APRIL 2021 | DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION
WORKING OUT LOUD

Humentum held a 'working out loud' session where we discussed the following question: "What are your fellow member organizations doing to address issues of DEI internally?"

Below are the responses and suggestions to use as a benchmark and guide as your staff and board navigate within your organization.

What do you mean by 'DEI?'

- Full participation from those with lived experience
- Diversity of leadership
- More staff voices involved in decision making
- Inclusive leadership, include all voices, achieve mutual respect, acceptance, and engagement
- Upending current status quo and systems of power

QUESTIONS:

- What do you mean by DEI?
- How does your organization define DEI?
- How do we educate on the meaning of DEI?
- What components make up your DEI strategy?
- What does your ideal global DEI culture look like?
- Who help shapes your DEI culture?
- Is leadership visibly supportive of your organization, and if not, what does that look like?
- In what ways are your organizations making all voices heard?
- What are we still not getting right?
- How do we prevent snap-back?
- What did we forget to ask?
- What advice would you give others just starting this journey?

How does your organization define DEI?

Most said they are working on this (some with a consultant)

How do we educate on the meaning of DEI?

We need to agree on a shared definition of DEI by listening to our global teams

What components make up your DEI strategy?

- People, processes, product
- Real institutional buy-in so it is constantly front-of-mind
- HR systems, putting DEI in our overseas work, board recruitment, product development and delivery, organizational culture, policies, and sharing power/decision-making
- Pay equity analysis
- Here is our order of phases: Preparation, establish a framework, begin implementation, staff survey, organizational DEI statement, develop/improve DEI action plan, integrate diversity into organizational goals, evaluate progress, redefine the direction and goals, consolidate goals and activities
- Hiring and retention, training and awareness, accountability, transparency

What does your ideal global DEI culture look like?

- DEI means different things based on global/local context
- Where prejudice doesn't exist, and we are only evaluated by our work
- Leaders and decision makers are reflective of the communities we serve
- Amplifying underrepresented voices in intentional ways and providing real leadership opportunities
- Living the values
- Being in the right relationships with one another
- All staff have a shared understanding of these terms (can internalize them based on cultural context)
- A culture where employees feel safe talking about DEI; one where we work to better understand each other and value differences
- Power imbalances and hierarchies are explicitly discussed and addressed transparently

Who helps shape your DEI culture?

- Human resources
- DEI task force; executive leadership
- Everyone, but it starts from the top
- All staff are responsible for shaping the culture
- Everyone, but you need buy-in from top leadership
- Culture is shaped by all
- May be CEO, Diversity Director, HR...those who understand the nuances of this topic and can lead by example and facilitate the hard conversations
- Anyone who has power
- Everyone, but we started at leadership + HR, then brought in individual groups (e.g., communications, programs, development)
- We have a taskforce of staff from our anti-racism committee, leadership team, HR, and board members
- A working group of 5-6
- Our DEI Leadership Council

Is leadership visibly supportive of DEI, and if not, what does that look like?

- Our leadership is all in on DEI, including financial support
- In the last three months, added board members representing the countries
- Our COO is on the DEI committee, and our CEO led the staff survey
- I don't think they have a choice not to do so—so they are all a part of the Diversity task force (senior leaders, which is a group of four). And need to find the resources (finances) for it
- Yes; fully supportive, although there are financial constraints
- Regular DEI updates at our all-staff meetings
- COO is the executive sponsor of our DEI initiative
- Yes, but it took a lot of time, and very few financial resources to support the work; however, our Executive Director is now part of the DEI Leadership Team and is much more involved
- Deputy CEO chairs our DEI initiative
- Board chair is a sounding board to leadership on DEI
- For the most part, I think they're supportive. DEI ladders up to new organizational strategy. Some departments are paying to support employee-led initiatives ERG's are funded (weren't 12 months ago). However, a lot of asks with not enough financial resources or support to do the work

In what ways are your organizations making all voices heard?

- We are doing a DEI survey; will be doing listening sessions; adding an anonymous feedback option on our DEI Webpage
- Asking the people that are most marginalized for feedback
- We will see what the consultant proposed—but the idea would be a survey, focus groups, etc.
- Staff sessions; surveys; meetings with leadership
- We are developing indicators to measure our progress and keep the organization accountable
- A TEAMS channel was created for all staff where we include chats, files, and meetings
- We include a specific space for DEI during All Staff Meetings.
- We're building a large coalition which acts like a council but allows anyone from the organization to join and bring ideas (it includes a running document), and we did a survey too
- We did an all-staff survey with 90% participation and then summarized key take-aways into action areas
- Our DEI committee keeps the organization accountable in those four areas—the committee reports back
- Global survey, listening sessions, global focus groups, Diversity Advisory Group
- Biweekly meetings between EDI Council coordinators and ED/COO

What are we still not getting right?

- We're struggling to get every staff member on board—we have offices globally and the communication/build-in has been toughened by COVID-19
- Slowing down staff to get our foundational work done, i.e., share before launching into bias training or antiracism training
- We need LGBTQI+ diversity
- Harder to access people with disabilities
- We are not listening well to the opponents of DEI—those who say, for example, " white lives matter," instead of expecting them to understand BLM, we need to listen more
- Addressing past harms that some staff feel were perpetrated by senior staff (power/fear of retribution)

How do we prevent snap-back?

- Build it into the culture of the organization where there are regular/ongoing town halls, build into all leadership meetings; keep reporting on progress on DEI objectives
- Consistently talking about it and prioritizing it (not just when it's in the news)
- The goal with the permanent/establishment of our Council, which meets monthly, is this won't happen, and we have strategic plans for each fiscal year focused on DEI
- Consistently assessing the internal systems. We have created a DEI council to focus on this
- If DEI is embedded in the culture, then there is less of snapping back—it will be part of the normal. It will be under everything that we do as an organization
- Building some of the funding into year-after-year to secure it long-term. Weaving training into onboarding, manager training, etc. so it can't just go away
- Not just talking about it when it happens but looking internally
- Addressing and living your true values; consistently assessing systems and processes needs to be a part of strategic priorities, built into organizational values build into our systems policies, processes and culture, not just another training or HR tweak

What did we forget to ask?

- So many people are getting things right (vetted training, created a strategy), etc., how can we leverage each other to not re-create the wheel?
- How do you compensate and ensure that staff from marginalized backgrounds who are often asked to help with DEI are not burned out or sharing their pain for others' education?
- Who in your organization leads the DEI effort: HR / Leadership Board?
- How is the organization willing to be changed by this work? How is it not?
- We deeply discuss decolonization of global health and how it impacts HQ operations; and sharing power and privilege.
- How did you get your whole company onboard, not just the all-staffs or work groups but day-to-day?

What advice would you give others just starting this journey?

- Take an intersectional approach to the work
- Set expectations with staff
- Hire your DEI person first, then the consulting group
- Grant mercy, as everyone is in different places in the journey
- Act more thoughtfully rather than quickly in establishing
- WHY we are addressing DEI?
- To make time to educate myself more
- We jumped into action without clearly articulating our organization goal