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# Final Report

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November 2020



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## Executive Summary

When MSF UK/IE began this journey - all the vital building blocks were present. A consensus that collaborative thinking and a vision of shared valued and understanding was quintessential to blocks of change. Alongside, the Strategic Direction, there was an expressed need to bring about equity and respect in a manner that was sustainable and wholistic to ultimately optimize work practices.

Going forward with building this shared vision, the training was explored in three interdependent learning and thinking blocks - Communication, Behaviour and Development. Within these block, it enable participants to explore and mold these emerging equitable vision for their workplace.

- A) Communication:** In the form of brave space, these sessions encouraged dialogue among participants. In this type of space, permits the recognition of difference and holding each person accountable to do the work of sharing experiences and coming to new understandings. It was imperative that this space allowed participants to discuss matters around anti Blackness and anti racism and explore both their concerns, their experiences or ask their questions.
- B) Behaviour:** In this learning block, the purpose was to provide those people who manage others - an opportunity to learn and practice. The focus was furthering the management's ability to new thing things and improve what they are currently do. Alongside being able to communicate, capacity building add the dimension of action. It examines how can MSF UK/IE improve its perforation and enhance its ability to function and continue to build an equitable environment.
- C) Development:** It is was essential to vision building to provide time and space where both management and staff could deliberate and decide the foundation of the work culture. It is in these sessions, where the vision begins to emerged and goes from



dialogue to actionable deliverables. It was the start of a sequence of steps that must be taken in order for the desirable strategy to change can succeed and be sustained.

## Findings

### Methodology for the Survey Findings

My initial introduction to the findings began with the survey. This organization-led survey was distributed to both the UK and IE staff. It is very reasonable to use a survey methodology as it is used to be able to gather data from a large group of respondents. In the case of the MSF UK/IE survey, the questions were created in order reach a wide number of participants.

The questions were not designed by myself, rather they were designed by a knowledgeable team. The aim of the survey was to seek out information about the actions taken by the organization and the sentiments around the notions of equity, inclusion and diversity in the organization. Before distribution, I had the opportunity to review the survey questions. Using a criterion of diversity and equity, where the researcher is ask to examine one's own bias, as well as look for elements of diversity, I deemed the questions both inclusive and accessible. My goal in the examination of the questions was to ensure there is was an embedded understanding and willingness to address the underlying structural factors that may perpetuate inequity.

After a designated period of time, the data was collected and returned to me. At this time, I was able to cross tabulate the data, and to filter the results. The only filtering of the

results was to differentiate answers based on geographical location. The decision to limit the filtering of the result was due to the volume of the respondents. There were not a significant number of responses that required filtering.

The next phase of the data was to calculate the percentages of the responses. This process was mathematical and allowed the data to tell its story, for example there is a silent 15% of respondents who do not wish to discuss element of equity. The survey also gave the participants the ability to comment. They were able to add comments in order elaborate on their responses. As a result, a different method was used to evaluate the comments. To evaluate the responses and seek out the emerging data, it was necessary to use thematic analysis. This process is further explained in the next section of the methodology.

### **Methodology of the Findings of the Report**

Coming into the sessions with the data from the survey, it permitted me to see that participants needed space voice their comments. This need for space was finding of the survey.

Prior to the start of the Brave Spaces, I made the decision to use the methodology of observation. The observation method is a manner of collecting data through observation. Observation data collection method is classified as a participatory study, because the researcher has to immerse herself in the setting where her respondents are, while taking notes and/or recording. To delve deeper into the methodology, I specifically employed the naturalistic observation methodology also known as unstructured observation.



The reason this technique was selected was the ability to observe and study the spontaneous behaviour of participants in natural surroundings, the Brave Space. In short, as both facilitator and the researcher, it provided the ability to note what was said and how participants reacted in the sessions. It is the art of collecting data when and where the sessions were happening, which adds richness and honesty to the observations.

Lastly, the sessions were rarely recorded and if recorded, it was always documented with the consent of the participants. And as the researcher, consent was obtained to take notes that were only accessible by the facilitator.

