

2018 REPORT

# Realizing Diversity, Accelerating Impact.

*State of Diversity  
in Global Social Impact*



# Acknowledgements

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## Quantum Impact

[www.quantumimpact.org](http://www.quantumimpact.org)

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# Executive Summary

Quantum Impact is a diversity and inclusion non-profit focused on helping mission-driven organizations achieve greater impact by helping them build inclusive and innovative teams.

In 2017, Quantum Impact's team of researchers analyzed data from Quantum Impact's own leadership survey and storytelling projects and from other key research to analyze the state of diversity among leadership teams in organizations working on social impact at a global scale (also referred to as international development).

We found that overall, two out of three organizations do not have gender-balanced leadership teams and that four out of five organizations do not have a representative proportion of people of color on their leadership teams. Boards of directors have even less representation of both women and people of color.

Furthermore, we found that the stories of women and people of color highlight several reasons why this leadership gap exists, including issues related to recruitment, promotion, and creating workplaces that feel safe.

The research findings also helped us identify recommendations for organizations, individuals, and funders that we believe can help improve diversity in this sector. Our recommendations include:

- 1. Using data to inform decisions and strategic plans*
- 2. Focusing on systemic changes*
- 3. Incorporating diversity metrics in funding decisions*
- 4. Helping to generate and share knowledge as individuals*
- 5. Taking ownership of our own leadership styles*

Finally, our researchers have also identified a few core areas for future research, including examining the data through an intersectional lens, the types of leadership roles that women and people of color are in, and taking a closer look at organizations that include themes such as gender equality in their mission statements.

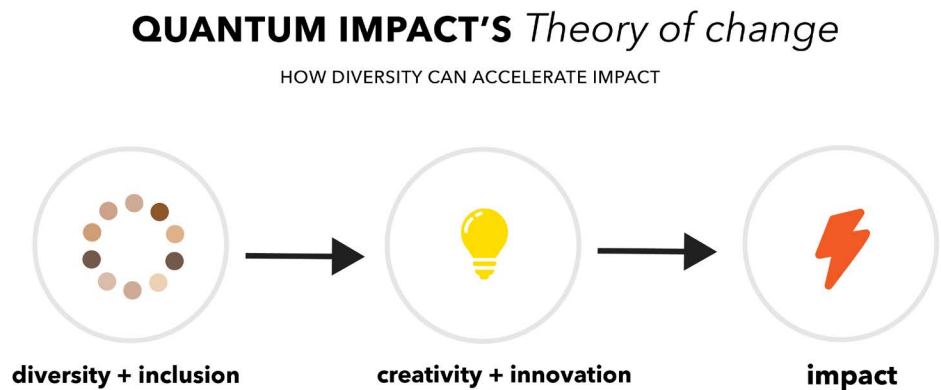


## Introduction

Launched in 2017, Quantum Impact is on a mission to help socially minded global organizations build the most inclusive teams possible.

### *Why study diversity and inclusion?*

Research shows that increased diversity is linked to stronger team performance. Diverse and empowered teams challenge, innovate, explore, and contribute more. Leaders in turn have more information, which leads to improved decision-making. Companies that are diverse and inclusive in turn have higher profits and more engaged staff.



Quantum Impact believes that all of these factors are true for the global social impact and international development sector as well. To improve aid effectiveness, we need more diverse and inclusive teams working in this sector.



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Over the years, however, we have focused on *how* we create social impact and achieve results through projects, products, and technologies while largely ignoring the *who* — the teams of people working to create change. Our researchers are working to understand the impact that the teams themselves have on impact.

To do this, we first need a baseline understanding of what diversity in the global social impact sector looks like today. This understanding can, in turn, help us to conduct additional research in the future.

### ***Critical moment in time with a critical gap in knowledge***

Over the past several years, researchers have conducted [similar analyses](#) across a number of different sectors, most notably in the tech sector.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, “global social impact” does not fit neatly into any other study we have reviewed to date. It is also challenging to find information through public sources, such as U.S. Department of Labor statistics or websites that collect and share information about companies because “social impact” and “international development” are not commonly listed as categories in the data collection forms. Social impact organizations are a mix of for and non-profits, social enterprises, and management consulting firms.

Without this baseline information, we cannot answer the critical question of “how are we doing?” Without knowing where we are, we cannot plot a truly customized and effective path forward.

#### **KEY VOCAB CHECK**

*In this report, we use the terms international development and global social impact interchangeably. Both terms refer to mission-driven organizations working to promote positive change in the world on a global scale.*



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## Quantum Impact's Research Approach

In its first year of operation, Quantum Impact decided to conduct original research to better understand the diversity and inclusion landscape within the global social impact sector.

In 2017, we undertook the following research initiatives:

**Survey of leadership teams and boards.** We examined the leadership teams of over 200 different organizations working in global social impact and explored and examined the gender, race, and ethnic makeup of those teams. In this effort, we collaborated with Dr. Michelle Sandhoff, Associate Professor of Sociology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a published author and expert on diversity in organizations. For additional information about our partnership with Dr. Sandhoff, see Annex 1: Leadership Survey.<sup>3</sup>

**Women's Storytelling Project.** In a year marked by courageous women sharing stories about their experiences around equity and inclusion (or lack thereof) at work, we gathered more than 40 stories from women at all stages of their social impact careers. These stories chronicled the range of issues women working in globally focused organizations face in their offices, on their teams, and in their work. See Annex 2 for more details.

**Literature review.** We began reviewing and cataloging the existing body of evidence and research. We have incorporated the most critical research we have reviewed to date. In addition, we have included an annotated bibliography in our Literature Review Report. We continue to expand our literature and research review to include additional studies and reviews.

In the *Realizing Diversity, Accelerating Impact* report, we combine our findings from these research projects. As part of this, we also contextualize and compare our findings to findings across other industries.

Compiling global diversity data is a massive undertaking, so we were selective in where we focused our research for this first report. We decided the best place to start examining diversity and inclusion was in the headquarters of U.S.-based social impact organizations. In the future, we hope to expand our research to include country offices to gain a better understanding of how diversity and inclusion varies by geography.

