Understanding For Purpose Leadership Challenges

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About the Author

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Glossary

EDI	Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
(I)NGO	(International) Non-Governmental Organisation
MSF	Medicine Sans Frontières
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

Introduction

The for - purpose sector is an interesting sector to analyse. Amidst the heritage of structures of colonialism and unequal power relations, you find people who all are convinced that the world only gets better if everyone in it, has the same equal rights. After more than forty years of poverty alleviation, poverty remains. The development sector wasn't designed to exist this long, and yet it does. The founding principles of the sector date back to the previous century, beginning as a temporary expedient of Cold War diplomacy (Bermeo, 2017, p. 737). Over the years the sector has transitioned itself from an "imperialist paradigm of international relations in which rich powerful countries exercise power over small weak countries, to a North-South paradigm in which rich states assume responsibility for supplying aid to poor countries" (Bracho et al., 2021). Especially, the latter illustrates to the post – colonial paradigm and the foundation of the uprise of debates around decolonising aid.

Apart from socio-economical and historical development, the sector itself has also emerged as an employment industry. Only in Europe alone, the sector is estimated to have 29.1 million FTE workers (paid and volunteer), thus accounting for a bit over 13 percent of the European workforce (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2017). Although many people's livelihood depends on this sector, it seems as if purpose -driven work is still treated as this interim intervention, with short-term funding cycles and short-term vision. The actors in this sector often have competing priorities with their donors and are often in competition against others, who essentially are fighting for the same cause. This is keeping many organisations from becoming sustainable businesses that can vouch for themselves. The paradoxes of the development work are not new, many buzz words have tried to address the inherent problems of the sector that lie at its core. Locally led development, localisation,

shift to the South, and lately Shift the Power are a of couple of those phrases that have gone by over the years. Every phrase had its own movement, and every movement tried to change the narrative of the sector. Despite the changes such as more local approaches, the same conversations are still being held, but with a different flavour. It must be said that Shift the Power is perhaps the first movement that enabled organisations to have a conversation about the elephant in the room; the historical power imparity that this sector is built on. The funding structures are a form of neo- colonialism, and no one can deny the influence this has had on the structure of the entire sector (Branco et al., 2021). The co-dependency in the sector, the limited room for mistakes, and the scarce unrestricted funding, i.e., no restrictions from donors on how the money needs to be spent: all contribute to the feeling that the sector is being held in a chokehold.

Against this backdrop, leadership has always been of utmost importance to navigate through complexity; to lead the way to a new and sustainable future amid the multiple crises that have and are unfolding. However, it may not be surprising that development around leadership and human resources within this sector are notorious for being underdeveloped and undervalued. The need for a well-developed and carried leadership and human resource development within for – purpose organisations is growing more than ever. To understand what these needs of today's for – purpose leaders are, Oxford HR has interviewed 25 leaders from mostly 'Global North' for – purpose organisations and collected data from a global survey where almost 50 leaders shared their insights. From this data, this research dives deeper into the stories behind leaders active in the for – purpose space, to depict what drives them to be leaders and what are the challenges that they are facing today.

Before I further delineate the challenges and responses, it is important to have a common understanding on what for – purpose leadership means. Leadership is a social process and cannot be captured in one specific model or theory, rather it should be seen as fluid (Day et al., 2014). Over the years various scholars have aimed to theorise the needs and challenges of leaders often through an Anglo – American and European lens. However, the overarching theme that emerges in many of these models is that leadership and the development of leadership is tight to contextualisation, not only of one's cultural and professional environment but also of one's personal life (Kuada, 2010). Thus, leadership comes in different ways and shapes and therefore this research does not contain one specific leadership model. Rather, it highlights how leaders make use of their personal side of leadership while combatting strategical and organisational challenges requiring more strategic skills. Despite the hardship to define leadership because of its contextuality, this research came across certain commonalities that are specifically tied to leadership within the for - purpose sector. Leaders in this sector are known to have a mission driven desire, a strong sense of (social) justice and are not led by the motivation of money (McMurray et al. 2012; Stewart and Kuenzi, 2018; Hailey, 2006 as cited in Kyalimpa et al., 2017).

This elaboration on for – purpose leadership is essential to understand, as it serves as the foundation in this research. In the following chapters I have defined the challenges faced by today's leaders into four layers: personal, organisational, contextual and transversal. The first chapter delineates what is needed to be an effective leader in this sector, by elaborating on the challenges experienced by leaders on a personal level; what are the values that leaders try to lead by, and it dives deeper into the question of how these leaders manage to take care of the Self in these complex times.

The second chapter further looks at organisational and occupational challenges faced by leaders. It describes a rich picture on the reason for the lack of investment in Human Resource and Leadership development and illustrates why it is essential to an organisation's survival. The third chapter takes a closer look at the debates on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Shift the Power. Two important movements that can be seen as transversal challenges faced by leaders, as they have a serious impact on all levels ranging from the personal to the contextual. By various examples given by leaders, it tells a story of the hardships and the opportunities for leaders to learn from these debates. Lastly, the fourth chapter looks at the contextual challenges and how these are perceived by the leaders. It illustrates the shortcomings of the sector's architecture and the urgent need for collective action in the form of collective leadership. I conclude by arguing that future challenges may be complex and strategic, the answer to these challenges lie within leaders themselves. Going forward, the future shows more than ever the important value of personal leadership and contributing ingredients such as self-awareness, that are needed in a leader today.

Leadership and its development is pivotal for the survival of the sector. The chapters and its content have shown that many shortcomings in the sector start by poor organisational processes and structures. Organisations still need to mature in their support and development of talent and leadership. After all, leadership is not tied to a position, it is present throughout all levels. Organisations in the for – purpose sector are not going to get it easy, rather the complexity in the world will only increase. It is therefore crucial that the sector identifies the needs of its employees, engages with their journey and prepares itself for the leaders of the future.

Methodology

Research design

The aim of this research is to give a deeper and contextual understanding of the challenges that leaders within the for – purpose sector face by providing an anthropological lens. The chosen research design for this study is grounded theory, a frequently used design in social studies and entails systematic strategy where data collection and analysis are happening simultaneously (Glaser & Strauss, 1968). By engaging in an iterative process of data collection, it enables the researcher to focus on the most significant issue of the research (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Grounded Theory is a form of exploratory and descriptive research, meaning that it is meant to seek new insights on what is happening (Makri & Neely, 2021). Furthermore, this exploratory and descriptive research, helps Oxford HR and those who are interested in the topic of for – purpose organisational leadership and the challenges for – purpose leaders face. This research adopted a mixed methods approach using both qualitative and quantitative tools. By the use of triangulation, I can provide a richer picture of the research context. According to DeWalt and DeWalt (2011, p. 113) using different techniques and methods with different strengths and limitations creates cross validations for research findings. By examining social phenomena from different angles, multiple dimensions of an issue can be revealed.