After the sessions, the process of producing the report and its findings require the use of methods of thematic analysis. Please note that this is the same method used to analyzed the data of the survey. The use of thematic analysis was the most effective one for this process. Given the collected and observable data, there were themes that were emerging from the notes. There were important patterns, such as repeated statements, which were notable and stood out as the observer. This methods permitted me to look at the opinions and feelings of the participants through the lens of themes. It provided an opportunity to look do more than summarizing the data rather begin to interpret its implications for the organization and its goal to work towards a more equitable and inclusive organization.

Using the thematic analysis method, the first step involved becoming familiar and reviewing the notes taken during the session. Throughout this process, there was a code of

data generated. What this entails is a code assigned to words or comments that seem to repeat themselves in the notes. Once a code or legend was established, the search for themes was next.

What emerged in the search for themes was the ones reported in the final report for example 1) varied starting points and 2) open culture. These themes stemmed from observed comments that recurred more than three times in the session notes. After an initial read of the session notes and observations, the themes that arose out of the comments were again increasing more evident. However, before confirming the themes in the report, there was a second review of the findings. This step was to ensure that no data was overlooked. This step confirmed both the validity and reliability of the initial themes found. The finality of these themes were then defined and again reviewed for a final time to ensure it was a honest reflection of the collected observations. Once complete, the themes were explained and discussed in this report.

It is important to note that the methodology and methods do have strengths and limitations. The main strengths for using the observation method and thematic analysis it is both one of the most common and accessible method of data collection. Given the time frame of the sessions, these methodologies were the most logical ones to employ. It was also useful because it allowed me to get well acquainted with the participants as well as the organization and how the two interact and impact one another.



Both methodology and methods are not intrusive. It does not required the people to volunteer personal information or information they may deem confidential or damaging in their current positions. This is significant because some respondents do not like to speak about themselves, especially to an outsider.

It is also important to note the limitations of the methodology and methods. Firstly, in regards to the observation methodology, there is the question of observational occurrences. Some of the occurrences may be not be witnessed by the observer. One of the challenges of this methodology is that previous conflicts could have taken place in the absence of the observer (me).

Secondly, there is an element of reliability. Because social phenomena, in this case the sessions, are not a controlled experiment, one can call into question the reliabilities of the generalizations made. One can never be sure that what I observed is the same if it would be observed by another person. Two persons may judge the same phenomena differently.

Finally, there is the personal bias of the observer. Although, in the case of the data, I did take the time to address my own bias. Upon examining the data, I was aware of my own bias and expectations. Nevertheless, as the observer, it must be noted that my own ideas and different conceptions of the data could have played a role in the objectivity and presentation of the data of the final report.

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To conclude, I submit that the the findings of the report used methodologies and methods that were effective. The collection of the data led to fruitful data for the organization. Data will assist MSF UK/IE with their goals to be a more equitable and inclusive organization. As both the facilitation and researcher, the data (i.e. the survey and observations) received attentive, and professional handling. The participants and their stories were heard and observed in a setting that was both safe and confidential. As a result, the findings of the report were examined and reported in an objective manner and within the limitations mentioned.

## **Findings**

***“ I would like to learn more and play an active part in bringing about real change.”***

MSF UK/IE has pride itself on being a transformative part of people’s lives around the world. It is with this sense and foundation values such as witnessing and speaking that we are breaking ground and starting to deepen the implementation of Anti Blackness and Anti-Racism into its culture of help and to create an wholistic culture that takes into account of all elements of diversity, equity and inclusiveness.

Since commencing our work in the July, I have observed a important components that will help continue to work to move in a progressive and positive direction:

***Staff Survey - “....these events have been eye-opening and upsetting.”***



To begin it was essential to solicit and analyzed the perceptions and current thinking about how MSF UK/IE handles and addresses the phenomenons of anti-racism and anti-Blackness.

The staff survey distributed to both the UK and IE office, was distributed to (number) participants. The response rate was 59%, indicating a solid commitment to the topic and a culture of communication. Among the data compiled, the survey draws attention to the four major facts:

- 1) *87% of the respondents agree that the Strategic Direction is moving in the right direction*
- 2) *57% of the respondents felt personally impacted by the events*
- 3) *96% of the respondents agreed that there is a need for a brave space*
- 4) *87% of Respondents agreed with the commitments and actions at the Executive and Board level in addressing racism and on the right track*

**The staff identified 7(seven) areas of anti-racism training:**

1. Understanding Racism - **71%**
2. Ally ship (learning how to be an ally) - **67%**
3. Dismantling White Privilege - **66%**
4. Racism and links to colonialism - **63%**
5. Understanding anti-oppression - **60%**
6. Unconscious bias - **60%**
7. Stop microaggressions - **57%**

***Open Culture- “I would like to leverage my privilege to help others, and seek support to do so..” ... “We need to have access to be able to tell everyone’s stories, not just stories coming rich generally white people.”***



In the survey, the comments clearly suggested that this is a staff that wants to learn. The quote above demonstrated a resounding need to learn and continue to be educated on matters of inclusion, equity and diversity. It further illustrated the willingness of people to do what it takes and to use tools to create more room for inclusion. This is a striking feature and one that needs to be nurtured along with space in the movement and its departments.

This movement towards change was equally apparent in the brave spaces, a space where discomfort and honesty is encouraged as a means of learning. In spite of the hesitations and concerns, the willingness of the staff, outweighed their desire to re-invent an environment that is honest and equitable for all. These are striking features and one that needs to be nurtured along with space in the movement and its departments. A good starting point is the established resources available in the movement and how it can continue to help the staff.

***Varied Starting Points - “ I am not sure where to start...” “ I am worried about making a mistake...”***

In the work of equity and diversity, it is expected that everyone is starting at different points. The work in the brave space clearly demonstrated that the staff are all at different points of their journey. In the brave spaces, the repeated message was, uncertainty and fear of offending. There are some due to their lack of exposure, who are afraid of addressing equity for fear of making a mistake or offending another. While, in some cases, there are people who have taken initiative and created platforms and rooms to build equity in their department. Whereas for others, they are not yet prepared to share or discuss their viewpoints and concerns.

However, what is important is that those who entered into the brave space have started this work. As a management team, it will be easy to work with those who are open



and prepared to do the work, yet those who are silent will also need to talk. What the survey does indicate is that these diverging starts are important as they point to a need to create space, and resources to assist all involved to pace engage at their comfortably.

## **Voice of the Staff and Management**

### ***Holistic Culture - “We should do as much as we can to positive changes.”***

The work done in the sessions was vital to the growing of the movement. The staff believe in a workspace and organization committed to equity. Equally important was the platform provided for them to discuss, learn, and be uncomfortable while we tried to process the global events and their impact in their environment. It raised a significant question for the staff - how do we move away from the reactionary response?

This sentiment was echoed by staff on several occasions - this desire to move away from an emergency response culture or “a bandwagon response,” and to begin the vital work of including all elements of diversity. This is an essential need for the staff and it is evident from their comments, questions and feedback. It boils down to rethinking and re-imagine a culture that pays attention, develops resources and integrates all equitable elements from religious literacy to people with physical disabilities as oppose to responding in time of crisis.

Currently, different elements of D.E.I are discussed and given attention. For example, the staff commented that challenges such as safeguarding, and mental health were handled very well. In these areas, there was always going to be work to done yet they were clearly implemented and training was on-going. The impression was that these elements are clearly established in the culture. On the other hand, other D.E.I elements, such as anti racism, examining multiple perspectives and religious literacy, fell short in the eyes of staff.



Based on the action plan sessions, the majority of the staff felt that other elements were severely underdeveloped including the approach to these elements. As previously mentioned some staff felt these areas are equally important, however, they were not given attention until the moment of crisis. Ultimately, the staff would like to see the approach shift. A shift away from being a reactionary culture to a holistic culture and approach. This shift would address all elements including training and dialogue prior to global events.

### **The Silent Audience**

Additionally in the staff's responses and reinforced from the survey is the need to find a manner to encourage diverse dialogues and perspectives. Drawing on the data, there is a underlying 12-15% of the respondents that are not comfortable to disclose their feelings or rather not share their perspectives. This is to be expected, however, yet it also indicates that there are sleeping concerns. One of the goals of a brave space was to allow people to process their feelings and navigate their discomfort. It would appear that there is a small part of the staff that may feel there is no place for their differing perspectives. It is important when a culture is re-imaging itself that it provided space for other opinions. Furthermore, it is imperative for cultural change buy-in that there is a mechanism in place that allows everyone to voice their concerns without face of reprisal or alienation.

### **On-Going Training - "I have experienced racism and micro-aggressions in the MSF UK office before. It's a very real issue."**

In the capacity building, participants, managing staff, were given an opportunity to participate in training to creating an equitable environment. The capacity building presented two main techniques: 1) Calling in and out and 2) stepping in and out. Participants discussed



these two techniques and were able to tease out the effectiveness of the skills and how it can operate in their immediate departments.

Emerging from this session is the clear demand and need for time for more training. At the end of most sessions, it was mentioned a number of times for more time. For the effectiveness of the new tools to penetrate and remain in the culture, managers and staff need more time. It was interesting to remark that people mentioned that in safeguarding training, there was great amount of time spent to ensure that everyone was aware of what they were doing.

The training time will also help with the emergence of a holistic culture. It is also important time is implemented into existing mechanism as to not overwhelm the staff. And it will provide opportunities for the staff to overcome their worry of making mistakes and instead learn from each other.

**Accountability - “It would be great to see management get more involved with the sessions.”**

Accountability was an important part of the conversations for the staff. From the brave space to the capacity building, it was voiced that there was need for management to be part of the process. It was acknowledged that management’s efforts to put together the training were vital and welcomed. There was an overall feeling that the management was in tune with the needs of the staff and its various departments. And it was especially clear the that the staff felt the management team were also aware of the need for diversity.

However, what was also echoed was the desire to see management actively participate in the initiatives. Although, the management attend certain sessions, it would be encouraging to take another step, which would be to actively engage in the workshops alongside the staff. Increasing the visibility and active participation of the management team would assist in laying the foundation of a holistic culture.



## **Recommendations**

**“...a more careful use of language a renew commitment to the values...a commitment..of senior management...a clear road map.”**

**Recommendation**

**Target Finding**

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### **#1 Time**

Time is essentially the number one recommendation. And it is the one factor that was repeatedly echoed from the staff. From the brave sessions to action planning, more time was the element that was recommended after the sessions. However, it is important to note that we all need time and accomplish all that we do in our work.

This creation of time and space within departments and the entire staff can and will target the finds and create a wholistic sustained and open culture desired by the staff. Furthermore, it will also enable people who are arriving to the dialogue at the different points to engage and share resulting in a diverse and vital dialogues.

My recommendation is to create time and space in the departments, and the overall movement. One way to create time is to ensure that elements of diversity, and equity is repeatedly on the agenda. Secondly The frequency of the DEI element would be decided upon by the department, however, it should happen at least once a month. And lastly, this allowed time created should also happen at the all staff level and occurred at least once a month.

- Open Culture
- Varied Starting Points
- Wholistic Culture
- Diverse Dialogues

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## #2 Sustainable Dialogues

Building on the first recommendation of time, it will be help nurture and develop sustainable dialogues. The ability to dialogue and have open and honest communication are essential to ensuring that the culture remains open and equitable. It was important to the staff that the time they do take to dialogue that the sustainability part of the dialogue is achievable.

In order to achieve a sustainable dialogue it will be important to incorporate two mechanisms: a) department brave spaces or dialogue space and b) DEI is a recurring agenda item. It would be beneficial if there is a move to create permanent brave spaces within departments and the movement. This is not a working group where policy is discussed rather, a space to dialogue about elements of DEI and how people are addressing them, handling them and areas of discomfort or exploration.

The second part of the recommendation, the recurring agenda item, is the part of the mechanism that allows the dialogue to sustainable and also meets the first recommendation, the vital need for time. Providing time and space can ensure sustainability and culture change.

- Open Culture
- Varied Starting Points
- Wholistic Culture
- Diverse Dialogues

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### #3 Self-Education

Drawing on the finding of varied starting points, the need for people to education themselves remains a steadfast comment. What is meant by self-education is the ability to read, think, listen, watch and converse about DEI. However, it is more than an education and exchange among colleagues. In sessions and feedback, it was significantly, that people want to learn. They want to be a reflective person and genuinely understand the perspective and experience of others.

Again, this is hinged upon time and to avoid overloading staff and their busy schedule. The recommendation here is two folded: a) to have work with the resource page and update it into categories where staff and select resources that meet them where they are. And b) to create time to do some self-education. This time could be done by schedule, where people can select a resource to read, watch and tease out and discuss it at the selected time in a meeting.

This is not to say that people do not have a responsibility for their own learning. However, to be able to be an organization that provides time for their staff to reflect, learn and engage will also target and build upon other goal such as sustainability and a wholistic culture.

- Open Culture
- Varied Starting Points
- Wholistic Culture
- Diverse Dialogues

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#### **#4 Management Example**

A recommendation that emerged from staff dialogue was the need for management to model and to be involved. What this entails is that management be an example for other departments to model. Currently, it was noted by staff that there is management representation missing from working groups, for example the Diversity Equity and Inclusiveness (D.E.I). This missing representation is seen as a lack of modelling in regards to this element and to the sustainability of the culture.

Ideally, it would be beneficial to assign someone from the management team to join and participate in the D.E.I working groups. This demonstration and willingness to participate would be beneficial to both the staff and management. Firstly, the management have an insight to what is impacting the staff and what type of training is necessary and how people are handling situation. And secondly, this management presence will serve as an indication to the staff that the culture change is a priority.

This recommendation would again assist in forwarding the targets of accountability and the building and maintenance of a wholistic culture.

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- Accountability
- Wholistic Culture

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### **#5 Board Diversity Policy**

This recommendation pertains to the board and what is necessary to do as the “face” of the MSF UK/IE Movement. As a vital part of the success of the strategic direction’s movement, their role is pivotal as a model and support. Based on their session, it is recommended that the board work towards creating and implementing a board diversity policy.

This policy is one that highlights the importance of diversity on the board as well as sets the tone. In some manners, it is a top down affect, signalling that as the board and faces of the movement, the value diversity is a priority and reflected in policy.

The Board Diversity Policy equally signals to both the outside world and inside the movement that recruiting people of different experiences and worldview is important. This demonstrates one of the fundamental values of MSF to speak up. This policy speaks up for those are missing and making a decision to include them. Not only does MSF serve those in need, it also welcomes their voices in order to do better.

- Accountability
- Wholistic Culture

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## #6 Equity Plans

Building upon the board's diversity policy, it is also important to create a movement equity plan. An equity plan will build in accountability for the movement and act as a tool to assess the culture change.

The building of an equity plan will require time. It is recommended that the development of an equity made a priority. This task can be possibly taken on by the D.E.I working group. In the group, a good starting point would be to create an overall plan for all staff. Once achieved, this plan can be forwarded to department for personalization and specificity.

A global equity plan that is discussed and worked on in departments create accountability on two mutual inclusive levels. Firstly, on a global level, the plan is one where all staff and their department need to work on their tasks. In the department level, it allows departments to focus in on their areas of improvements. At given time, there is both macro and micro equity building. And lastly, there is a clear direction that the entire movement is working on an achievable task.

- Accountability
- Wholistic Culture



### #7 Annual Planning Reviews

One of the established mechanisms in place, is the annual planning time. This set apart time can be expanded to include even more accountability. As mentioned in the findings, a vital concern of the staff was the “emergency reactive response,”. As described by staff, there is this feeling that MSF UK/IE when a challenge is presented hence reactive. However, it is clear that the staff would like to see a more proactive and wholistic approach. As such it would be important to maintain the annual planning and more specifically the staff surveys.

The survey is a great way to continue to solicit the thoughts and concerns of the staff at large. I would recommend that these surveys continue and also expand in nature. When the equity plan is in place, it can also serve as the questions for the survey alongside other questions related to implementation and sustainability.

- Accountability
- Wholistic Culture