Our decision to focus on headquarters was a practical one. Most major decisions on organizational strategy and budget for U.S.-based social impact organizations are made in the United States. If we can better understand the diversity of the teams making these decisions, we can begin to talk about how diversity influences how development is implemented. Once we start to acknowledge the linkage between diversity and impact, we can create strategies to accelerate greater social impact by hiring and retaining more diverse staff.

Our research also focused on three critical levels: staff, leadership, and board members. We collected most stories from staff, which helped us better understand the experiences of entry and mid-level professionals. We also collected stories and examined organizational data around their leaders. As we know, leadership teams decide on strategy and allocate resources. They are critical in making hiring and promotion decisions, on setting workplace culture, and on deciding what types of programs or products to invest in.

Likewise, boards of directors help organizations set strategy. [Research](#) has shown that diverse boards bring additional insights and ideas, raise more money, and ultimately attain better results.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, a recent survey of [1,300 non-profit organizations](#) in the United States found that 79 percent of chief executives say that expanding racial and ethnic diversity on boards is important, or greatly important, to increasing their organization's ability to advance its mission.<sup>5</sup>





## Methodology Overview

Our report pulls uses both quantitative and qualitative data sources collected in these primary ways:

**Stories from women.** In soliciting stories, we used a convenience sampling approach. Researchers asked for volunteers through open calls via our website, mailing list, and social media outlets. Additionally, Quantum Impact held three focus groups in Washington, D.C., and in San Francisco, California. These methods for collecting stories are not scientifically rigorous, and we acknowledge a degree of selection bias. However, they allowed us to focus on our target audience of professionals working specifically in global social impact. As a result, we ensured that every story we collected was from the sector we were studying. Additionally, these stories highlight important themes that can spark meaningful conversations and inform future empirical research.

*Selection.* We identified organizations by looking at attendance at key industry conferences, such as the InterAction Forum, and membership in associations like the Coalition of International Development Companies, Society for International Development, etc.

*Data collected.* For the identified organizations, we used the information on their websites to assess the gender balance and racial/ethnic representation of both the leadership teams and the boards of directors.

The researchers used a combination of pictures and names to draw inferences about gender and race/ethnicity. We acknowledge that gender and race/ethnicity are social constructs, and thus it is hard to draw fully accurate conclusions based on names and pictures. We discuss the limitations of our methodology in Annex 1.

*Information analyzed.* Of the organizations analyzed, researchers removed those where there was not sufficient information about the indicators in question. The details of the final samples for both leadership teams and boards of directors are outlined in the text box.

*Type of organizations.* To better understand organizational factors that may have contributed to the results in terms of equity and representation, we also cataloged several key characteristics of the organizations:

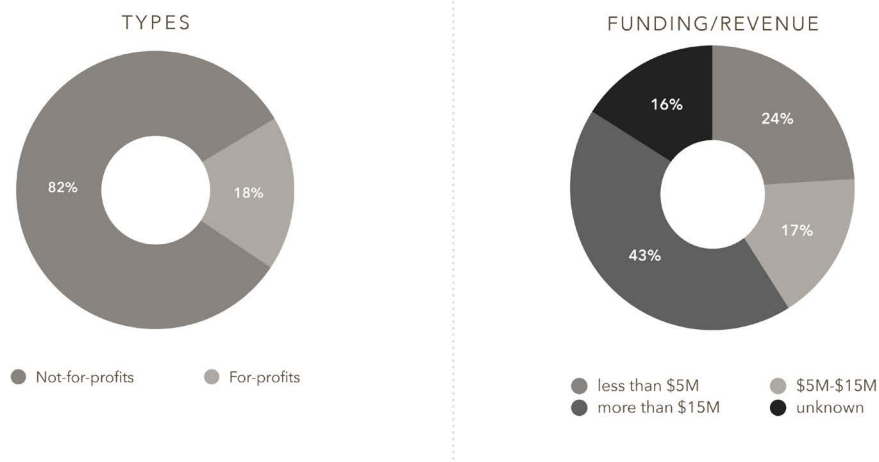
**For-profit or non-profit status, based on registration.**

**Funding**, analyzed in terms of annual budget size

**Age**, categorized as new (formed after 2005) or long-standing (formed before 1965) for ease of analysis. For additional breakdown of this category, please see Annex 1.

**Geographic reach and sector**, but we did not use this characteristic in our analysis, as we describe in Annex 1.

## ORGANIZATIONS



We have a full analysis of these factors in our detailed report and methodology section in Annex 1. Overall, however, we noticed that there were few clear trends or correlations based these factors. As a result, we focus on our overall numbers without distinguishing between the types of organizations detailed in Key Findings.

## **SAMPLE SIZES**

**For leadership teams. For the gender analysis,** our final sample included 976 leaders from across 206 organizations.

**For representation for leaders of color analysis,** our final sample included 777 leaders across 162 organizations. We only included organizations in the race/ethnicity analysis if 75 percent or more of the leadership team list had a racial or ethnic identity that we could

**For boards of directors. Our sample for the gender analysis** included 2,303 leaders across 162 organizations. Many organizations did not list any information about their boards of directors, so fewer organizations were analyzed in total. However, each board of directors was fairly large, so the total sample size is larger.

**For the representation of leaders of color analysis,** our sample included 1,014 leaders across 79 organizations for the racial/ethnic representation for board of directors. identify based on the information available on the website.



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**Leadership survey.** For the leadership survey, we analyzed publicly available information from nearly 300 organizations. We present detailed information about our approach and methodology in Annex 1, and summarize it below.

## Key Findings

Below, we highlight our key findings from this year's research.