Defining the population sample

For this research, I made use of two forms of sampling. For the qualitative part I made use of snowball sampling, this is a non-probability sampling technique that is often used for hard-to-reach populations. My participants are mainly CEO's; this population is often hard to reach so I made use of networking and referral. The limitation of this form of sampling is that it's very dependent on those who are willing to participate, influencing the perspective of the research. I conducted interviews with 25 people of whom 23 hold a leadership position. With the phrase 'leadership position', I refer to being in a position of Executive, Director or Board role. In addition, I have spoken to experts on the topic of organisational and organisational development in the for-purpose sector. The leaders work within various types of organisations ranging from (I)NGO's, CSO, Private sectors, Foundation and Start-ups, with a majority being a (I)NGO's. The interview sample consisted of 15 men and 10 women, of which 78% were located in Europe. This means that the research holds a European perspective and thus cannot be generalised as a global perspective. The complete respondent list can be found in Annex 1. As some of the participants preferred to stay anonymous, not all of the information is disclosed. For the quantitative part of the research, I made use of an online questionnaire that has been spread through social media and the Oxford HR newsletter. The sampling method here was voluntary sampling, meaning that it is up to the participants to fill in the survey. Often those who are interested in the topic fill in the survey. The population of the survey consisted of 48 people, of whom 77% held a senior manager or executive position. The entire outcome of the survey can be found in Annex 2.

Data collection

The main data collection methods used throughout the research are in-depth interviews and an online questionnaire. In addition, I have done a literature review and analysed various grey literature regarding the topic, setting out an online questionnaire with both quantitative and qualitative questions to further support my qualitative research method.

Data Analysis

After data collection, I analysed the gathered data. I analysed the data by coding the interviews. Coding is a central process of Grounded Theory (Bryman, 2016, p. 568). This is the main framework I used to analyse my data. The coding process took place in three steps, open, axial and selective coding. First, open coding was used to code the transcripts in specific codes, identifying similar concepts and themes. During this stage, data was ordered alongside research questions. Per question, the data was open-coded in an effort to find overarching concepts and themes. Then, axial coding was used to align, refine, and categorise existing codes more in order, to focus on the themes that were identified through open coding (Bryman, 2016, p. 569). Lastly, the data was selectively coded. This procedure enabled me to select core categories and relate it to other categories and validate those relationships (p. 569).

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Personal level: Leadership defined

Firstly, this chapter defines effective for – purpose leadership on the basis of what leaders see are the required personal ingredients needed in leadership. Secondly, this chapter particularly zooms in on the challenges experienced on a personal level by leaders and how these leaders try to overcome these challenges. Lastly, this chapter highlights the strengths and opportunities of for – purpose leadership, to further develop and enable leaders to become more effective.

Leadership, as one of the participants mentioned, is not tied to a position and can exist throughout all levels of organisations. Lawrence Haddad, CEO of GAIN, amplifies to the notion of leadership by underlining the importance of self – leadership:

"First of all, good leadership is distributed throughout organisations, right? It's not just the CEO. Everyone can be a leader, is it in a different way in a different domain. I think being a leader is about stepping out of your comfort zone"

Furthermore, leaders pointed out that leadership is a personal journey that ties into who you are as a person, the personal attributes that you have and develop, and lastly, the values that you hold. The next section explores how leaders develop, discover and make use of their personal ingredients to combat strategic challenges.

Values

The following six ingredients are identified by leaders in this research to be essential to be an effective for – purpose leader:

- self – awareness
- empathy
- inclusivity
- vision
- authenticity
- vulnerability.

Although leadership does not limit itself to these six ingredients, this research has found that in the context of for – purpose leadership these personal ingredients have been frequently mentioned directly and indirectly, while addressing the question how to overcome various strategic challenges.

The majority of these ingredients that enable you to perform well as a leader, require emotional intelligence. Barbuto et al. (2014) find that leaders with emotional intelligence, use the information they gather to guide both their own thinking and actions and those of others. Emotional intelligence and empathy were pivotal to leaders consulted for this research as well and often connected this value to coaching and mentoring leadership. Lilian Githuka from GATSBY Foundation states:

"I think mentorship and coaching have been high on the agenda, just leading with a coaching mindset and being a mentor to those that we manage and lead. And of course the emotional intelligence that enables us to engage with others effectively."

To be able to develop coaching leadership and show empathy, leaders need to listen and show vulnerability. This is a requirement to be able to nourish an environment where your employees have the psychological safety to be and develop themselves. For interviewees, to be vulnerable means to dare to surround yourself with people that know more than you do. "If you are the smartest in the room, you should know that you are in the wrong room," as Mark Vermeulen, CEO of Aidsfonds – Soa Aids Netherlands, mentioned during our interview.

Challenges of being an effective for-purpose leader

The number one mentioned personal ingredient needed to become an effective leader is vision. Being an effective leader in today's complex world, is seen as being able to anticipate opportunities and look into the future (Torres, 2013 as cited in Cote, 2017). Interviewees mentioned the importance of looking ahead of the curve, while at the same time understanding the process that the employees in your organisation go through. Chris Kinyanjui Kamau, former deputy CEO and Director, Federation Development at ActionAid, describes it as: "start living the future, before the future arrives." Simultaneously being visionary leaders doesn´t come without its challenges. Jean van Wetter, CEO of Enabel, mostly finds it challenging to be "thinking ahead, but making sure you don't lose your people along the journey".

A frequently mentioned hazard for leaders to develop an impactful vision, is the current funding structure. These funding structures are often focused on short cycles of projects, which limits organisations to develop a long-term vision. "This forced form of short-term thinking influences leadership. By giving more freedom in funding, you push leaders to think more on the longer term" says the CEO of a Dutch public – private funded organisation.

To be an effective leader, it is thus crucial to be visionary despite the given challenges. To balance leading with vision and being able to stay connected to the rest of the organisation, is what will deem success, both internally and externally.

Another recurrent personal challenge mentioned by leaders in this research is how to be a 'good' leader. Those working in the for – purpose sector have an intrinsic drive for passion and an organisation's mission, which often leads to having an extra critical lens on those leading the organisation. Therefore, leaders in this research understand the importance of 'walking the walk' in a leadership position. This often leaves them challenged to continuously 'lead by example', as "people expect that from you more than in another sector", says the CEO from WWF Belgium, Antoine le Brun. Leaders point out that this only can be done if you possess values such as authenticity, modesty and communication. The importance of authenticity especially is a leadership trait that has grown to be more important over the years according to Mihaela Isonic, HR director from MSF.

