



**FEED THE FUTURE**

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

# SHAPING OUR NEW NORMAL: AN UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY TO REIMAGINE A MORE INCLUSIVE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKPLACE

The Canopy Lab for the Feed the Future Market Systems and Partnerships (FTF-MSP) Activity – Implemented by DAI  
*Holly Lard Krueger, Laura Kim, and Michelle LeMeur*  
2 May 2022



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## WELCOME

- Please introduce yourself in the chat box – Name, Organization, Location – and share your favorite food.
- There will be a Q&A session at the end. To ask a question, you can Raise your Hand and a facilitator will unmute you and allow you to speak. Alternatively, you can type your question into a chat box and the facilitator will read aloud your question on your behalf.
- Note that this webinar is being recorded and it will be uploaded to Agrilinks along with the links to the brief and full study. Contents of the chat box will not be included in the recording.



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## PRESENTATION OUTLINE

AGENDA ITEM	SPEAKER(S)
• Welcome and introductions	<b>Bronwyn Irwin</b> , <i>Chief of Party, Market Systems and Partnerships (MSP) Activity</i>
• Research overview	<b>Holly Lard Krueger</b> , <i>Managing Partner, The Canopy Lab</i>
• Key findings	<b>Laura Kim</b> , <i>Senior Consultant, The Canopy Lab</i>
• What's at stake? How can we seize our moment?	<b>Michelle Le Meur</b> , <i>Affiliate Consultant of The Canopy Lab</i>
• A Conversation with IPs	<b>Bobby Jefferson</b> , <i>Global Head of Diversity, Equity, Engagement, and Inclusion at DAI</i> <b>Swathi Massar</b> , <i>Director of Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion at Mercy Corps</i>
• Q&A Session	<i>All</i>
• Reflections from USAID	<b>Kristin O'Planick</b> , <i>Market Systems Team Lead and COR for MSP, USAID</i>