### WOMAN IN LEADERSHIP

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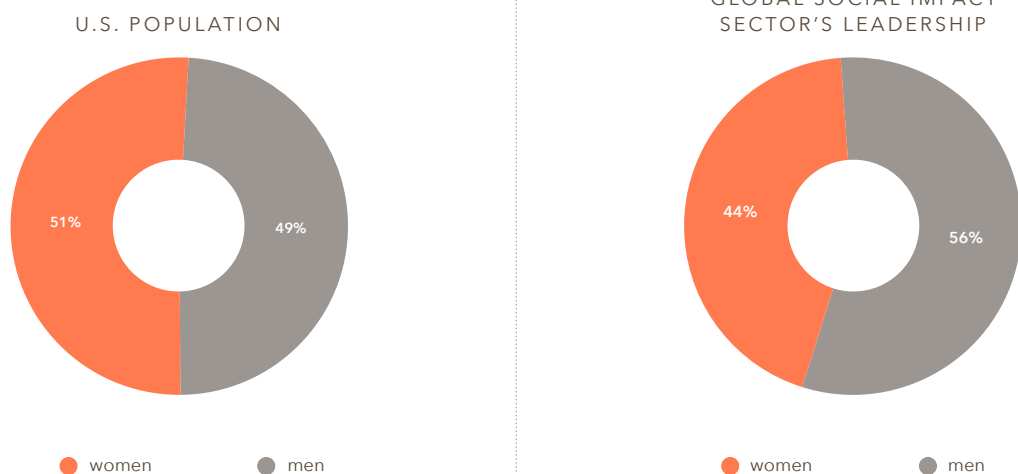
#### Leadership Survey Key Findings

**Demographic context.** According to the 2016 estimated census for the United States, 51 percent of the population identifies as female. Therefore, we marked an organization as not having a “gender balanced” leadership team if it has less than 50 percent women on their leadership teams. For a full breakdown of gender representation, please see Annex 1.

**Aggregated findings.** In total, we looked at 976 leaders across 206 organizations. Of these, 44 percent of all leaders in the sector were women.

### GENDER GAP COMPARISON

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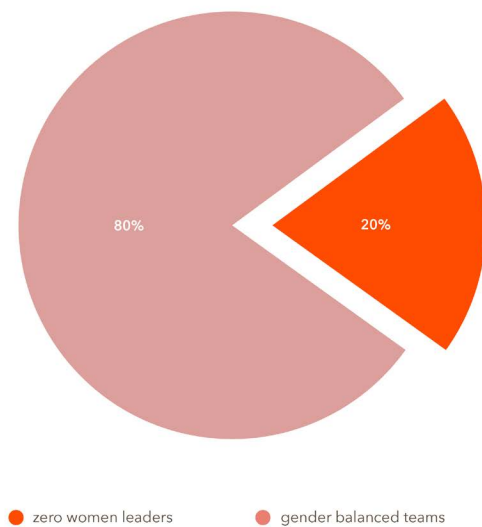
**Organizational findings.** We also looked at gender balance within organizations. Of the 206 organizations we analyzed, we found that two out of three organizations (66 percent) did not have gender-balanced leadership teams.

## GENDER BALANCE ON LEADERSHIP TEAMS WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS



One out of every five organizations (20 percent) do not have a single woman serving on their leadership teams, as listed on their websites.

## ZERO SCORES - NO WOMEN LEADERS



Some additional results of note include:

Generally, lack of gender balance on leadership teams held true regardless of the size of the leadership team.<sup>6</sup>

The lack of gender balance on leadership teams was similar for non-profits and for-profits, with for-profits having slightly more balanced numbers.

The lack of gender balance on leadership teams was roughly the same among organizations with annual funding/revenue between \$5 million and \$15 million and more than \$15 million, especially when we compare averages. The only difference of note was when we compare organizations making less than \$5 million a year and those making more than \$15 million a year, with organizations with less revenue demonstrating less gender balance.<sup>7</sup>

The only factor that appeared to have a substantial impact was the age of the organization. Of newer organizations (those formed after 2005), 36 percent have no women leaders. Only 15 percent of older organizations have no women leaders. However, in terms of gender-balanced leadership teams — those whose leadership teams are at least 50 percent women — we found no substantial difference based on the age of the organization.

## Staff Stories Highlights: Contributions to the Gender Gap

*Our leadership survey data suggests that a persistent gender gap exists at the leadership levels of global social impact organizations. Quantum Impact's Storytelling Project sheds light on the types of adversity and institutional bias that contribute to this gap.*

**Persistent and institutionalized pay gaps.** One key informant described in detail how a [persistent pay gap between her and a male co-worker led to her leaving the industry](#). In her story, she describes discussing the issue with her supervisor and with her organization's human resources department. She documented the exact achievements and tasks that she worked on which would justify equitable pay. And how time and again she was turned down. This [article](#) discusses the use of biographical data forms among USAID-funded international development organizations as a tool that institutionalizes bias by basing salaries on salary history rather than on job function. As a result, women who start off with a small pay discrepancy are forced to see the salary disparity increase year over year, regardless of performance.

**Harassment.** Women's stories demonstrate a clear pattern of sexual harassment in the office. One woman [shared a story](#) of how harassment by a male colleague led her to leave a prestigious program at a multilateral development organization. Another woman [described going to happy hour](#) with a mentor for advice, and being asked out on a date – despite her mentor's marital status. Another woman described a similar story – going to dinner with someone who she thought she was a mentor, only to have them try to kiss her at the end of the evening. These stories highlight yet another struggle that women experience – finding career mentorship. Research shows that having a career sponsor or mentor leads to more promotion opportunities for men. These opportunities are harder to come by for women as they try to navigate between opportunity and harassment.

**Micro-aggressions.** We also [heard from several women](#) about the day-to-day small annoyances that build up over time. The favorite dress that one woman could no longer wear because a male co-worker would always comment on it. The expectation that women should wear heels and still walk with male co-workers to meetings around town. The senior female executive who made a point to come down hard on younger ambitious women to “toughen them up” for leadership roles. These experiences are consistent with [research](#) that shows that men and women are treated differently for doing the same thing.

**Biases.** Then, there are the stories of bias. *The male co-worker who had no trouble gossiping with female colleagues in the office, but when it came to technical conversations, he only talked to the other men in the office.* Or the man who wouldn't let a woman work on the technical deliverable – even though she had a similar technical background as the men on the team. Or the woman who did not know what to do in a recruitment meeting when her two male co-workers disqualified the best candidate for a high-level position because “the counterparts would never take a woman seriously, so we simply can't propose her.”

*These are just samples of the stories we collected that highlight the day-to-day experiences that women go through that add up over a career through the [snowball effect](#). All these obstacles – and more – contribute to the absence of women in leadership roles. We highlight more examples of adversity that minorities face later in this report.*



## Contextualizing our Findings: Comparing with Other Sectors

We know that not having enough women in leadership is an issue across sectors. In fact, as one researcher proclaimed, there are [fewer women CEOs than there are CEOs named John](#).<sup>8</sup>

So how does global social impact compare? That can be a complex question to answer that will require additional research. However, there are some high-level comparisons we could make using our review of existing research and studies from other sectors. We recognize and fully acknowledge that these are imperfect comparisons given that the data is not exactly the same across all sectors. But we believe that it adds some context in which to understand our findings.

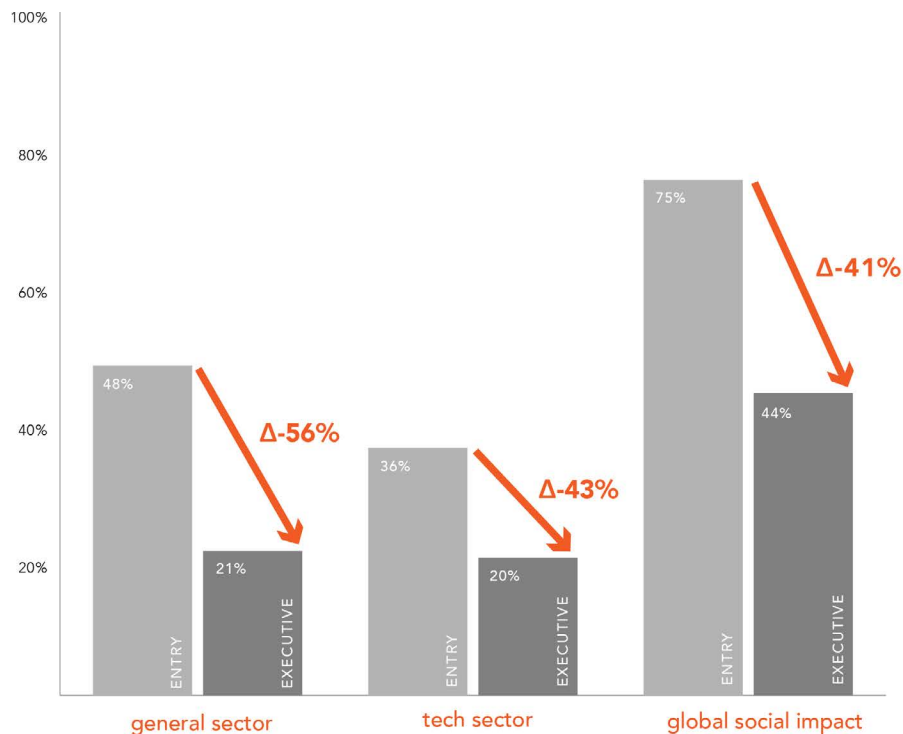
**General sectors.** In the [Women in the Workplace Report](#), researchers at McKinsey and LeanIn found that if you look only at C-suite (the highest levels of executive leadership) roughly 21 percent are women. At entry level, however, women comprise about 48 percent of the workforce.<sup>9</sup>

**Tech sector.** In the tech sector, [only 20 percent of leaders are women](#), according to the U.S. Department of Labor,<sup>10</sup> and about 35.7 percent of the general employee pool are women.

**Non-profits.** What about global social impact? That's a harder comparison to make. We did not find publicly available data on the percentage of women among entry-level global social impact professionals. The closest comparable number that we could find was from [the White House Project, which estimates that 73 percent of the non-profit workforce in the United States is female](#).<sup>11</sup> Another report that surveyed 900 organizations found that, for domestic-focused non-profits, "white men make up only 18.3 percent of the total workforce, [while] they make up over 40 percent of executive leadership within philanthropic non-profits." This report also found that women at foundations make up about 75 percent of the staff as well.<sup>12</sup>



## DECLINE IN REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN BETWEEN ENTRY LEVEL AND LEADERSHIP ACROSS SECTORS



We assumed that the entry-level workforce in global social impact is somewhere between 70-80 percent because we believe that it mirrors the overall non-profit space based on anecdotal information we have from organizations in this sector, as well as based on the percentage of organizations in our sample size that are non-profits.<sup>13</sup>

Overall, this analysis demonstrates that global social impact organizations experience similar trends to other sectors with respect to the pipeline from entry level to leadership. We discuss this further, including exploring possible reasons why, in our Conclusions.

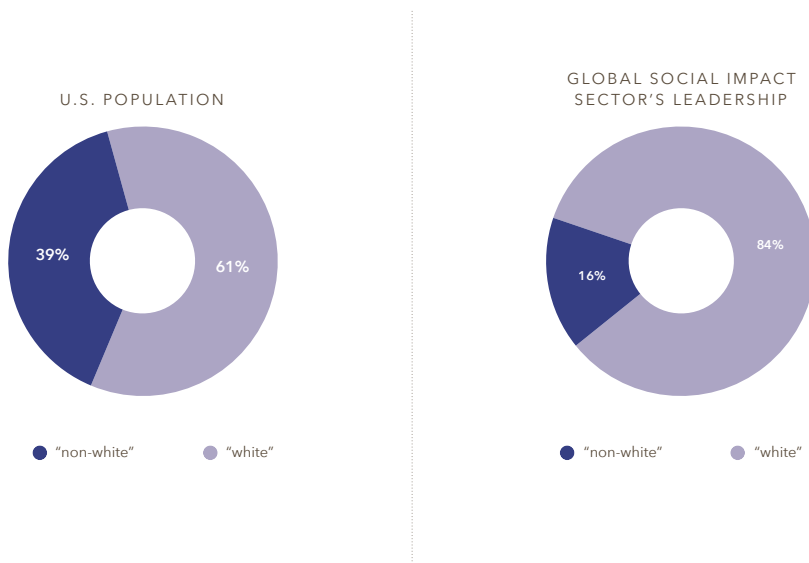
## Leadership Survey Key Findings

**Demographic context.** The demographics around race/ethnicity are more complicated. According to the 2016 estimated census for the United States, 39 percent of the population is “non-white.”

For ease of reporting, our researchers categorized an organization as having equitable representation of people of color if at least 35 percent of their leadership team comprises people of color. A full breakdown and analysis is available in Annex 1.

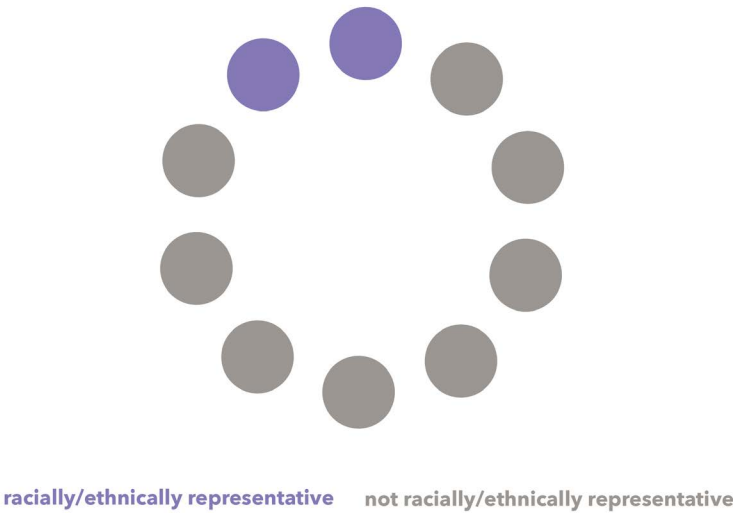
**Aggregated findings.** Of the 777 leaders we analyzed for race/ethnicity, we identified 16 percent as leaders of color.

### RACE/ETHNICITY COMPARISON

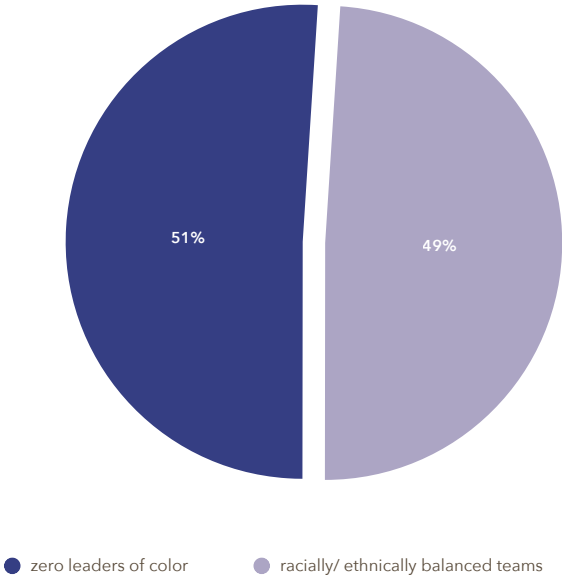


**Organizational findings.** Of the 162 organizations we analyzed, we found that four out of five organizations (80 percent) had leadership teams that did not have a representative number of people of color. Half of all organizations (51 percent) had no leaders of color.

REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR  
ON LEADERSHIP TEAMS WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS



ZERO SCORES -  
NO LEADERS OF COLOR





When we analyzed this information across different types of organizations, we found more variation than in the gender data, but not as much as we had initially hypothesized.<sup>14</sup>

For example, there is no substantial difference between non-profits and for-profit organizations. The age of an organization appeared to have a substantial difference only if we compare organizations more than 50 years old to those less than 15 years old. For organizations in between, the age of the organization did not have a significant impact.

However, there were two exceptions. Larger organizations were more likely to have a leader of color (i.e., they were less likely to have no leaders of color). However, they were more likely to under-represent leaders of color (i.e., less than 35 percent leaders of color). Essentially, larger organizations were better at having one leader of color. However, the data suggests that as organizations grow, they do not continue to hire additional leaders of color.

Additionally, as with gender, the funding for an organization appeared to make a difference only when we compared the extremes: 66 percent of organizations that make more than \$15 million a year had representative numbers of people of color (meaning at least 35 percent of leadership teams are people of color), compared to only 44 percent of organizations that make less than \$5 million. We discuss these findings and more in greater detail in Annex 2.

## Staff Stories Highlights: Contributions to the Race Gap

Our researchers found that the gap in leaders of color in the global social impact sector mirrors gaps in other sectors and industries. Many of the stories we gathered shed light on some of the reasons there are relatively fewer people of color working in headquarters offices and why the gap widens at the leadership level.

**Barriers to entry.** One woman [described](#) how she struggled to join the global social impact sector at the entry level. One factor that worked against her was her lack of overseas volunteer experience in Latin America, even though she is a native Spanish speaker and had grown up between the United States and a Latin American country through which she had learned critical soft cross-cultural skills. Recent research has shown that being unable to participate in unpaid internships and volunteer opportunities is a barrier to entry for people from lower socioeconomic groups — including immigrants — in sectors like government and finance. In the global social impact sector, this barrier can be even higher if unpaid overseas experience is used as a critical factor in hiring decisions at the entry level.

**Bias – unconscious and conscious.** An African-American woman [shared](#) how she was routinely confused for administrative or office services/facilities staff because of the color of her skin. For example, whenever she was in the mailroom, she would be asked questions about where to find staplers or how to use the copy machine. When it came time for promotions, she wondered if the same biases were hindering her opportunities. Numerous studies have shown that many of us unconsciously pair certain leadership skills with specific skin colors.