Taking care of the Self

To be able to handle challenges such as the pressure to lead by example and walk the walk, leaders find it important to have personal alignment with organisational values and to take good care of themselves. Shatadru Chattopadhayay from Solidaridad India states "if you are not fully aligned with the vision of

the organisation then there is a possibility of disruption". At the same time, being driven by the mission of your organisation often leads to personalisation of the organisational values as being your own, risking that the work itself becomes very personal. In its turn, this often leads to people working over hours, putting in extra work and eventually leaving them overstretched or even burnt out. Organisations in this sector are known for creating high stress work environments and burnouts are often seen as a distinct problem of the organisational culture (Kahnweiler, 2011). It is therefore a challenge for leaders to create the right set of working conditions for themselves and for their employees. Here, a couple of leaders stressed the importance of self-care. Dario Soto Abril, CEO from Global Water Partnership, expresses that taking care of the Self is something leaders should be doing more. To him, it is crucial to distinguish the differences in the role of being a leader and the role of the Self. He explains that because the work is demanding, it is necessary to have a sense of the Self and to avoid bringing work home. He is not the only one who stresses the importance of taking good care of yourself. According to Antoine Le Brun, CEO of WWF Belgium, it is important that you, as a leader, set the right example for your employees. He explains that he makes sure that he is energised and well-rested when going to work, by not working over hours and making sure that weekends and evenings are free for everyone. "If you have to systematically work on weekend days, this is something I say no to. There's no reason to work on a Sunday. If you work on a Sunday and that was pre-planned, it means that you are not well organised."

Opportunities for for – purpose leadership

It is probably clear that there is no one size fits all when it comes to for - purpose leadership. Even though the practice of being a leader comes with its challenges, these challenges can also be seen as opportunities. The survey suggests that leaders see room for improvement in relation to communication within teams that contain different personalities, cultures and keeping the cohesion within the organisations taking in the overall diversity of its employees. At the same time, the survey and interviews show there is opportunity in enabling more peer to peer contact, as a way to overcome challenges. At times, being in a leadership position can feel lonely and having the ability to share and receive feedback from those who face similar challenges, is very much appreciated. Peer to peer feedback assists leaders in discussing matters that they are unsure of, to share vulnerability and to learn from each other. This is seen as a great tool to further develop self-awareness, which helps you understand your environment and thus organisation better.

All in all, it may be clear that leading in the for – purpose space requires a variety of specific values and skills. In this research, it mainly became evident that having the ability to be a visionary leader that stays in contact with its employees is the most important. This requires leaders to connect, listen and be inclusive with their employees. This sector is notorious for working with and for mission driven people, which puts an extra critical lens on the one in leadership positions. Identification with the cause of the organisation and personalisation of organisational values seem to be a logical consequence from this. At the same time, the latter also brings great hazards towards boundaries within work, causing many people to become overstretched, leading to many internal organisational challenges. To identify tomorrow's leaders, it is important that organisations retain and develop talent. In the next section, I dive deeper into the challenges organisations face around succession planning and human resource development within organisations.

2
Organisational challenges: The main issues identified

In the next section I dive deeper into the organisational challenges faced by leaders in this research. The organisational challenges reflect challenges faced by leaders ranging from how to recruit and retain people, to lack of succession planning and human resource development. All challenges encompass an overall theme on how to lead your organisation in a sustainable way, taking into consideration your stakeholders, the world's complexity, and organisational limitations. As stated before, the majority of the leaders interviewed for this research are located in the 'Global North', this should be noted while reading to understand the perspective given on the challenges and examples in this chapter.

Retention, Recruitment and Turnover

Research shows that the for - purpose sector has been struggling with various organisational challenges for quite some years now (Yawson, 2019). The rising complexities and challenges in the arena of where organisations operate, has its effect on the organisations internally. One of the challenges that comes with shortage in the job market, is the difficulties to recruit and retain people. Additionally, the for – purpose sector deals with a high voluntary turnover that causes a financial and emotional strain for organisations and its people (Yawson, 2019). Ronquillo et al. (2017) find that "due to additional pressure of social enterprise agencies, recruiting and retaining employees who historically may have opted for mission-driven non-profit employment, creates additional market pressure challenges for the non-profit sector"(p. 32).

This research confirms that recruitment and retainment of senior staff is still a remaining challenge. Antoine Le Brun, CEO of WWF Belgium, points towards low salaries as an important reason for the difficulties to recruit: "There was this belief that, because you work in an NGO, you shouldn't be paid. Okay, we don't have to be paid at the same level, but if you don't pay right you don't get the quality." He continues saying that this may be an issue internally, but he sees it as one of the main barriers for the for - purpose sector as a whole.

"We [WWF Belgium] have been working on that [better pay] for a long time. We agree with each other on director levels within the organisation, but you have to convince the board. And it is not only a matter of your own internal organisation. (...) It has to be a sector thing, (..) the sector has to evolve in the direction of becoming professional."

The inability of actors in this sector to compete when it comes to compensation, is a known reason for organisations to lose talent. Aside from competitive salaries, the lack of career development prospects also influence the recruitment and retention (Gratton, 2018). Lastly, the type of work is challenging and complex, limiting the capacity of doing this work long-term, due to the lifestyle and at times, insecurity. (Ingram and Lord, 2019).

Human resource development

The challenges around retention, recruitment and high turnover of staff within organisations is, amongst other things, a consequence of the limited human resource development. A well-developed Human Resource department that is seen as a valuable strategic partner, contributes to the long term preservation of organisations. HR director Mihaela Ionasc from MSF attests to this notion, as she observes the need for maturity of the profession within the sector, especially comparing it to the private sector. "It is still a challenge to gain a seat at the table", she says. At the same time, she does see improvement compared to earlier years. The improvement can be attributed to external events, such as the growing debates on unequal internal organisation structures and the general development of employees'

attitude within the workforce. An example of such an external event is the growing scarcity in the job market, which leads to employees becoming ever more critical of their employers. Mihaela Ionasc sees that this accelerates changes in the department of HR: "People demands are increasing, (...) what they accept, what they want from an organisation is changing. They accept much less that there are big gaps in salaries and opportunities between the 'Global North' and 'Global South'." The challenge remains, as she sees it, to 'connect the dots between the investments that we do in Training and Development and the other parts of HR like talent management, succession planning, performance management. Here, we still have more opportunities than results."

Succession planning & leadership development

Another important HR process that has been under great critique within the for – purpose sector is succession planning. Succession planning can be seen as a process for organisations to identify and prepare future leaders in organisations (Bozer et al., 2015). An important element in identifying who these leaders must be and supporting them to be their best selves, is leadership development. The development needs to be seen as a prerequisite to enhance the effectiveness of leadership and can be done on an individual or collective level (Day et al., 2014; Reichard et al., 2017). However, many studies show that non-profits are often ill -prepared to invest and develop potential leaders, let alone have the luxury to afford 'a number – two executives with the capability of the CEO' (Worth, 2017, p. 123 as cited in Yawson, 2019). Till this date, having good succession management that leads to a strong leadership pipeline is scarce, as this research also shows. Limited organisations involved in this research, show to have the means and resources to invest in leadership development, often seeing it as a nice to have instead of a must have.

Influence of the donor

An important reason given for the limited resources and capacity to invest in potential leaders, is the lack of financial resources. The majority of leaders interviewed, mention that their organisation is dependent on external resources through e.g. donor money or grants. This suggests that a great responsibility for weak succession planning lies with donors and other funders. Organisations and their leaders need to do better in convincing donors, the urgent need to build in more overhead costs into the budget for actors in the for - purpose sector, and at the same time there is wide responsibility for donors to understand and implement this. More often than not, donors still have an insufficient understanding of the relation of overhead costs, to the effectiveness of an organisation (Geib, 2022).

