where statistical significance is not mentioned, the data presented is purely representative of the responses received. Wherever possible, the statistics presented were derived from a minimum of 30 respondents. No chi-square test included fewer than five respondents. In order to protect the anonymity of certain groups that had very low counts, such as gender queer and non-binary populations, their data was not presented, because low numbers may have made it easy to identify individual responses.

Throughout this report, where we refer to data on the humanitarian sector, we can only speak of the data being representative of those who responded to our survey. The results of this survey cannot be extrapolated to represent the whole sector in every part of the world, but rather should be used to indicate possible trends in the sector.

## Limitations to the research

**Accessibility:** Certain remote populations or those without sufficient internet infrastructure may have difficulty completing an online survey, and therefore are likely to be under-represented. The survey was not accessible to visually impaired populations. There was no phone-based option for taking the survey, and the SurveyMonkey format is not necessarily compatible with all screen-reading software.

**Language:** The survey was available in five major world languages (English, Arabic, Bangla, Spanish and French); we lacked the resources to translate it into all the primary languages spoken by humanitarian staff. This limited the participation of staff who speak languages other than those listed.

# ANNEX B: TOOLS

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## **Key Informant Interview Guiding questions:**

1. What are the enablers and barriers to developing diverse teams within your organisation?
2. What are the enablers and barriers to developing diverse leadership teams?
3. What are the enablers and barriers to sustaining diverse team members? Do they grow and develop in the organisation or exit at certain levels and why?
4. How do you undertake recruitment? What works in terms of bringing on diverse team members? Do you address unconscious bias?
5. How have you seen diversity work and why?
6. How have you seen diversity fail and why?
7. What has been the impact of having a diverse/not diverse leadership team?
8. How does your organisation foster inclusion?
9. Is your organisation proactive in promoting diversity and inclusion? Can you provide examples of why/why not?
10. How are your programs impacted/how could your programs be impacted, by diverse leadership teams?

## State of Diversity: Global Humanitarian Sector Survey

The international humanitarian sector is facing many new challenges; these are driving rapid change and exposing a need for more diversity in approaches, funding sources, and thinking. In particular, diversity and inclusion in leadership is vital.

Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) is undertaking research into how diverse and inclusive leadership can tackle new humanitarian challenges. The first step is this short survey, which aims to measure perceptions of the diversity and inclusiveness of the humanitarian sector. We appreciate your assistance in completing it.

**Purpose:** Our findings about the perceived diversity and inclusiveness of humanitarian leadership will be provided to you and the sector, and will underpin subsequent research.

**Confidentiality:** No names or other identifying data are needed or requested. No information will be attributed to individuals or organisations. Data collected by Survey Monkey complies with EU and US data protection regulations.

If you have an accessibility requirement and require the survey in another form, please contact the researchers (see below).

This survey is also available in English, French, Spanish and Bangla.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about HAG's research, please contact:

Kate Sutton, Director, ksutton@hag.org.au

Pip Henty, Researcher, phenty@hag.org.au

### **A note on definitions:**

For the purpose of the research, the following definitions apply:

**Diversity:** the differences between individuals in how they identify according to gender, age, disability, cultural background, sexual orientation and social and economic background, profession, education, work experiences, and organisational role.

**Inclusion:** inclusion occurs when a diversity of people feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organisation.

This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. If you feel comfortable about participating, please press 'next' to begin.

#### **1. What is your age? (logic: select one)**

- 16-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 55-59

- 60-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

**2. What gender do you identify as? (logic: select one)**

- Male
- Female
- Other. If Other, please specify (optional).....
- Prefer not to say

**3. What is your nationality? (logic: select one)**

(Have all countries as an option)

**4. Where are you currently based? (logic: select one)**

(Have all countries as an option)

**5. Do you identify as a person with disabilities?**

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. (CRPD, 2016)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

**6. What type of organisation do you work for?**

- UN agency
- INGO
- National NGO
- Private sector
- Government
- Donor
- Red Cross/Red Crescent
- Faith-based organisation
- Academia
- Independent consultant or contractor
- Other. If Other, please specify .....

**7. What is your highest level of education?**

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Diploma/certificate
- Degree
- Masters
- PhD
- Post-Doctorate

**8. Did any of your parent (s) or guardian (s) complete a University degree (e.g. BA, BSc, or higher)?**

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

**9. What position best describes your role:**

- Senior and executive level leadership (e.g. CEO / country director/Humanitarian Coordinator/ members of Humanitarian Country Teams)
- Organisational leadership (e.g. Humanitarian Directors, HR/Finance Directors, management with multiple teams)
- Program and/or technical leadership (e.g. management of multiple programs or projects/ management of multiple technical staff or teams)
- Project Leadership (e.g. management of individual humanitarian projects)
- Experienced individual contributor (technical expert/professional)
- Entry level individual contributor (program/organisational support role)
- Administration
- Intern / volunteer

The final questions relate to the leadership team whose decisions most directly impact on your day to day work. You may be a member of this leadership team.

**10. In your opinion: (Logic: Likert matrix)**

Very; Mostly; Somewhat; Not very; Not at all

- How diverse is your leadership team?
- How inclusive is your leadership team?

### **11. How well does your leadership team: (Logic: Likert matrix)**

(Very well; Mostly well; Somewhat well; Not very well; Not at all well)

- Make decisions?
- Manage risk?
- Promote innovation?
- Listen and act upon the views of colleagues?
- Listen and act upon the views of communities that you work with?
- Reflect the diversity of the population / communities you work with?

Confidentiality: Please note no information will be attributed to an individual or organisation. The survey does not request your name or the name of the organisation you work for. Data collected by Survey Monkey complies with EU and US data protection regulations.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the survey or research please contact:

Kate Sutton, Director, [ksutton@hag.org.au](mailto:ksutton@hag.org.au)

Pip Henty, Researcher, [phenty@hag.org.au](mailto:phenty@hag.org.au)

Thank you for your participation

# ENDNOTES

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- 1 Interview 9
- 2 The survey was open for completion from 16 May to 19 July 2019. See methodology for more details.
- 3 Humanitarian Advisory Group, Diverse and Inclusive Leadership Workshop Report, April 2019. [https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Diverse-and-inclusive-leadership-workshop-report\\_electronic\\_10May19.pdf](https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Diverse-and-inclusive-leadership-workshop-report_electronic_10May19.pdf)
- 4 Emergency Management Victoria (2017). The Emergency Management Diversity and Inclusion Framework.
- 5 Adapted from Diversity and inclusion, Diversity Council Australia, 2018, <https://www.dca.org.au/di-planning/getting-started-di/diversityinclusion-explained>
- 6 O'Leary, J, Russell, G and Tilly, J (2015), Building inclusion: an evidence based model of inclusive leadership, Diversity Council of Australia, [https://www.dca.org.au/sites/default/files/dca\\_inclusive\\_leadership\\_synopsis\\_accessible.pdf](https://www.dca.org.au/sites/default/files/dca_inclusive_leadership_synopsis_accessible.pdf)
- 7 Humanitarian Advisory Group, Drawing on our Diversity: Humanitarian Leadership, August 2018. <https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Drawing-on-our-Diversity-Humanitarian-Leadership.pdf>
- 8  $p=0.036$
- 9  $p<0.001$
- 10 Interview 19
- 11 High and extreme risk countries identified: <https://www.controlrisks.com/-/media/corporate/files/riskmap/maps/riskmapmap2019uka184web.pdf> Security risk evaluates threats to the financial, physical and human assets of a company, as well as the willingness and capability of public security forces to protect corporate assets and personnel. Factors assessed include military conflict, insurgency, terrorist attacks, strikes and riots, vandalism, kidnapping, and violent and acquisitive crime.
- 12 Interview 6
- 13  $p=0.018$
- 14 Interviews 3, 5, 8 and 9
- 15 Interview 3
- 16 Interview 23
- 17 Interviews 1, 3, 4, 12, 6, 14 and 18
- 18 Interview 1, 13
- 19 Interview 13
- 20 Interviews 1, 2, 5 and 6
- 21 Dorey, K, How can we include LGBT people in the humanitarian sector, <<https://www.chsalliance.org/get-support/article/how-can-we-include-lgbt-people-in-the-humanitarian-sector/>>; Feinstein International Centre, Stop the Sexual Assault against Humanitarian and Development Aid Workers. 2017. < <https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/stop-sexual-assault-against-aid-workers/>>
- 22 The status of people from sexual and gender minorities in many contexts globally can often put those people at risk. In order to mitigate the risk to survey participants globally, and to respect the complexity of culturally and linguistically diverse conceptualisations of sexual and gender minorities, data was not collected on this topic.
- 23 Methodology workshop; Interviews 6, 9 and 10
- 24 Dorey, K, How can we include LGBT people in the humanitarian sector, <<https://www.chsalliance.org/get-support/article/how-can-we-include-lgbt-people-in-the-humanitarian-sector/>>;
- 25 Interview 10
- 26  $p<0.001$
- 27 World Bank Group, Disability Inclusion and Accountability Framework. 2018 <<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/437451528442789278/pdf/126977-WP-PUBLIC-DisabilityInclusionAccountabilitydigital.pdf>>
- 28 Interview 20
- 29 Interview 5
- 30  $p=0.01$
- 31 Knox Clarke, P. The State of the Humanitarian System 2018, < <https://sohs.alnap.org/help-library/the-state-of-the-humanitarian-system-2018-full-report>>
- 32 Interview 5
- 33 Interview 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 21,
- 34 Interview 9
- 35 Interview 24

- 36 The survey did not include a specific question regarding ethnicity and race. Whilst one set of ethnicity questions might be suitable in one context it might be wholly unsuitable in another. Connelly, Roxanne, Gayle, Vernon and Lambert, Paul. (2016) Ethnicity and ethnic group measures in social survey research. Methodological Innovations, 9. pp. 1-10. [http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/77804/7/WRAP\\_Methodological%20Innovations-2016-Connelly-2059799116642885.pdf](http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/77804/7/WRAP_Methodological%20Innovations-2016-Connelly-2059799116642885.pdf)
- 37 Interview 23
- 38  $p < 0.001$
- 39 There is no single definition of “localisation”. In the Grand Bargain (a 2016 agreement between some of the largest humanitarian donors and agencies), signatories committed, under the heading of “more support and finding tools to local and national responders,” to “making principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary” while continuing to recognise the vital role of international actors, in particular in situations of armed conflict. -<https://media.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/05/Localization-external-policy-brief-4-April-2.pdf>
- 40 Interviews 1, 3, 4 11 and 12
- 41 Interview 1
- 42 Interview 19
- 43 Socioeconomic status (SES) is typically broken into three levels (high, middle, low). Any or all three variables (income, education and occupation) can be assessed. Higher levels of education are associated with better economic and psychological outcomes. Research continues to link lower SES to lower academic achievement and slower rates of academic progress than higher-SES communities <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/education>
- 44 Interview 23
- 45 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Information Paper: Measures of Socioeconomic Status, 2011, p. 21, p. 24, [https://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/367D3800605DB064CA2578B60013445C/\\$File/1244055001\\_2011.pdf](https://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/367D3800605DB064CA2578B60013445C/$File/1244055001_2011.pdf)
- 46 Interviews 19 and 20
- 47 Interview 20
- 48 Interview 19
- 49 Interview 10
- 50 Interview 7
- 51 Interviews 1, 3, 5, 6 7, 8, 9, 14 and 17
- 52 Interviews 3 and 7
- 53 Interview 4
- 54 Interview 5
- 55 Interview 8
- 56 Interview 9
- 57 Interview 9
- 58 See Annex A for more details
- 59 Respondents who perceived their leadership teams to be very or mostly diverse
- 60 Respondents who perceived their leadership teams to be very or mostly inclusive
- 61 Respondents who perceived their leadership teams to be very or mostly diverse
- 62 Respondents who perceived their leadership teams to be very or mostly inclusive
- 63 Interview 1
- 64 Interview 3
- 65 Interview 9
- 66 Diverse and inclusive is defined as responds of very or mostly diverse and very or mostly inclusive.
- 67 Interview 7
- 68 Diverse and inclusive is defined as responds of very or mostly diverse and very or mostly inclusive.
- 69  $p < 0.001$
- 70 Interview 19
- 71 Diverse and inclusive is defined as responds of very or mostly diverse and very or mostly inclusive.
- 72  $p < 0.001$
- 73 Interview 4
- 74 Interview 19
- 75 Diverse and inclusive is defined as responds of very or mostly diverse and very or mostly inclusive.
- 76  $p < 0.001$
- 77  $p < 0.001$
- 78 Interview 17
- 79 Interview 9

Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) was founded in 2012 to elevate the profile of humanitarian action in Asia and the Pacific. Set up as a social enterprise, HAG provides a unique space for thinking, research, technical advice and training that positively contributes to excellence in humanitarian practice.

Humanitarian Horizons is a three-year research initiative supported by DFAT. The program adds unique value to humanitarian action in Asian and Pacific contexts by generating evidence-based research and creating conversations for change. The program is supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

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