A Latinx woman shared how she felt isolated and alone in the room as white colleagues made fun of her mother's maiden name. A number of famous ["resume tests"](#) have shown that if recruiters are sent identical resumes but with different names, the Hispanic, Muslim, or otherwise "ethnic" names are 50 percent less likely to get a call back for an interview. The stories we gathered demonstrate that this bias around names continues even after someone is hired.

A Muslim-American woman shared how a co-worker casually mentioned how he would like to solve the "terrorism" problem by shooting all Muslims. She described talking to leaders within her organization and being told that she was being too sensitive to comments that were likely meant in jest.

These types of stories offer anecdotal evidence of why many people of color do not make it onto leadership teams. Those who do are often in stereotypical administrative roles, such as human resources, operations, finance, IT, or diversity managers, rather than sales, products, or strategy.

## Contextualizing our Findings: Comparing with Other Sectors

So, how does the global social impact sector compare? As with the research on gender, we used our literature review data to identify some points of comparison with other sectors. Although imperfect, this does help us contextualize our findings.

There are relatively few reports and studies on race/ethnicity, so the comparison points are harder to find. To have some comparison data, we looked at the U.S. Department of Labor's numbers in this [public report on diversity in the tech industry](#).<sup>15</sup>

**Private sector.** Only 36.5 percent of the general private sector workforce are people of color; 32 percent of the leadership in the general private sector are people of color.

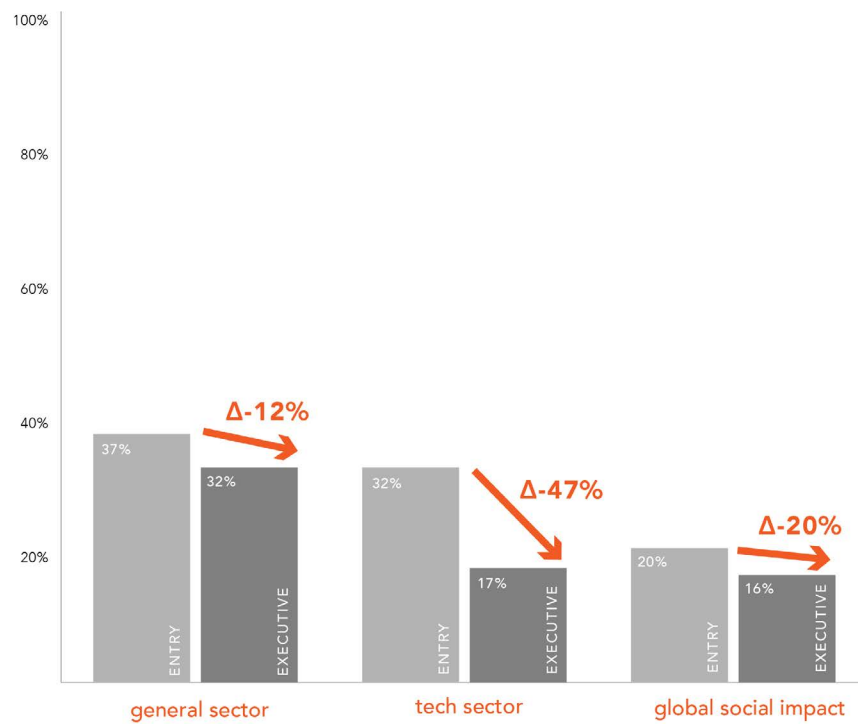
**Tech sector.** In technology, 31.5 percent of the entry-level workforce are people of color, while only 16.7 percent of leadership are people of color.

**Domestic non-profits.** [Reports](#) show that among domestic non-profits, about 18 percent of the staff is made up of people of color, and for foundations, people of color make up 22 percent of the staff, for an average of 20 percent.

**Leadership.** Research shows that, overall, non-profits have less than [20 percent leadership of color](#).<sup>17</sup> Another [study](#) found that non-profits have 18 percent leadership of color, while foundations have only 8 percent. These numbers track closely with our findings from our leadership survey as well.<sup>18</sup>

Overall, this data demonstrates that global social impact organizations have trends similar to other sectors for the pipeline from entry-level positions to leadership, as shown in our infographic.

## DECLINE REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR BETWEEN ENTRY LEVEL AND LEADERSHIP ACROSS SECTORS



Overall, this data demonstrates that global social impact organizations have trends similar to other sectors for the pipeline from entry-level positions to leadership, as shown in our infographic.

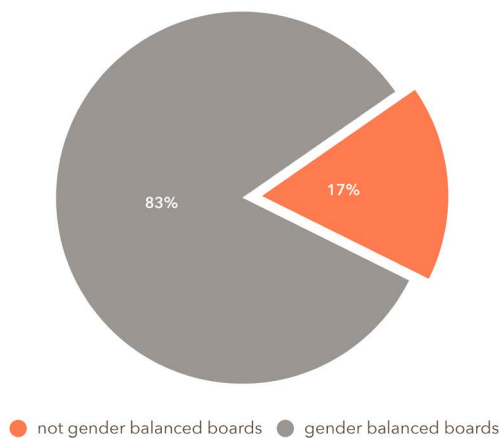
## Composition of Boards of Directors

Below, we present our findings regarding representation of both women and people of color on boards of directors. As limited findings about boards emerged from our story project and literature review, we have included only high-level findings from our Leadership Survey. Full results are in Annex 1.

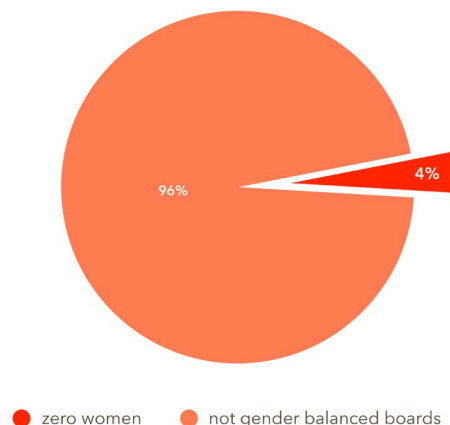
**Gender balance on boards of directors.** Only 162 of the 206 organizations had enough information about their boards for us to do an analysis of gender representation.

Most boards (96 percent) had at least one woman member. However, only one out of five have 50 percent or more women. Moreover, about four out of five (83 percent) organizations with available information have boards of directors that are not gender balanced.

**GENDER BALANCE**  
ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS



**ZERO SCORES -**  
ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS







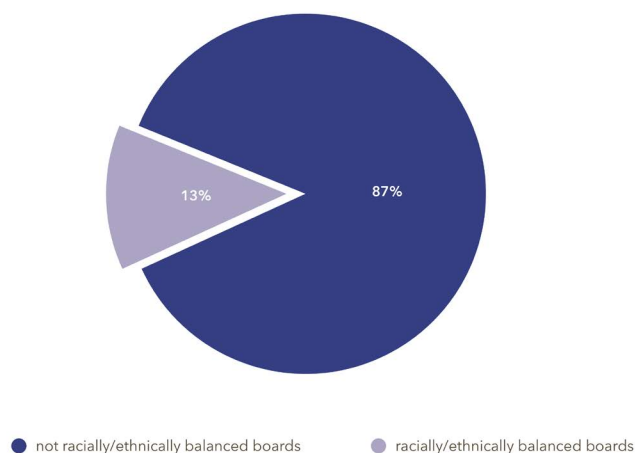
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Interestingly, when we analyzed this information by aggregated numbers (not by organization), we noted that 871 out of 2,303 (38 percent) board members are women. As detailed in Annex 1, our analysis shows that many organizations have some women on their boards, but few have equal numbers of men and women.

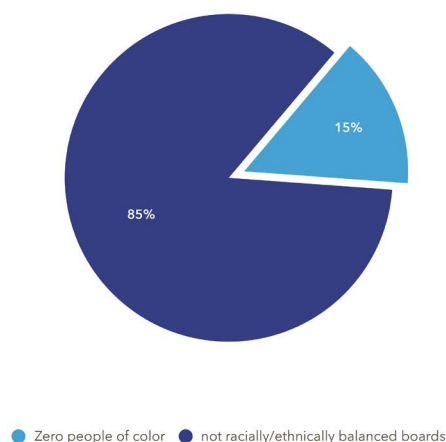
When we disaggregated this data by type of organization, we noted again that many factors make no difference, except at the extreme ends. For example, the size of an organization (measured by revenue) made no difference in gender representation on boards of directors, except at the extremes. Organizations making more than \$15 million have a better gender balance than those making less than \$5 million.

Age also made a difference at the extreme ends. Long-standing organizations (those formed before 1965) exhibited greater gender balance than brand new organizations. However, there was relatively little difference in the middle of the spectrum.<sup>19</sup>

## REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR ON BOARDS WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS



## ZERO SCORES - NO BOARD MEMBERS OF COLOR



**Representation of people of color on boards of directors.** Of the 79 organizations that we analyzed for this factor (see Annex 1 for full analysis), about nine out of 10 organizations (87 percent) have boards of directors that are not racially/ethnically representative. And 15 percent of organizations had no people of color on their boards at all.

Interestingly, when we analyzed it on aggregate, not by organization, we noted that only 192 leaders out of the 1,014 leaders that we analyzed are people of color. This means that only one out of every five members on the board of directors (19 percent) were people of color.

When we disaggregated this data by the type of organization, we noted one major difference, again only at the extremes: 19 percent of newer organizations have all white boards, while this was the case with only eight percent of long-standing organizations.

Our findings are consistent with recent research around board diversity within non-profits (a comparable sector to social impact) that have shown that non-profit boards are generally not very diverse. [This report](#) found that 90 percent of board chairs are white men.<sup>20</sup>

# Conclusions

Overall, our results suggest that global social impact has many of the same challenges and opportunities around diversity and inclusion as other sectors in the United States.

In particular, our findings from our leadership survey are that there are fewer women and people of color in leadership roles and as board members than is representative of the general U.S. population, and that organizations — regardless of type, size, age — generally under-represent both women and people of color at the leadership and board of director levels.

Comparing across the data, we also hypothesized potential reasons why.

**Gender vs. race/ethnicity.** Overall, our findings suggest that organizations think more about gender than race and ethnicity. This pattern becomes clear when we compare zero scores. There are substantially more organizations with no leaders of color at all their on leadership teams than there are organizations with no women on their leadership teams, despite the global nature of the work in our sector.

**Organizations may demonstrate understanding of the importance of diversity, but their actions do not go far enough.** Organizations are adding a few women and leaders of color to their leadership teams, but are not necessarily thinking in terms of representation. We saw this most clearly in our board results where many organizations had *some* women, but not a representative number of women. As we discuss below in Recommendations, this baseline study will help us track improvements over time as organizations work toward deepen their understanding and commitment to diversity.

**Pipeline vs. promotion.** For women, the barriers to leadership positions appear to be related to promotion since women are generally well represented at entry levels. For people of color, there are also critical barriers to entry into the sector starting at the entry level and continuing through leadership levels.

**Other common factors impacting inclusion.** From our research, we see the same factors influencing diversity within the global social impact sector as we do in other sectors, including [unconscious bias](#),<sup>21</sup> conceptions of leadership qualities, gendered job descriptions, [discrepancies in promotions and salaries](#), and both micro and macro-aggressions that lead to staff not feeling safe or included in the workplace.

# Recommendations

Below, we present our recommendations – for organizations, individuals, and a specific recommendation for funders and donors. We also have recommendations for future research on topics related to diversity and inclusion.

## ORGANIZATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS

### For Organizations

**1. Use data.** As social impact practitioners, we understand the importance of establishing a baseline and using data to help make informed decisions. And each organization has a different profile and needs. Therefore, we recommend that organizations conduct internal diversity and culture audits to establish baselines, which is critical to set targets, identify problem areas, and strategize solutions in the long-run.

**2. Focusing on shifting organizational culture, not just one-off trainings.** The leadership survey results, stories, and research all suggest systemic issues are causing these leadership gaps. These systemic issues are similar to what we see in different sectors and affect diversity and inclusion within organizations. To address these issues, we recommend that organizations develop diversity and inclusion strategies that address a wide range of factors. Strategies can include training, but must also incorporate changes to policies; processes and systems such as blind resume reviews to reduce recruitment biases; revised performance evaluation systems to reduce barriers to promotion; and systemic changes to how salary negotiations are conducted.

**3. Recruitment and beyond.** Our research also indicates that challenges exist at every point from entry-level recruitment to board tenure. As such, we recommend that organizations work along every point in a person's career journey, including recruitment, retention, and promotion.

## For Individuals

**1. Help generate additional data.** Individuals can help generate system-wide data by using sites like [Glassdoor](#), or [InHerSight](#), or that collect data that will help make further analysis possible. These sites also allow you as a potential employee to find organizations that may be good matches for you, and help direct colleagues to organizations that value diversity and inclusion. Additionally, you can also share your story with co-workers who may be struggling with some of these issues, or with researchers examining these issues in greater depth.

**2. Reflect on your own leadership.** Each one of us has unconscious or implicit biases that contribute to diversity and inclusion issues. Therefore, all of us can work to manage those unconscious biases. We highly recommend that individuals take the Project Implicit at Harvard University's [Implicit Association tests](#)<sup>23</sup> online, sign up for a workshop or webinar on diversity, or seek out coaching and leadership development programs that incorporate core diversity and inclusion principles.

### *Special Recommendation for Funders and Donors*

We recommend that funders and donors in the international development and global social impact space follow our organizational recommendations. This is true for bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, and even corporate social responsibility arms of private companies. It is important to ensure that the organizations you fund not only say that they value inclusion in their grant proposals, but also demonstrate their values through their internal practices and staffing.

In addition, we call on anyone funding gender empowerment programs to require a minimum of gender equality on both their leadership and board teams. A team that wants to save women overseas but does not engage women on their own leadership teams is not living the core value of gender empowerment. We also encourage donors and funders to carefully consider the representation for leaders of color for the same reasons.

## Additonal Research

Through conducting this research, the researchers identified additional areas of study that we will explore, including:

**Intersectionality.** We recognize the importance that [intersectionality](#) plays in these discussions.<sup>24</sup> In future research, we will cross-code results to capture people in leadership positions who are both women and people of color to identify areas of overlap.

**Stereotypical roles.** In collecting this data, our researchers also noted that in many cases, women and people of color were in stereotypical supporting roles. For example, women were largely in human resources roles; men of color were often leads in IT or finance. For example, one report found that within governmental environmental organizations , 66% of the people of color were diversity managers. This is just one clear example of how some roles are seen as “stereotypical roles.”

**Mission alignment.** Additionally, we found that several organizations that included gender empowerment and/or gender equality in their mission statements still struggled with representation on their leadership teams. We believe this will be an interesting area of future study to understand how and why that misalignment occurs.

Quantum Impact plans to re-run this analysis every three years to help track progress over time and help track how the sector improves over time as we begin to address these critical issues.

## Annexes

[Annex 1: Leadership Survey Report](#)

[Annex 2: Women's Storytelling Project Report](#)

[Annex 3: Literature Review Report](#)

## Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup>. <https://www.quantumimpact.org/qi-blog/2017/11/11/how-will-a-focus-on-diversity-make-foreign-aid-work-better>
- <sup>2</sup>. <https://www.quantumimpact.org/qi-blog/2017/11/11/7ex9c8877ko3uye2ge85rf8cu7h1xq>
- <sup>3</sup>. See the full report here:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x1kHcGbEo6bYR9AZOsEP8pNn2b8Ui7XVlyONGlyrAqU/edit>
- <sup>4</sup>. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25072854>
- <sup>5</sup>. <https://leadingwithintent.org/>
- <sup>6</sup>. See Annex 1 for additional details, including the analysis for organizations that list only one leader on their website.
- <sup>7</sup>. There are additional differences for organizations that have listed only one leader on their website, as described in greater detail in our full report in Annex 1.
- <sup>8</sup>. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/03/upshot/fewer-women-run-big-companies-than-men-named-john.html?mcubz=0>
- <sup>9</sup>. <https://womenintheworkplace.com/>
- <sup>10</sup>. <https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/reports/hightech/>
- <sup>11</sup>. [https://www.in.gov/icw/files/benchmark\\_wom\\_leadership.pdf](https://www.in.gov/icw/files/benchmark_wom_leadership.pdf)
- <sup>12</sup>. <https://www.cof.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/2017-Gender-Diversity-Report.pdf>
- <sup>13</sup>. <https://www.cof.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/2017-Gender-Diversity-Report.pdf>
- <sup>14</sup>. Although we noted no substantial differences, we have captured these variations across different types of organizations in Annex 1.
- <sup>15</sup>. <https://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/reports/hightech/>
- <sup>16</sup>. <http://communitywealth.com/the-state-of-diversity-in-the-nonprofit-sector/>
- <sup>17</sup>. <http://racetolead.org/>
- <sup>18</sup>. <http://communitywealth.com/the-state-of-diversity-in-the-nonprofit-sector/>
- <sup>19</sup>. See Annex 1 for full breakdown.
- <sup>20</sup>. <https://leadingwithintent.org/>
- <sup>21</sup>. <https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-here-s-how-to-combat-unconscious-racial-bias-at-work-92099>
- <sup>22</sup>. <https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-what-we-know-about-global-development-s-wage-gap-92041>
- <sup>23</sup>. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- <sup>24</sup>. <https://www.quantumimpact.org/qi-blog/2018/2/12/diversity-and-inclusion-101>