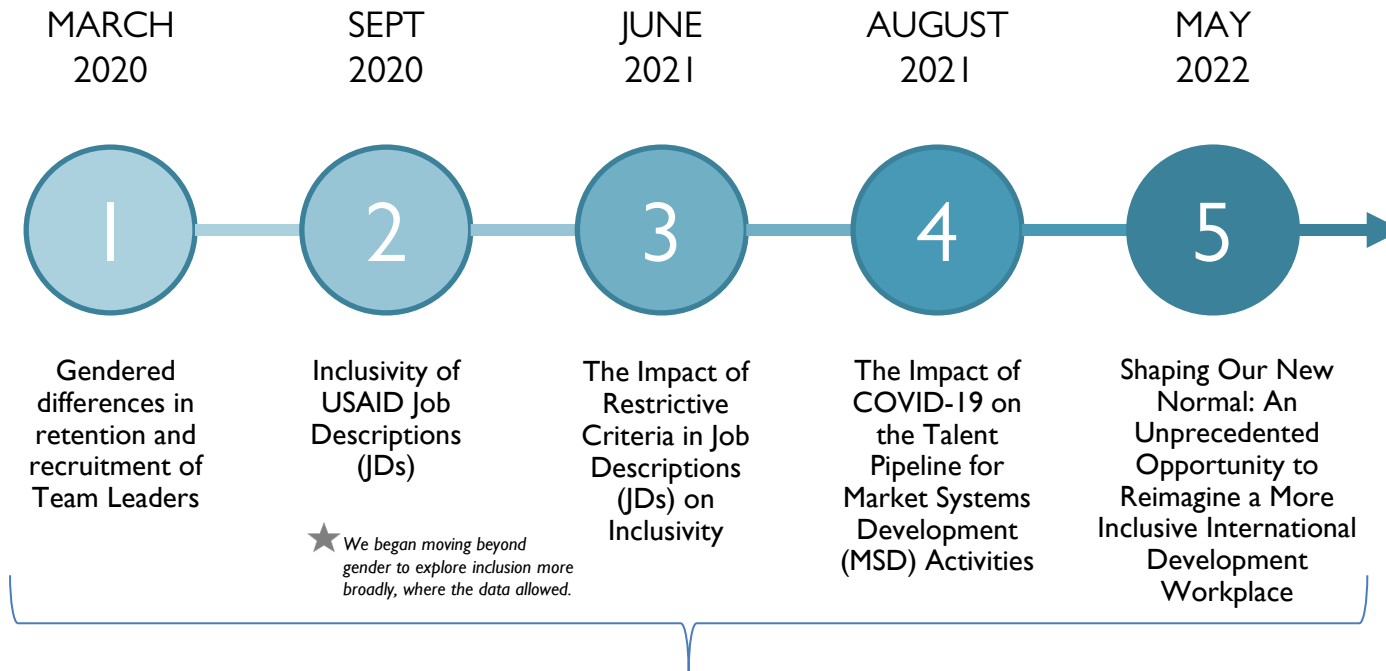




# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## RESEARCH EVOLUTION



**What are the biases, structures, relationships, and rules which influence who is selected for leadership jobs?**



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



## STUDY OVERVIEW

### ➤ Focus:

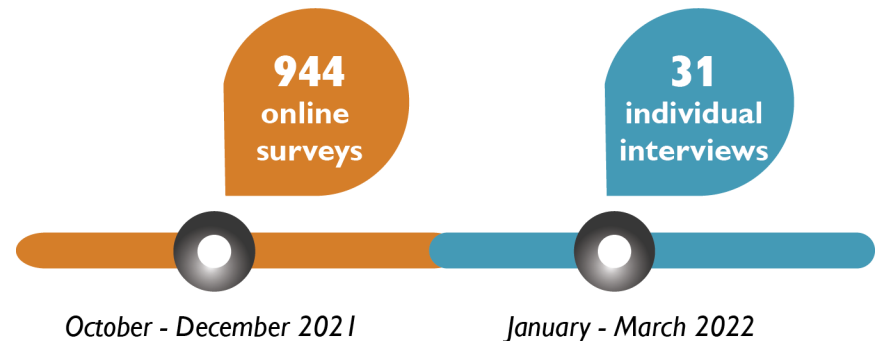
- We explored professionals' shifting perspectives on their careers in light of the seismic changes brought on by the pandemic.
- We also investigated to what extent Implementing Partners (IPs) are aligning with and responding to these shifts and consider what the implications are for the future diversity of the sector.

### ➤ Methodology:

- Large online survey (n=944) combined with 19 in-depth interviews with development professional IP employees
- Individual interviews with 8 IP senior leaders
- Individual interviews with 4 USAID personnel

### ➤ Limitations:

- Despite substantial outreach efforts, our research does not capture the full diversity of experiences within the international development community.
- Our research was limited to professionals who were working in full-time positions with IPs. It does not capture the perspectives of freelancers, part-time staff, or those who lost or left their jobs (or the field) altogether.
- There were insufficient responses to allow for other inclusion aspects beyond gender (binary) and racial or ethnic minority status, including LGBTQIA+ and disability.





# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## FINDING I

*The pandemic inspired professionals to turn away from a work-centric lifestyle, challenging the overworked culture of the development industry.*

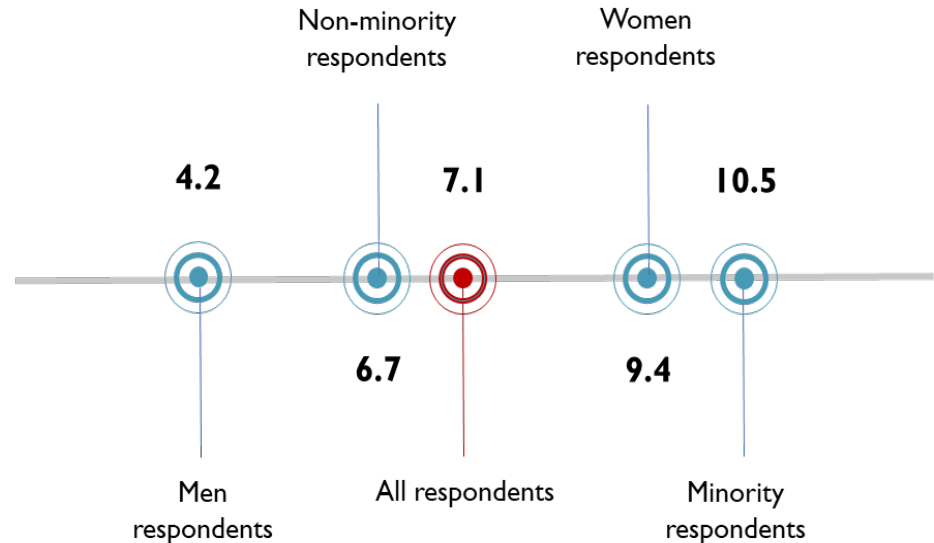


**Work is taking a backseat. People are saying, I'm going to protect and prioritize my...family, kids, partners, life, the environment. So much has happened in the world within the last two years. These big tectonic shifts, both domestically in the United States and globally, have impacted people and their well-being, their mental health as well as their physical health.**