In most cases the receiving funds and donations are required to be directed to the main cause of the organisation, which leaves limited budget to invest into the organisation itself. As funding often operates in short – term cycles, it causes pressure for organisations to meet short-term demands, leaving limited room for organisations to invest in leadership for the long term. In addition, in the survey conducted for this research, leaders suggest that donors' requirements and priorities are often competing with the requirements of the organisations themselves. There is a growing critique amongst for – purpose leaders for the short term funding cycle, leaving many forced to adopt short term planning. One respondent rightfully questioned the restricted funding stating that:

"The industry is changing; how do you sustain a longer-term view suitable for addressing systemic problems, in short-term funding cycles that are still largely determined by political considerations in countries where most of the traditional sources of funding originate."

Overall, leaders and donors need to understand that investment in overhead costs such as succession planning, leadership development and human resource development, contributes to greater organisational effectiveness and does not have a negative effect.

Doing it differently

What is notable in this research is that those with more diversification in funding, for example by bigger donations from the private sector, tend to invest more in leadership and organisational development. One leader explains that all investment into organisational development comes from private funding, as these often have less restrictions for what you need to do with the money and thus can be spent more freely. This suggests that if organisations made use of diversified funding with less restricted funding, organisations might feel the liberty to invest in human resource, leadership, and

organisational development. Nevertheless, the limited financial resources should not be seen as the sole reason for an underinvestment in these organisational processes. In the interviews it became clear that the investment in these organisational processes is very dependent on who is leading the organisation.

An example of such a leader that does take time and money to invest in organisational and leadership development is the CEO of Aidsfonds – Soa Aids Netherlands, Mark Vermeulen. He can be seen as a strong advocate for an active investment in leadership development. His strong drive for leadership investment dates back from when he obtained his MBA at 36. Here, he learned about the leadership style of servant leadership and got intrigued by the mantra of this particular leadership. So when he got the position of CEO a few years later, Mark Vermeulen urged the board to go through this leadership trajectory with the rest of the leadership team. This journey has made the team and himself realise that leadership development is a prerequisite to be able to properly execute the mission of the organisation. He says:

"Often mission – driven organisations see leadership development as something 'extra', as a present. The essential part of the work needs to be the mission of the organisation and the rest is an extra. And I think we are now in a position where we [him and the leadership team] see that the investment in proper leadership development needs to be a core prerequisite for the work that we are doing."

Mark Vermeulen is an example of a leader that understood that change isn't something that comes from the bottom up alone. Rather, he, as a leader, took a daring decision to invest in the leadership capacity of his organisation, because he truly believes that leadership development needs to be a core element of your organisation. He is a strong advocate of investing in your people as a leader stating: "if you don't invest in your people, you won't be able to develop your employees and their talents." He underlines that this remains an important and underdeveloped necessity within the sector.

Interesting to note, was that those who have had experience with the private sector, tend to approach the topic of organisational and leadership development differently. These leaders view leadership development more as a necessity that actively contributes to building a sustainable business. Chris Kinyanjui Kamau, former deputy CEO and Director, Federation Development and now an Organisation Development and Institutional Governance Expert, said in our interview:

"The INGO sector needs private sector people with a business mind that are able to grow the business, make it sustainable. These people understand the need for capacity building, entrepreneurial business mindset and resource allocation. They have an integrated approach to projects."

2: Organisational challenges: The main issues identified

This suggests that the traditional people who work for the for -purpose sector have different priorities. A Learning & Development advisor of a public- private organisation further elaborates on this by saying:

"People working here are extremely driven towards their clients, their mission and are less focused and interested in their own personal development, whereas those active in the commercial sector, see personal development as a means to climb up the career ladder quickly."

In his case, the issue is not money, being funded from both public and private funds, there is a decent personal development budget, but the focus of the employees is somewhere else. He states: "That is why the idealist walks in old shoes, wears worn off jeans and really wants to better the world. (..) It is a different kind of person." Thus, the donors aren't entirely at fault for the lack of human resource development, succession planning and leadership development. Not all leaders within organisations see it as a priority, says also Jannemiek Evelo, the CEO of CHOICE Youth. She explains how she and her leadership team deliberately chose to invest in a progressive HR policy, despite having limited funding as an organisation. She explains that this investment has been positively received by employees, making them feel seen and trusted within the organisation. She ends our conversation by saying that she sees how the current and upcoming generation is taking a more critical attitude towards their employer, expecting them take up more responsibility towards their employees.

This chapter illustrates how the for – purpose sector has come a long way regarding the profession of human resources by slowly appreciating the expertise of the profession. Leaders are seeing that organisations are starting to treat HR as a business partner, rather than an extra. Next to human resource development, this chapter underlines the concerns about the existing lack of succession planning and leadership development in the sector. At the same time, it depicts various stories of glimpses of change happening in organisations, due to the efforts and investments of leaders themselves, illustrating once again the importance of leadership in the process of change. Lastly, it portrays the everlasting influence of donors as the one who gets to decide the agendas of many organisations. This leads to the conclusion that the sector is built in a way that makes organisations co-dependent and less autonomous to take their own decisions. This chapter is mostly a confirmation that the challenges that have been identified in the beginning of the decade still remain and stay relevant. In the next chapter, more is being said about perhaps the future's most important challenges that hit all layers of the organisation, namely Shift the Power and Equity, Diversity, and Challenges.

3 Transversal challenges: EDI and Shift the power

Two themes that have been addressed by leaders in this research as the most important challenges of the future are the current debates on Shift the Power and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. These are two topics that critically examine power dynamics inside and outside the organisation and can be identified as transversal challenges of being a for–purpose leader, as it touches upon the personal, organisational and contextual layer of leadership. Where Shift the Power focuses more on the power imparity within the sector as a whole, Equity, Diversity, and inclusion dives more into how power imparity is interwoven in organisations. Throughout the years, social movements such as #Me Too and the Black Lives Matter movement have enabled many patterns of racism, sexism and discrimination within, and outside the sector to become visible (Kumar, 2022; Daud, 2021). These pressing issues have intensified the focus on who holds leadership positions in this sector and what is being done to truly enact (social justice) change. Both the interviews and the survey show that this pressure is felt by leaders admitting that these events have had a significant impact on them and their organisations.

Shift the Power illustrated

Although the sector is notorious for being a critical voice in the public space regarding topics such as injustice, it also known for having its own critical journey towards becoming equitable. There is a long history of various movements, such as localization and decolonizing aid, that repeatedly critically examine the hegemonic social, cultural and educational norms implemented by the former colonial power and examines how these dynamics have lasting effects on the current way of doing. (Paige, 2021, p. 15, E-International relations, 2017; Racial equity tools, n.d.). The critical perspective on the sector is also amplified in this research. One of the leaders interviewed, Manuel Patrouillard , CEO of Humanity & Inclusion says: "within a development and humanitarian organisations, a certain number don't know what transformation looks like. These last want to change the world. But they don't wish to change themselves. No, they are very critical about everybody and everything except themselves." In addition, Moses Isooba, CEO of Uganda National NGO Forum mentioned in our conversation that the

need for shifting power is essential for the existence of organisations: "they need to, otherwise they won't survive. They either transform, die well or die badly". To transform, he argues, it necessary that mindsets are changed, on both sides. The current leaders in the system, which he calls the "INGO Industrial Complex", need to unlearn and learn. He is afraid that if Shift the Power becomes a policy paper it turns into another project, instead of a learning trajectory with an emphasis on "behavioural and cultural changes".

Where 'Global North' actors need to understand how they embody and radiate power, actors located in the 'Global South', need to shift their "mindset to recognise their own resourcefulness", adds Lilian Githuka, People director at the Gatsby Foundation to the Shift the Power debate. The current changes she is observing happening in the sector are due to the uprising of the voices in the 'Global South' and the shrinkage of the 'bigger voice' of the 'Global North'. Lilian Githuka says that the shifting dynamics is teaching 'Global South' actors something new: "To stop seeing themselves as recipients of, and they can leverage their own resources. (...) It is teaching us something new, that we [those situated in the 'Global South'] need to be better at negotiating." She continues saying that it is necessary that more businesses and financial resources need to be kept in the South, so the South can also leverage its own resources for development and then partner with those that want to be part of that conversation.

An organisation that has seen the benefits of hearing critical voices by opening safe spaces is MSF. In our interview, the HR director, Mihaela Ionasc, mentioned that by holding space for critical and new perspectives, a need for decentralisation of organisational structures was identified. She admits that by "just moving the location, the problem isn't solved". Therefore the organisation also invested in structural changes that

removed organisational and symbolic barriers that kept the organisation from changing. One of the barriers that maintain unequal power relations within the organisation , Mihaela Ionasc explains, is the association of 'Global North' staff, coming to the 'Global South', with leadership positions. By automatically associating a staff member from the Global North with a leadership position creates power imparity within offices. The hegemony of staff is a structural barrier that actively needs to be deconstructed. These observations are in line with Peace Direct research conducted in 2021 on the matter of decolonising aid. Here, they identified that many organisations still contain structural barriers where 'national' staff behaviours are often made to conform to 'international norms', while international practitioners do not alter their behaviours according to the cultural norms of project contexts." (Paige & Kotsiras, 2021).

Decentralising power may have a bigger audience these days, but the topic isn't entirely new. An example of an organisation that has transitioned and decentralised its organisational structures is Solidaridad Network. They installed this decentralized structure in 2008 and adapted a more network model and leadership accordingly, which gives more leadership and autonomy to their network partners in the countries that they're operating in. According to Jeroen Douglas, the Executive Director of Solidaridad, the turnover between 2008 and today has increased from 10 million annually to 70 million euro annually and they are now staffing over 1100 people worldwide. Shatadru Chattopadhayay, the Director of Solidaridad India, sees this as "a result of giving more empowerment to the local level, giving trust and power to decide about their own future." This requires flexibility and adaptability from leaders, because it is needed to understand that a lot comes down to contextualisation. Moses Isooba, CEO of Uganda National NGO Forum, defines being contextual as a core part of being an inclusive leader:

"To take everyone with you along the way, but above all to be contextual. (…)understand the context you are leading. If you are a good leader here in Netherlands, it doesn't mean that you can be a good leader somewhere else."

The topic of Shift the Power painfully illustrates the many points of improvement needed towards establishing equitable relations between various actors in the sector. It touches upon the topic of the importance of who holds a leadership position and how organisations are structured. This important element is being critically examined even more within the topic of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. In the next section, various leaders speak on their experience with this topic and what it meant to their way of leading.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in practice

The need and challenge to create more equity within organisations is also reflected in the growth of the topic, and equally the challenge, of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). A clear element of EDI is the need to reshape power dynamics and question the normalisation of power discourses within all levels, processes and practices of an organisation (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2014, p. 171). It needs to create equal opportunities for those who are part of socially marginalised groups, and let these members take part in core decision-making processes and make a difference (Shore et al., 2018, p. 177).

An important prerequisite for leaders to become truly inclusive and equitable is self-awareness. To become

inclusive and equitable as an organisation it is important that as a leader you can recognise, understand and acknowledge the meaning of the various facets of your own identity, and this influences how you see your surroundings and vice versa.

The ability to self - reflect, be vulnerable and continuously hold difficult conversations are seen as the key traits of inclusive leaders. In my conversations with Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director from GAIN, I asked what his biggest lesson was regarding this topic. He mentioned that learning and understanding about his hidden biases has been his biggest lesson learnt:

Biases are to him "something that we all have, and we don't really understand them, that is kind of our brain shortcut, and we use it a lot. It is about the process of understanding the short cuts that we use that they don't hold. And when we do use them, they can make people feel like they don't belong in the organisation and that's very important to understand."

To ensure that EDI is being ingrained in the organisational culture, GAIN has installed a task force on this topic for over 2 years now, which Lawrence Haddad and two other directors are leading. This taskforce critically re-examines the organisation's policies, and salaries and tries to be accountable and fair. A challenge that Haddad points out when it comes to EDI, is the fact that GAIN is an international NGO with a global presence and thus EDI has a different meaning, priorities and outcomes in every country. Haddad underlines the importance of peer-to-peer exchange regarding this topic, as there is still much to be learnt. Through organising an internal seminar with partners such as Unilever, CARE and WWF, employees of the four organisations can share their journey regarding EDI. These shared experiences are then used to learn from each other and to find ways to shape the wider ecosystem.

Furthermore, Haddad points out the importance of accountability in relation to EDI. The importance of accountability, transparency and honesty that Haddad describes above, are crucial elements in the road to successfully implement EDI into organisations. As Church and Dawson (2018) argue:

"Accountability is the single most critical element for ensuring an intervention "sticks" and delivers lasting results. Without accountability mechanisms in place to track, reinforce and provide new insights into how development and change is occurring, many interventions remain single events executed at a point in time" (p. 295).

Haddad explains that he implements accountability by being transparent. He says:

"Every board report that I write goes to all the staff so they can see exactly what I am telling the board. (..) These kinds of things are very important to create a sense of fairness and transparency and inclusion."

To the question of what he thinks leaders must know when it comes to going through the transition of becoming more equitable and inclusive, he responds:

"I think they've got to be brave, because I think the temptation is to think that by being more inclusive, you are giving up power. But I don't think you are. I think you're creating more powerful decisions and more

powerful actions, because more people buy into them. I think the challenge is that it slows things down and very often the external imperative is to speed things up. So, it is about getting the balance right between not everything has a tight deadline and when it doesn't you can take your time and when it does, you just have to be honest and say we don't have time for a more inclusive process, this is as inclusive as we can get."

A condition for accountability and honesty is creating a culture of trust and openness. Leadership is important in ensuring organisations have an open culture of trust, and where there is room to be held accountable and to give feedback. Mark Vermeulen, CEO of Aidsfonds – Soa Aids Netherlands, talks about the challenge of enabling your employees to be open and to create a feedback culture within your organisation. A way he tried to set up a culture of trust is by showing vulnerability himself. It was something that was challenging for him to do so, as he primarily didn't associate vulnerability with leadership. However, through the earlier illustrated leadership trajectory that he followed, he really adapted vulnerability as one of his main leadership principles. By being vulnerable and allowing his leadership team to be vulnerable too, he feels they were able to set a norm within the organisation that represents a culture of openness, vulnerability and trust. The new normative standard gives the organisation breathing space; when it does not go as planned, falling back on the principles of being open and honest. At the same time, he underlines that it is a continuous challenge to uphold the norm: "It is constantly two steps forward and one back".

Shift the power and Equity, Diversity and inclusion are perhaps the two challenges that leaders experience as the most pressing issues regarding the future. These two topics illustrate the long-overdue need for a drastic and intrinsic change within organisations and inside the sector. Shift the Power is a movement originating in the 'Global South' and represents the dissatisfaction that many in the sector face. By applying a reflective lens inward, the developments around EDI and Shift the Power once more underline that leadership is contextual. Christine Holtkamp, a consultant on Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion, says that leaders now and in the future "need to understand that the process of awareness raising is long and intense. It is important that the tough conversations continuously need to be held, and at the same time that you, as a leader, need to keep listening."

The examples in these chapters importantly underline that the road to an equitable environment, inside and outside, is one of learning and unlearning, being self-reflexive, vulnerable and being inclusive yet decisive.

4

Contextual challenges: The crux of the sector

Up until now, this report has illustrated the various challenges leaders experience on a personal, organisational and transversal level. It elaborated on the rising complexity of the surroundings that leaders work in and the impact it has on their organisational culture, structure, and processes. The current complexity of the arena that the leaders operate in not only has an impact on the organisation itself, it also has an impact on the sector as a whole. The earlier chapters briefly explained the influence and power of donors within the for – purpose sector. This chapter further elaborates on the contextual challenges faced by leaders, such as how to operate in a complex arena, with various geo-political agendas, increasing funding scarcity and competition.

The context of for-purpose leadership is quite unique due to the "donations and volunteers, emphasis on mission over profit, lower salaries and limited resources, competition with other sectors for talented leaders, among other factors" (Allen et al., 2018, p. 124). Leaders not only need to lead an international organisation but also need to fully understand the complex social civic space the organisation is active in. This complexity

intensifies considering the rich presence of various forms of organisations and stakeholders that are active within this sector.

Reinventing the role of 'Global North' actors

Through external events such as decrease in funding and an uprise of debates on Shift the Power, organisations feel the pressure to transform. A main challenge considering these changing global dynamics is how to activate sector transformation. There is already some reshaping happening regarding the current roles in the sector, yet the majority of the decision-making processes still lie within the 'Global North'. In the podcast produced by Partos, Charles Kojo Vandyck, a social justice activist and thought leader with expertise and experience in strengthening civil society resilience, states the growing investments of (private) philanthropy directly in local communities impacts the involvement of (I)NGO's . These actors rather avoid involving (I)NGOs and argue that their investments directly impact the community.

Here lies the challenge for (I)NGO to maintain their legitimacy as transnational advocates (Kojo Vandyck & Medik, 2021).

The call for (I)NGOs to reinvent their role and thus re-evaluate their legitimacy in the sector has been brought by multiple leaders in this research. To reiterate the words of Moses Isooba, "organisation who refuse to transform either die well or die badly." The various developments have leaders questioning: what exactly is my role as a leader, as an organisation? The reinvention of your role as an organisation can take on different shapes. Leaders interviewed for this research believe that the sector needs to grow towards an equal playing field. As Kojo Vandyck notes (Kojo Vandyck & Medik, 2021), "(I)NGO´s have much relevant knowledge, resources and networks that cannot be missed in the fight for social justice." Reintje van Haeringen, CEO of CARE Netherlands, attests to this notion by emphasising that Northern actors should not be erased completely, as they are important negotiators between the local actors and the funders and doners. She argues: "our local partners do not want us to disappear, they want to keep working together. Rather they want a different division of roles. This needs investments on our side [Northern actors on a whole] which we lack doing." She continues explaining the importance of 'Global North' actors: "There is an assumption that the more local the more effective. But then we overlook the fact that we [northern actors] have been the broker for more than 50 years between donors and those local organisation."

Being in that position for so long has raised expectations on the donor side, which means that things can't shift from one day to another. Therefore, Reintje van Haeringen would like to see a mindset shift at donor level that shifting the power means that they cannot expect the same things from smaller or local organisations as they do from big (I)NGOs: "We function as a guarantee for donors. If something goes wrong and funding gets lost, the donor will not cover that, which is something an organisation like CARE does." The contextual challenge that lies underneath this debate is that the sector has become an industrial complex industry where structures and systems are installed based on certain expectations. Since these systems have already existed for over 50 years, changing them requires collaboration between all actors. Something that is hard to do as a result of the major dependency on financial resources. Besides, admitting that you, as an actor, need to change your position and role in the system, brings in the risks that your role can disappear, an uncertainty that not many would like to face.

Mark Vermeulen, CEO of SOA Aidsfonds, agrees with Reintje van Haeringen on the topic of holding a broker position between donors and local communities. He especially sees an added value for Northern actors in bringing the donor and the local community closer together. He adds to this discussion saying:

"(..) At a given moment I do believe that we need to hold an honest conversation with donors stating that we do see the biggest impact if our decision are being made by the local communities. This may lead that we as an organisation won't have projects that address one big group of donors, or that we need to create other ways to get involved."

He sees this as a challenge, since he understands that when people give their money to specific causes, they want to see what happens with their money. This money comes with expectations. To him the reinvention of the role of 'Global North' actors comes down to being self-reflective as an organisation, revaluing what you stand for and if needed reformulating your mission as an organisation. Up until now, leaders see hesitation within

organisations in the sector to focus on one specialisation. Many say that if an organisation just focuses on one theme this jeopardises funding opportunities. Being specialised in just one core theme makes you less attractive to work with or slims down your chances of participating in multiple projects. Once again, this points out the shortcomings of the current sector architecture and the influence of donors.

Togetherness

Throughout this research it became clear that sector transformation needs collective action. At the moment the sector's architecture is built in a way where it makes actors compete with each other rather than collectively working together. Although over the years, this challenge has been answered with more provision of space for collaboration in forms of consortia, leaders in this research still think the level of collaboration is insufficient. Daan Wensing, CEO of IDH, a global organisation transforming markets for the SDGs, sees a lot of competition within the international development sector: "There are so many shortages of resources, it results in organisations that actually should be working together, competing against each other."

Therefore, there is an urge to build bridges and set up partnerships outside the usual partners. Danielle Hirsh, CEO of BOTH ENDS, a human rights and climate justice organisation states:

"We [the sector] can push ourselves to perfection, but there is still this huge gap to bridge with leaders in the mainstream, such as governments and corporations. (..) The Dutch development sector makes up 0.5%

of the GDP. The other 99,5% is doing significant damage to people and the environment. So, I would rather start conversations about leadership with those actors.. (..) We need to have conversations with those far removed from us [the sector]."

Daan Wensing also advocates for more public – private partnerships:

"We [as an organisation] work together with the private sector, and a lot of organisations who are active in this space are not, they do not trust the private sector. And fair enough, because we should not be naïve, but that causes a major bottleneck to move forward. (...) Eventually we are just with a small group in this world, whether they are in private or public sphere, who are trying to alter this gigantic system and that needs creativity, partnership and positivity to be able to succeed. To me, doing this is the biggest challenge of the sector."

However, as Reintje van Haeringen, CEO of CARE Netherlands, rightfully points out: "At the end of the day the private sector just has different priorities than we do. We are here for the people and they are essentially for profit."

In sum, reshaping the sector and therewith reinventing the role of Northern Actors is not something that can be done alone. This chapter shows that leaders in this sector understand as no other that the complexity in their environment is rising. They understand the challenges that are ahead of them, from an organisational point of view to broader societal challenges. Through this research, it is clear that, although it doesn´t always seem like it, leaders are constantly reflecting on their role as an organisation and looking for ways to innovate their practices within the available means.

Organisations are re-evaluating their added value to the sector, some leaning towards social entrepreneurship, others further specializing their unique giving proposition (UGP). However, it goes to show that the influence of donors remains ever-high, meaning if you do not have unrestricted funding, you have limited freedom to innovate. The examples mentioned in this chapter show that the difficulties lie mostly in the architecture of the sector forcing actors to compete, stopping organisations from innovating out of fear of losing funding, which not only influences the organisation but also impacts the local communities. At the same time, leaders are showing resilience knowing they are not completely powerless against donors. They understand their responsibility and the important role they need to play. Civil society organisations, both big and small, are important actors to hold governments accountable, provide safe spaces for critical voices to be heard and are important in influencing policy. Lilian Githuka, People Director from GATSBY Foundation, points out that civil society sets the stage for transformation to be successful as they often push for reforms. The shared message amongst leaders in the sector is they are searching for collectiveness, because they understand as no other: changing a system cannot be done alone.

Conclusion

This report has dived into the topic of Leadership and Leadership development within the for-purpose sector. By adapting an anthropological lens it has aimed to give a holistic view of how leaders deal with today's challenges. It can be concluded that leading with purpose will remain and only become more important in the future. The personal ingredients such as empathy, authenticity, self – awareness, vision, vulnerability and inclusivity are centred in for – purpose leadership. Every leader consulted for this research sees the rising complexity of their surroundings as a challenge that can only be combatted by having a vision. As the complexity rises, it is even more important to lead with contextualisation in mind. Leaders need to have the ability to self – reflect, to be culturally sensitive and understand that you, as a leader, are not able to lead everywhere. Through the stories in this report, it shows that self – awareness can only be created by being vulnerable and daring to have tough conversations. Especially the latter is important in relation to the topics of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Shift the Power, probably the biggest challenges of the future. These debates have furthermore opened up the space to have conversations about the existing power imparity within the sector and, perhaps even more importantly, within organisations and their structures. The need for sector transformation is high. As can be read in the last chapter, leaders within the 'Global North' understand that their role and their organisation's role need to be reinvented. The current system is broken and time is running out to repair it. This is where one can read the urge for togetherness, of collective action. It is clear that the for – purpose sector continues to have complex strategic challenges and through this research it is shown that the attributes tied to personal leadership is and will be of utmost importance to overcome these challenges. The for – purpose sector and its actors need to build bridges and work together to make this system an equal level playing field.

Limitations

This study is an explorative research on the experiences around leadership challenges in the for – purpose sector. As with any research, this research also had its limitations. First of all, this research is conducted amongst mainly European, specifically Dutch, leaders of the for – purpose sector. This has a great impact on the perspective represented in this research. Having a heavy Eurocentric lens is a limitation to the topic of leadership. Therefore, it is suggested to expand this research where more attention is given to leadership in the context of those who are underrepresented in the sector of development and humanitarian work. These are often countries situated in the 'Global South'. Secondly, the research is mainly qualitative and consists of a small sample size. The small sample can skew the data. It is therefore suggested to do follow-up study with preferably a greater sample size to be able to generalise the outcomes more. Lastly, this research mainly represents the perspectives given by the leaders themselves. To truly understand what the influence is of leadership and leadership development, I recommend conducting organisational research within organisations in the for – purpose sector. This can better understand the influence and impact of leaders and their leadership style.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Interviewlist

Type of Organisation	Gender	Continent
Member based organisation - NGO	F	EU
Governmental cooperation	M	EU
Network organisation - NGO	M	EU
Network organisation -NGO	M	EU
	M	EA
	F	EU
Network organisation - NGO	M	SA
Branche organisation - NGO	M	EA
Network organisation -NGO	F	EU
Development bank – public private	M	EU
INGO – network organisation	M	EU

Type of Organisation	Gender	Continent
	F	EU
Network organisation	M	South East Asia
Human rights organisation - NGO	F	EU
Public / private / Social entreprise	M	EU
INGO	M	EU
NGO Foundation	M	EU
Start up	F	EU
Foundation	F	East Africa
Private sector	M	EU
Development finance company	F	EU
INGO	F	EU
Charity based / philanthropy	M	EU
NGO	F	EU

Annex 2: Outcome survey

General Biographical Information

Gender

Male	**30**	**62.5%**
Female	18	37.5%

In the sample, there were more males than females with 30 (62.5%) individuals being male out of 48 participants and 18 (37.5%) females of the 48 participants.

Age

31-35	1	2.08%
36-40	5	10.42%
41-45	7	14.58%
46-50	6	12.50%
51-55	**16**	**33.33%**
56-60	4	8.33%
61-65	7	14.58%
<65	2	4.17%

In the sample, the largest age group was 51-55 with 16 (33.33%) participants from this group. The next highest represented group was 41-45 and 61-65 with 7 (14.58%) individuals respectively out of a sample size of 48.

Position

Board	4	8.33%
Director	1	2.08%
Executive	**18**	**37.50%**
Manager at country and regional level	1	2.08%
Middle Manager	3	6.25%
Senior (external) Executive Advisor	1	2.08%
Senior Manager	**19**	**39.58%**
Technical Support	1	2.08%

Senior managers and Executives had the largest representation when it came to the sample job titles, with the former having 19 (39.58%) individuals and the latter 18 (37.50%) individuals. In this regard, these 2 groups made up 77.08% of the respondents.

The figures in bold have the most representation with the highest percentages.

General Biographical Information

Organisation Size

< 50	**14**	**29.17%**
50-150	**11**	**22,92%**
150 – 250	6	12.50%
250 - 500	5	10.42%
500 -100	3	6.25%
>1000	7	14.58%
No Response	2	4.17%

The majority of respondents were in organisations that had less than 50 or 50-150 individuals. Thus, the respondents mainly came from small businesses, with 14 (29.17%) having less than 50 people within the organization and 11 (22.92%) having 50 – 150 people within the organisation.

Years of Experience in a Leadership position

0-5	2	4.17%
6-10	6	12.50%
11 -15	**14**	**29.17%**
16-20	**11**	**22.92%**
21-25	8	16.67%
>25	7	14.58%

In terms of the years of experience, the majority of respondents had 11-15 years of experience and 16-20 years of experience, with 14 (29.17%) respondents being part of the former group and 11 (22.92%) respondents in the latter group. This could be linked to the majority of individuals being in the age group 51-55.

Responses to Questions

What would help you to overcome these challenges?

More Funding	18	16%
Training and Development	27	25%
Collaborate with different stakeholders	29	29%
Exchange of ideas with peers	31	31%
Other	5	4%

When it comes to the challenges faced within the companies the aforementioned categories were utilised. The results indicate that out of the 48 respondents exchanging ideas with peers was mentioned by 31 individuals. 29 respondents thought, collaborating with different stakeholders was important, 27 respondents focused on training and development, and funding was mentioned by 17 respondents out of 48.

How do you keep yourself informed on changes?

Contact with others	36	22%
Social Media	31	19%
Literature Review	26	16%
Webinar	39	23%
Training and Development	28	17%
Research	2	1%
Other	4	2%

When it comes to keeping abreast of changes the aforementioned categories were utilised. The results indicate that out of the 48 respondents the most used method was webinars with 39 respondents using it as a tool to keep UpToDate. The next method that was used most often was contact with other, then social media, training and development, literature review, and lastly research. This displays that individuals mostly use methods that require interaction with others over methods that are used by individuals such as research and literature review.

Responses to Questions

Name and describe three challenges you face in people management in your organisation?

Inclusivity	8		**Funding**	2
Communication	**10**		**Accountability**	6
Team Building	**13**		**Conflict Management**	3
Staff Motivation	7		**Retainment**	3
Remote	5		**Staff Productivity**	3
Performance	**12**		**Staff Funding**	2
Recruitment	8		**Poor HR function**	2
Integrity	3		**Work-life Balance**	2
Post-Covid	2		**Other**	25
Diversity	3			

The three main aspects that stood out when it came to the challenges involved in people management were team building, the performance of employees, and communication. Although the other category has a high number of respondents it displays that respondents mentioned multiple aspects that were only considered as challenges by one respondent.

Responses to Questions

Name and describe three challenges you face in capacity building in your organisation?

Lack of understanding	7
Remote	2
Funding	**15**
Lack of interest	5
Poor feedback implementation	6
Time Restraints	6
Digitilisation	2
Lack of staff interest	4
Internal Capacity	4
Unequal Opportunity	2
Other	22

When it comes to capacity building funding was identified as the biggest challenge with 15 respondents out of 48 mentioning it. The next themes that could also be a hindrance are lack of understanding when it comes to the concept of capacity building, time restraints for capacity building, and poor feedback in the capacity building process. The other category as aforementioned has challenges that were only mentioned by one respondent.

Shift the power (more decision making power shift to local actors)		
No Impact at all	2	4.17%
A little impact	7	14.58%
A lot of impact	**14**	**29.17%**
It has had an impact	**16**	**33.33%**
Neutral	9	18.75%
Equity. Diversity and Inclusion		
No Impact at all	2	4.17%
A little impact	4	8.33%
A lot of impact	**19**	**39.58%**
It has had an impact	**18**	**37.50%**
Neutral	5	10.42%
Funding scarcity		
No Impact at all	3	6.25%
A little impact	2	4.17%
A lot of impact	**20**	**41.67%**
It has had an impact	**14**	**29.17%**
Neutral	9	18.75%
Remote Working		
No Impact at all	3	6.25%
A little impact	4	8.33%
A lot of impact	**14**	**29.17%**
It has had an impact	**22**	**45.83%**
Neutral	5	10.42%

Responses to Questions

With the above aspects, it is clear that all the aspects were seen to have an impact on organisations, with an average of 80.2% of individuals selecting the categories of 'a lot of impact' and 'it has had an impact' for all four categories. However, these themes did not pull through strongly in the responses stated above.

The quantitative data analysis did not pull out strong differences between leaders with regards to the remaining questions. Therefore the other questions were manually analysed in order to identify any main trends.

Name and describe three challenges you face leading hybrid teams

The main challenge mention by participant was building a team in remote environment. People find it difficult to read nonverbal signs, and build a supportive culture within teams. Another challenge mentioned often is the accessibility due to connectivity issues. Especially for those living in countries where electricity is not a given but rather a liability.

The third most mentioned challenged is the fine line in the work life balance. It is harder for most of the participants to separate the two.

Categories:

- Teambuilding
- Accessibility due connectivity issues
- Work/life boundaries
- Motivating staff
- Cultural differences and how to read nonverbal language through screen.

What three qualities and skills are increasingly important as a leader to address these challenges?

The most mentioned quality mentioned to address these challenge is being a good communicator and listener. Then being flexible and adaptable was mentioned as an important quality to hold as a leader. Last having a high level empathy and emotional intelligence was also seen as an important skill.

Top three:

1. Being a good communicator and listener to the staff needs
2. Flexibility and adaptability
3. Empathy and emotional intelligence

What other challenges are your organization facing internally?

Funding has been seen as the most prominent challenges that leaders face internally as well as externally. The funding aspects influence internal organizational processes and structures. 'Changing funding environment - and the need to determine or refine the organizations' strategic positioning and what it offers'. Limited funding means that leaders have to choose what to invest in

Categories:

- Funding scarcity which prevents organization to long term invest in systems and structures
- Leadership challenges: trust issues, internal organizational restructuring, power imparity
- Lack of resources: money and capacity
  - Due to lack of funding
  - Also rapid growth and lack working governance structure - overstretching personnel

Responses to Questions

What other challenges are your organisation facing externally?

The most mentioned challenge mentioned by the participants is the funding. Mainly the scarcity of funding. But also the restrictions that come with funding. Meaning that donors who provide the funding often have specific conditions. These conditions are often determined by political climate of where the donors are localized. Funding was also mentioned in relation to competing priorities with other organisations. Pressure from donors in competing priorities, dependency, short term planning due to limited funding. The situation around donors and political environment is also linked towards to leadership and at times the lack of it. "The industry is changing; how do you sustain a longer-term view suitable for addressing systemic problems, in short-term funding cycles that are still largely determined by political considerations in countries where most of the traditional sources of funding originate."

Categories:
- Funding scarcity and restriction. Influence project planning/capacity/
- Competition amongst other organisations
- Political environment changes / restrictions. The space where organisations work in getting more complex.

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