– Senior IP leader

Increase in prioritization of work-life balance from pre-COVID times



Figures indicate percentage points



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## FINDING II

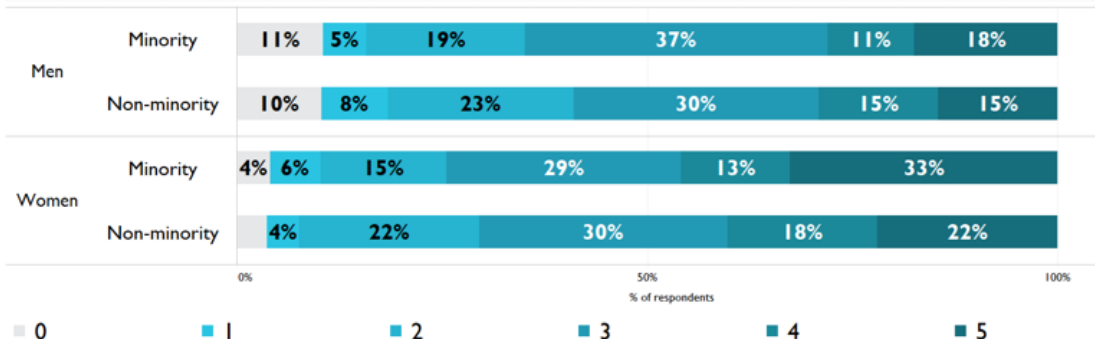
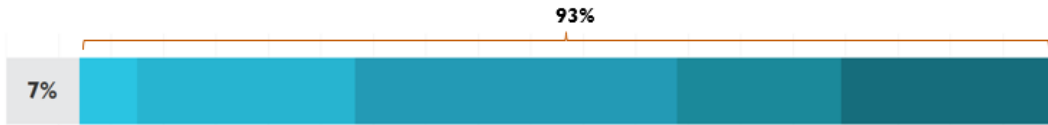
*Development professionals are demanding permanent flexible and remote-work arrangements.*

### Desire for remote work arrangements in a post-pandemic world

Prior to COVID-19, how many days out of the week did you work remotely?



If given the choice, how many days per week would you like to work remotely in a post-pandemic world?



*When you start seeing diversity dwindle at [senior/executive levels]...you say, "Why do I need to go into the office if what I can do can be done remotely? Also, I'm not making that much because of where I fall in the organization, and so I might not be able to afford childcare..." There are a lot of layers where socio-economically you may not stack up with your colleagues.*



– Senior-level professional, woman, identifies as a racial/ethnic minority



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



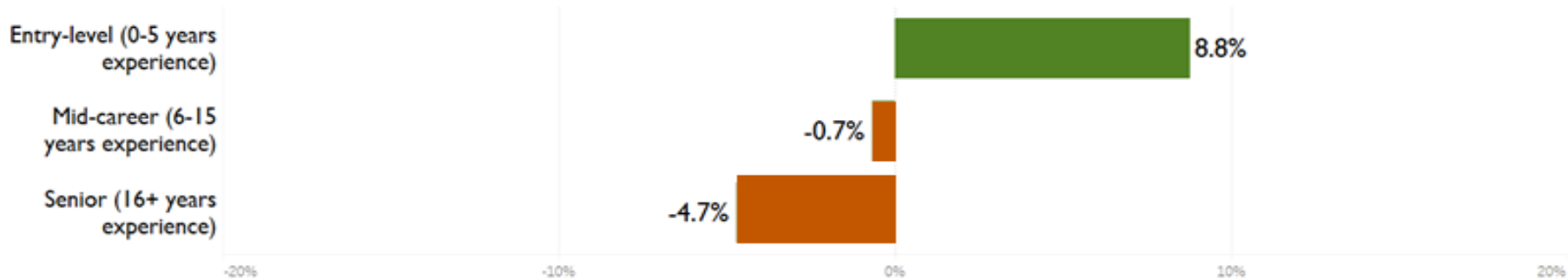
# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## FINDING III

*COVID-19 has created opportunities to advance locally led development.*

### Average change in desired travel levels compared to pre-COVID levels



Figures represent the average percentage point difference between future desired levels of work travel and pre-COVID levels, calculated as a percentage of one's overall job.



*Work travel allows us to meet with colleagues based in other locations and can be a key part of this work. I do think organizations have to start thinking about how much can be implemented locally and reduce the need for travel or ensure travel goes both ways (from 'global north' to 'global south' but also vice versa). Some work travel is helpful, too much can be stressful and an unnecessary toll on the environment.*



– Mid-career professional, based in headquarters



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

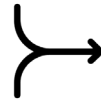




## WHAT IS AT STAKE?

### **Our findings underscore the real threats to DEI gains in the industry.**

We consistently found that women and minority professionals are among the groups seeking more work-life balance, more offsite work, and a decrease in their future job responsibilities.



Inaction or even half measures by IPs to understand and address the root causes of these issues will likely result in a growing number of employee departures, **with women and minority professionals comprising a larger proportion of these exiting professionals.**

### **IPs face impediments to pursuing localization more deliberately.**

There is renewed momentum among development professionals and IPs in promoting locally led development, and while they embrace the initiatives announced by USAID, realization proves challenging.



USAID's regulatory mechanisms and decision-making protocols are **dampening risk appetites** for pursuing partnerships with local organizations or putting forth local personnel.





## HOW CAN WE SEIZE OUR MOMENT?

### GET STARTED

*Commitment*



### GO FURTHER

*Accountability*



***I benefited, where some of the senior executive colleagues were on a board of a company, and they gave it up, and then tapped me for that board seat. I've lived it when the person said, 'I really want to live my values, I really want to live my change. And here's a person who's qualified and just wasn't aware of all the things that were going on.' So they gave up that power and that privilege. For me, that's been a tremendous way to give back to others, and I'm going to do the same.***





## HOW CAN WE SEIZE OUR MOMENT?

### DIG DEEPER

*Systemic change*



***If we don't really understand why we're doing DEI and what it helps us achieve, it's going to be very hard for people who are already stretched, and systems and organizational processes that are stretched, to create that thoughtful space we need to evolve [...] We know from our work that change takes decades, and it **takes a systems approach**. So we owe it to ourselves to apply those very same lenses [in our programming] to this piece of the equation too.***





# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## A CONVERSATION WITH



**SWATHI MASSAR**  
*DIRECTOR  
GENDER, DIVERSITY, AND  
INCLUSION*

MERCY CORPS



**BOBBY JEFFERSON**  
*GLOBAL HEAD  
DIVERSITY, EQUITY,  
ENGAGEMENT, AND INCLUSION*

DAI



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

1

How do these study findings reflect your observations about what has been happening in the industry over the last two years?



**BOBBY JEFFERSON**  
*GLOBAL HEAD  
DIVERSITY, EQUITY,  
ENGAGEMENT, AND INCLUSION*

DAI



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



2

The study findings highlight how DEI must be integrated into IPs' post-pandemic strategizing. What is the risk of not doing so?



**SWATHI MASSAR**  
*DIRECTOR*  
*GENDER, DIVERSITY, AND*  
*INCLUSION*

MERCY CORPS





# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

3

What are some lessons you can share regarding what your organizations have been doing to address DEI in the future of development work?



**SWATHI MASSAR**  
*DIRECTOR*  
*GENDER, DIVERSITY, AND*  
*INCLUSION*

MERCY CORPS



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



4

You have previously stated that embedding DEI in international development requires a systems lens. Could you talk more about what that means?



**BOBBY JEFFERSON**  
*GLOBAL HEAD  
DIVERSITY, EQUITY,  
ENGAGEMENT, AND INCLUSION*

DAI







# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Please raise your hand to ask your questions.  
Or type your questions into the chat box.*



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



FEED <sup>THE</sup> FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

# REFLECTIONS

KRISTIN O'PLANICK

*Market Systems Team Lead  
& COR for the MSP Activity*

USAID



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

**The Canopy Lab** is a DC-based small business specialized in the practical application of systems thinking. Our team is recognized for its work in adaptive management, monitoring and evaluating systemic change, and advancing approaches to WEE and youth employment in market systems programs. Together, they have over 70 years of experience delivering innovative, high-quality work in 30+ African, Asian, Eastern European and Latin American countries for a diverse range of clients including DFAT, FCDO, SDC, World Bank, and USAID.

**Feed the Future Market Systems and Partnerships (MSP) Activity** is advancing learning and good practice in market systems development (MSD) and private sector engagement (PSE) within USAID, USAID partners, and market actors. For more information, access to technical resources, and opportunities to engage, visit [www.agrilinks.org/msp](http://www.agrilinks.org/msp).

## Thank You!



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative

[www.feedthefuture.gov](http://www.feedthefuture.gov)



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE