

INTERIM EVALUATION OF THE ANTI-RACISM PROJECT

Anti-Racism TIC:
Building awareness and
changing practices



MAY 2022-DECEMBER 2022

Evaluation period: May 2022 to February 2023

Authors

Madeleine Smith, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, People Management Unit

Abbreviations

DEI	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
MSF CAMINO	MSF Mexico and Central America
MSF SARA	MSF South Asia Regional Association
MSF WaCa	MSF West and Central Africa
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OC	Operational Centre
OCBA	Operational Centre Barcelona
OCG	Operational Centre Geneva
PMU	People Management Unit
TIC	Transformational Investment Capacity

Table of contents

Executive summary	3
1 Introduction	7
1.1 Background	7
1.2 Purpose and Scope	8
1.3 Methodology	8
1.3 Limitations	9
2 Findings.....	11
2.1 The Head: Knowledge and understanding of racism and anti-racism.....	11
2.2 The Heart: Creating a conversational framework to discuss racism	14
2.3 The Hand: Building capacity of participants to have and host conversations about racism..	22
2.4 Designing a journey with different entry points into anti-racism awareness and actions.....	28
2.5 Way Forward.....	34
3 Conclusions and Recommendations	39
Annexes	41

Executive summary

BACKGROUND

This report is an interim evaluation of the first phase of the Anti-Racism Project: Building Awareness and Changing Practices. The Anti-Racism Project is a Transformational Investment Capacity Project (TIC) Incubator project initiated in mid-2021. The overall aim of the project is to address structural racism by overcoming the challenges in holding difficult conversations on racism; facilitate a discovery-based anti-racism journey to increase knowledge and understanding of racism at MSF; and take concrete steps in building greater understanding, tolerance, awareness to achieve a cross-sectional organisational commitment to anti-racism. The program designed three entry points for anti-racism work to achieve its objectives.

Pillar 1 The Conversational Cohort: Eight monthly virtual conversation spaces with MSF staff from across the movement to learn how to discuss concepts related to racism and anti-racism and how they apply to MSF. External consultants from ReosPartners facilitated the sessions. This pillar also included the Conversation Navigation training which aimed to build the capacity of participants to host conversations about racism in their MSF entities.

Pillar 2 The Accompaniment Sessions: Six sessions facilitated by ReosPartners to provide tailored advice and support to any staff member, group, or team from an MSF entity working on anti-racism initiatives or seeking to deepen their knowledge and understanding of anti-racism.

Pillar 3 The eLearning Modules: eLearning training on Tembo covering anti-racism topics including Racism, Race, Whiteness, and Becoming an Anti-Racist organisation. The implementation of this pillar is delayed until Spring 2023.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This evaluation assesses the first phase of the Anti-Racism Project from May to December 2022 which includes the implementation and conclusion of the Conversational Cohort, the Conversation Navigation training, and the Accompaniment Sessions, which are the first two pillars of the Anti-Racism Project. The eLearning modules were still in development at the time of writing this report, so they lie outside the scope of this evaluation.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this evaluation was to provide lessons learned from implementing the first phase of the Anti-Racism Project to inform the development of future learning initiatives in the Anti-Racism Project. Specifically, the evaluation aimed to:

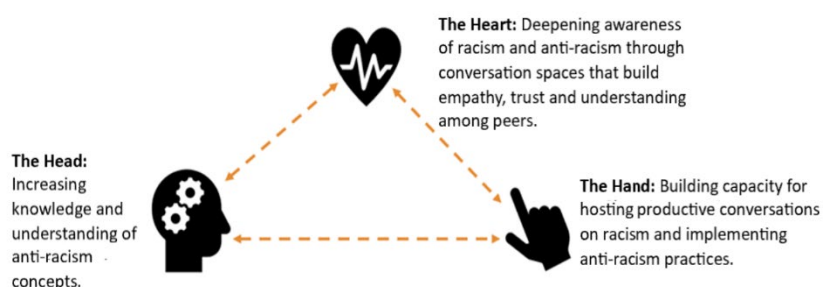
1. To assess to what extent the Conversational Cohort increased evidence-based knowledge and understanding of racism and anti-racism among the participants.
2. To explore how the project created a conversational framework to discuss racism in MSF and to identify the enablers and barriers to a productive conversation space.
3. To analyse how far the Conversational Cohort and the Conversation Navigation training strengthened the capacity of participants to have and host conversations about racism.
4. To examine whether the Anti-Racism Project provided a journey with different entry points into anti-racism awareness, practices, and actions.

The evaluation aims to inform the development of the next phase of the Anti-Racism Project by assessing if and how the project successfully achieved its four core objectives.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation used a theory-driven approach underpinned by a Theory of Change developed in collaboration with the Anti-Racism Project Lead. The Theory of Change outlines the conditions that need to be in place to achieve the objectives of the Anti-Racism Project.

Data collection included a desk-based review of project documents, an early-phase (n=22) and post-course survey (n=16) of participants in the Conversational Cohort, and semi-structured interviews with 11 participants from the first two pillars. The evaluation findings are presented using the project's implementation framework which sought to build participants' anti-racism capacity in three areas which are presented in the diagram below.





FINDINGS: THE HEAD

To assess to what extent the Conversational Cohort increased evidence-based knowledge and understanding of racism and anti-racism among the participants.

The survey results suggest that the Conversational Cohort increased respondents' conceptual knowledge of racism and related topics by 10% between the early-phase and post-course surveys. Concepts included Race, Racism, Anti-Racism, and Whiteness.



Overall, respondents' understanding of anti-racism and racism concepts increased during the Conversational Cohort. However, this increase varied between concepts and decreased for the concept of "anti-racism." This variation can partly be explained by the emphasis on "whiteness" in the initial sessions of the Conversational Cohort.



FINDINGS: THE HEART

To explore how the project created a conversational framework to discuss racism in MSF and to identify the enablers and barriers to a productive conversation space.

The Conversational Cohort and Conversation Navigation training provided a conversational framework that enabled many participants to engage in productive conversations about racism and anti-racism. However, findings suggest that some participants experienced barriers to engaging in conversations.

Analysis of the qualitative data resulted in five enabling factors for engaging in a productive conversation space, which include i) Psychological safety, ii) Acknowledging differences and commonalities in the understanding and experience of racism, iii) Discomfort as learning, iv) Empathy, and v) Empowerment. The main barriers to engaging in the conversation space included i) the challenges of accommodating different learning needs; ii) the fear of being vulnerable; iii) the need for acknowledgement that anti-racism is a priority for MSF, including the need for more engagement from MSF leadership in the Anti-Racism Project; and iv) the need for more focus on the practical side of anti-racism work to accompany the participants' emergence of anti-racism awareness and the sense of urgency to act.



FINDINGS: THE HAND

To analyse how far the Conversational Cohort and the Conversation Navigation training strengthened the capacity of participants to have and host conversations about racism.

The Anti-Racism Project's overarching objective focused on building the participants' capacity to have and host conversations about racism in MSF. Findings suggest that the Conversational Cohort and Conversation Navigation training had mixed results in strengthening the capacity of participants to discuss racism and related topics.

Respondents increased their confidence in explaining anti-racism and racism concepts between the early-phase and baseline surveys, however, there was a decrease of 14% in their confidence to discuss racism and related topics with colleagues at MSF.

Over half (56%) of the respondents who attended only the Conversational Cohort reported engaging in conversations about racism with their colleagues. A further 50% of the respondents who attended the Conversation Navigation training reported hosting conversations about racism with colleagues since attending the training.

A case study illustrates that the role of professional contexts, such as the level of commitment to anti-racism in the working environment, may have impacted how far the participants felt confident engaging in conversations about racism in their entities.

How did the Anti-Racism Project prepare participants for conversations about racism?

"I would never have dared to conduct a conversation around racism had it not been for the Conversation Navigation training."

"I think the main way that it prepared me was through providing a sense of solidarity - that there are a lot of other people in MSF who care about the fight against racism and being able to share experiences of these conversations with other people in the cohort."



FINDINGS: AN ENTRY POINT INTO ANTI-RACISM AWARENESS, PRACTICES AND ACTION

To examine whether the Anti-Racism Project provided a journey with different entry points into anti-racism awareness, practices, and actions.

There was a range of diverse learning needs and motivations among the participants of the Anti-Racism Project. Analysis of the survey results suggests that the project successfully provided an entry point into anti-racism awareness for participants at different stages of their anti-racism journeys. However, findings suggest that the project could do more to support participants in the Conversational Cohort and the Accompaniment Sessions to develop anti-racism actions.

Evidence points to two main challenges that contributed to the limited progress on anti-racism actions:

i) The goal of the Accompaniment Sessions, the pillar that aimed to build capacity in anti-racism actions, was broadened to accommodate any MSF staff with a general interest in learning more about anti-racism work which limited the Accompaniment Sessions' ability to provide tailored guidance on specific anti-racism initiatives of MSF staff and teams.

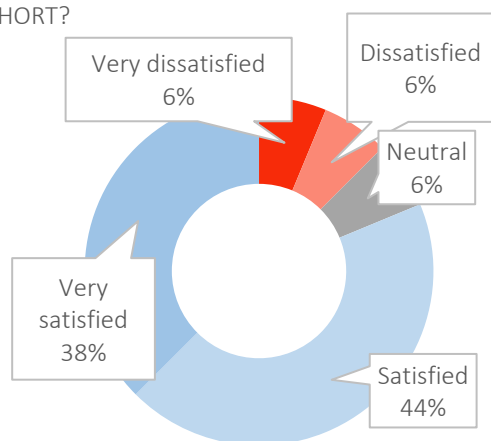
ii) The Conversational Cohort faced the challenge of accommodating the diverse learning needs and motivations of participants at different stages in their anti-racism journeys. The project initially prioritized providing a baseline knowledge to all participants over guidance on anti-racism actions, creating a barrier to building capacity for anti-racism action for those further along in their journey.

Given the high attrition rate and fluctuating participation in the Anti-Racism Project, these are important considerations for developing future anti-racism learning initiatives.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Overall, participant feedback on the project was positive. The majority (82%) of the respondents in the post-course survey reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the Conversational Cohort, and 88% said that they were likely to recommend it to their colleagues.

CHART : OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE CONVERSATIONAL COHORT?



According to participant feedback, program benefits include: i) the expertise of the facilitators from ReosPartners in moderating the conversations on racism; ii) the creation of psychological safety in the conversation spaces; iii) the diversity of learning materials and methods provided in the Conversational Cohort; iv) hearing participant testimonies from across the movement which deepened understanding of racism in MSF and led to a sense of solidarity for people with similar experiences; and v) the opportunity to learn from a diverse group of peers.

Program challenges included:

- i) Difficulties faced in accommodating the diverse learning needs of participants in the Anti-Racism Project's learning initiatives.
- ii) The limited engagement from MSF leadership and decision-makers in the project. Leadership's attendance in the project fluctuated between 9% and 12% between the early and final sessions of the project. Feedback suggests this created a barrier to engagement in the project for participants who joined the project with the aim of developing anti-racism actions and strategies.
- iii) The need for further guidance on developing practical steps to address racism and advance anti-racism work for participants in the Conversational Cohort and the Accompaniment Sessions.
- iv) Challenges related to the implementation, design and contextual factors that limited the capacity of the Accompaniment Sessions to advance the development of anti-racism initiatives in MSF.
- v) High attrition rate (over 50%) in the Conversational Cohort and the fluctuation in participation in the Anti-Racism Project in general.

BARRIERS TO FORWARDING ANTI-RACISM IN MSF

Respondents identified eight barriers to forwarding anti-racism in MSF. The barriers relate to cultural and structural factors in the organisation that may prevent MSF from moving anti-racism forward in the movement. These barriers are relevant for future initiatives seeking to achieve a systemic shift in the organisation to advance anti-racism work.

- i) Fear of speaking out due to repercussions (losing job/ being misrepresented).
- ii) Lack of an effective anti-racism reporting mechanism.
- iii) Need for a commitment to anti-racism work among MSF decision-makers.
- iv) Persistence of unsafe conversations due to the polarization of the issue in MSF.
- v) Most OCs and decision-making power located in European countries.
- vi) Need for alignment on an organisational anti-racism strategy.
- vii) Inequality in the treatment of internationally mobile and locally hired staff in programs.

- viii) The difficulty of keeping up momentum on anti-racism work in the organisation due to the tendency for headline issues to fade.

Of these barriers, two are particularly relevant for the development of future learning initiatives in the Anti-Racism Project: i) the need for commitment to anti-racism among decision-makers, and ii) the challenges of creating alignment in an organizational anti-racism strategy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from the evaluation suggest that the Anti-Racism Project supported the anti-racism journeys of participants with diverse learning needs and motivations. The project successfully deepened the awareness of racism among participants with diverse learning needs and provided the practical experience of engaging in productive conversations about racism in MSF. It is evident from the high attrition rate that the project faced several challenges to providing an entry point into anti-racism work for all participants.

The evaluation has several conclusions and recommendations for developing a second phase.

Finding: The survey results show that the Anti-Racism Project increased participants' confidence in discussing anti-racism concepts with colleagues. Analysis of the survey results provides an early indication that participants have been able to engage in or host conversations about racism with their colleagues outside of the Anti-Racism Project. However, a comparative case study of the experiences of three participants illustrates that the project has had mixed results in building participants' capacity in this area. The evidence suggests that more support is needed for participants to feel confident taking on the responsibility of hosting anti-racism conversation spaces in their workplaces.

Recommendation: Conduct research to identify the consistent barriers to holding and having conversations about racism for former participants to design further capacity-building training. This could include a community of practice for participants to share best practices and brainstorm solutions to the challenges faced in having and holding conversations about racism in their workplaces.

Finding: The Anti-Racism Project faced the challenge of accommodating the diverse learning needs of MSF staff

in the organisation. This was evident in the Accompaniment Sessions and the Conversational Cohort where the difficulty of responding to the different needs of participants may have impacted the engagement of participants who already had a strong understanding of racism and were looking to take action to move anti-racism forward in their sections.

Recommendation: Conduct learning and development needs analysis to design future learning events which will strengthen anti-racism capacity for staff with a range of diverse needs and motivations for engaging in anti-racism work.

Recommendation: Where possible, design learning initiatives with separate and shared spaces for participants at different stages of their anti-racism journeys to accommodate diverse learning needs and encourage peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.

Finding: There is evidence that the project deepened the understanding of racism and how it manifests in the organisation leading to an emerging consciousness among participants and the urgency to act. Participant feedback suggests that guidance on practical and concrete anti-racism tools and practices needed to be included in the learning initiatives. The lack of guidance on anti-racism actions may have prevented participants from advancing anti-racism work further in their MSF entities.

Recommendation: Continue investing in the cohort of former participants who are strongly engaged and motivated to advance anti-racism in the organisation. Building anti-racism awareness takes time, and while the number of participants may have reduced during the project's implementation, evidence indicates that the participants who remained in the sessions are committed to continuing anti-racism work after participating in the Anti-Racism Project.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is an interim evaluation of the first phase of the Anti-Racism Project: Building Awareness and Changing Practices. The Anti-Racism Project is a Transformational Investment Capacity Project (TIC) Incubator project initiated in mid-2021. The project is co-sponsored by eight MSF entities, which include CAMINO, MSF Brazil, MSF Canada, MSF East Africa, OCBA, MSF SARA, MSF Southern Africa, OCB, and WaCa.

The Anti-Racism Project designed learning initiatives to address structural racism in MSF. The project sees the persistence of structural racism as resulting from a widespread lack of knowledge and understanding of racism which limits MSF's ability to hold conversations on racism. The project was designed in the wake of increasing calls to action to respond to racism in the organisation, such as the Open Letter in 2020, which called for the adoption of anti-racism action across the movement.

The overall aim of the project is to address structural racism by overcoming the challenges in holding difficult conversations on racism; facilitate a discovery-based anti-racism journey to increase knowledge and understanding of racism at MSF; and take concrete steps in building greater understanding, tolerance, awareness to achieve a cross-sectional organisational commitment to anti-racism.

The project has identified three specific objectives to address these needs:

1. To design a journey with different entry points into anti-racism awareness, practices, and actions;
2. To create a conversational framework to discuss racism; and
3. To build the capacity to host conversations about racism.

To achieve these objectives, the Anti-Racism Project designed three pillars to build the capacity of MSF staff at different stages of their Anti-Racism Journeys. The three pillars are outlined below:

Pillar 1 The Conversational Cohort: Eight monthly virtual conversation spaces with MSF staff from across the movement to learn how to discuss concepts related to racism and anti-racism and how they apply to MSF. External consultants from ReosPartners facilitated the sessions. The sessions offered simultaneous translation from English into French, Spanish and Portuguese. This pillar also included the Conversation Navigation training, which aimed to build the capacity of participants to host conversations about racism in their MSF entities.

Pillar 2 The Accompaniment Sessions: Six sessions facilitated by ReosPartners to provide tailored advice and support to any staff member, group, or team from an MSF entity working on anti-racism initiatives or seeking to deepen their knowledge and understanding of anti-racism.

Pillar 3 The eLearning Modules: The Tembo eLearning training covers anti-racism topics including Racism, Race, Whiteness, and Becoming an Anti-Racist organisation. The implementation of this pillar was delayed until Spring 2023.

By providing these three learning opportunities to MSF staff, the project aims to support participants to progress in their anti-racism journeys by building capacity in three domains of learning: learning about racism and anti-racism and how they manifest in MSF (The Head), raising awareness and understanding by connecting and building relationships with colleagues from different contexts (The Heart), building capacity to host conversations and implement anti-racism actions to support MSF to become an anti-racist organization (The Hand).² The Anti-Racism Project recognises that the anti-racism journey is unique and does not need to follow

a linear pathway between the three domains. The journey between the Head, the Heart, and the Hand is a continuous process of learning and transformation that can start in any of the three domains.

The project's implementation framework describes how the three pillars will build capacity in the Head, the Heart, and the Hand to support the anti-racism journeys of participants.

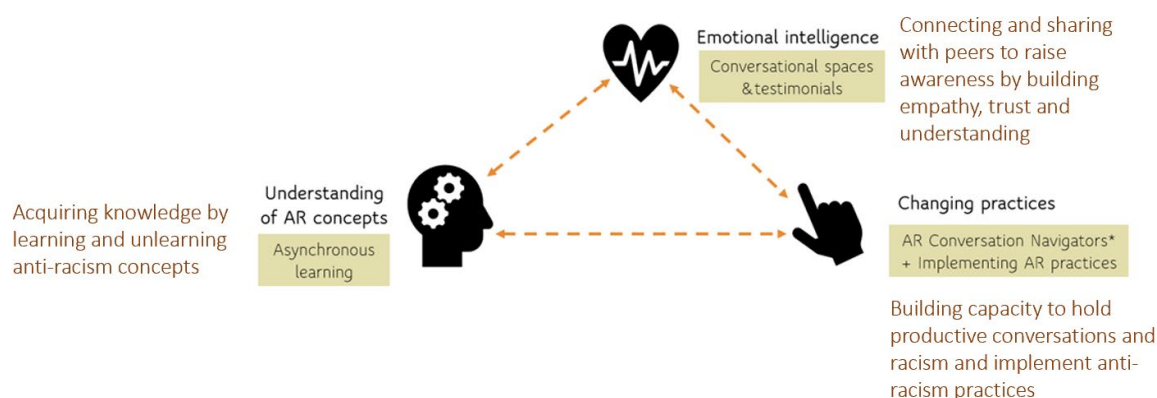


Fig. 1

1.2 Purpose and scope

This evaluation assesses the first phase of the Anti-Racism Project from May to December 2022, which includes the implementation and conclusion of the Conversational Cohort and Conversation Navigation training and Accompaniment Sessions, the first two pillars of the Anti-Racism Project. At the time of writing this report, the eLearning modules were still in development, so they lie outside the scope of this evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation was to draw lessons learned from implementing the first phase of the Anti-Racism TIC Project to inform the development and implementation of the second phase. Specifically, the evaluation aimed to:

1. To assess to what extent the Conversational Cohort increased evidence-based knowledge and understanding of racism and anti-racism among the participants.
2. To explore how the project created a conversational framework to discuss racism in MSF and to identify the enablers and barriers of a productive conversation space.
3. To analyse how far the Conversational Cohort and the Conversation Navigation training strengthened the capacity of participants to host conversations about racism.
4. To examine whether the Anti-Racism Project provided a journey with different entry points into anti-racism awareness, practices, and actions.

The evaluation aims to inform the development of the next phase of the Anti-Racism Project by assessing if and how the project successfully achieved its four core objectives.

1.3 Methodology

The evaluation was carried out by one evaluator, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer with the People Management Unit (PMU), a learning and development unit hosted by MSF USA. The evaluation used a theory-based approach underpinned by a Theory of Change developed in collaboration with the Anti-Racism TIC Project Lead. The Theory of Change outlines the conditions that need to be in place to achieve the objectives of the Anti-Racism Project.

The evaluation was conducted using a combination of research methods. Data collection methods included a desk-based review, an early phase (n=22) and post-course survey (n=16) of participants in the Conversational Cohort, and semi-structured interviews with 11 participants from the two pillars.

Participation in the Accompaniment Sessions varied between three and approximately 20 participants per session. Due to challenges with implementing the Accompaniment Session, surveys were not a viable data collection tool.

Data from the surveys and interviews were triangulated using appropriate quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. The evaluation methods are outlined in more detail in Annex 2.

1.3.1 Sampling

Forty-three participants enrolled in the Conversational Cohort and participated in the first session in May 2022; by the last session, approximately 16 participants were remaining. Due to the small population size, the evaluation sought a 100% survey response rate. Both surveys achieved a low response rate of 51% for the early-phase survey and 37% for the post-course survey.

The evaluation used purposive sampling to select candidates for the virtual semi-structured interviews. Purposive sampling involves identifying Key Informants to provide the most relevant perspectives to address the evaluation objectives.

1.4 Limitations

The evaluation faced several limitations, which are outlined below.

REPRESENTATIVENESS

The early-phase survey achieved a response rate of 51%, or 22 out of 43 participants and the post-course survey had a response of 37%, or 16 out of 43 participants. The post-course survey was sent to all participants regardless of whether or not they had completed the course, however, only 4 out of the 16 respondents had dropped out of the cohort. Since 100% sampling could not be achieved, the survey findings may be limited by self-selection bias.

Interviewees were selected to provide a range of perspectives on the learning initiatives however, the perspective of participants who dropped out of the project was not included in the sample of interviewees and therefore, it is not possible to rule out self-selection bias from the evaluation bias.

Lastly, the participation in the Conversational Cohort was voluntary, and the Anti-Racism Project selected the participants based on their interest in advancing anti-racism in their MSF entities. For this reason, the Conversational Cohort participants do not represent the perspectives of all MSF employees.

DATA COLLECTION

The early-phase and post-cohort surveys used a random unique identifier to match responses between the two surveys to conduct a pre-post-test analysis. Due to data privacy and protection concerns, the unique identifier had to be created randomly by participants to prevent to ensure the anonymity of the survey responses. Most participants entered different unique identifiers in the early-phase and post-course surveys, which meant it was impossible to match the early-phase survey results to the post-course survey results. For this reason, the difference between early-phase and post-course surveys was analysed as an aggregate percentage change.

The evaluator was requested to work on the evaluation after the first Conversational Cohorts were in session. For this reason, the early-phase survey was administered to the Conversational Cohort participants between June and July 2022, two and a half months after the start of the project.

RESPONSE BIAS

Anti-Racism and diversity training evaluations face a challenge in measuring changes in awareness and bias. This evaluation uses surveys to measure explicit attitudes and awareness. It acknowledges that there may be limitations in accurately measuring respondents' true disposition using explicit attitudes, especially when

respondents sense that particular response are more favourable than others.¹ For this reason, the survey may be limited by response bias, such as social desirability bias.

The interviewer and evaluator is a white British woman, and it is possible that her ethnicity introduced response bias in the data collection tools, including the surveys and the interviews.

SCOPE

Surveys were not a viable tool to collect data on the Accompaniment Sessions due to challenges with the registration system which meant that the project could not collect participant email addresses for follow-up communication. The main conclusions on the Accompaniment Sessions are drawn from the interview data.

Data were collected between May 2022 and February 2023. Since the two pillars ended in December 2022, 2 months may be too soon to measure the extent to which participants' capacity to hold conversations on racism with their colleagues increased.

¹ Paluck EL, Porat R, Clark CS, Green DP. Prejudice Reduction: Progress and Challenges. *Annu Rev Psychol.* 2021 Jan 4;72:533-560. doi: 10.1146/annurev-psych-071620-030619. Epub 2020 Sep 14. PMID: 32928061.

2 Findings

2.1 Head: Knowledge and understanding of racism and anti-racism

This section of the report analyses whether the Conversational Cohort increased the participants' evidence-based knowledge and understanding of racism and anti-racism and related concepts. As outlined in the implementation framework (fig. 1), the conceptual understanding of racism and related topics is one entry point for participants interested in developing their anti-racism capacity. Furthermore, the Anti-Racism Project theory assumes that providing a shared understanding and common knowledge of racism is crucial to overcoming the inability to discuss racism in the movement.

To increase knowledge and understanding in the first four sessions of the Conversational Cohort, the facilitators provided theoretical articles about anti-racism concepts to the Conversational Cohort participants to read as homework outside of the sessions. Participants in the sessions discussed the readings and shared reflections about the theoretical content and personal experiences.

2.1.1 Conceptual understanding of racism and anti-racism related concepts

Overall, there was an increase of 10% in respondents' understanding of racism and anti-racism concepts. The Anti-Racism Project provided the definitions of the key concepts for both surveys.

CHART 1

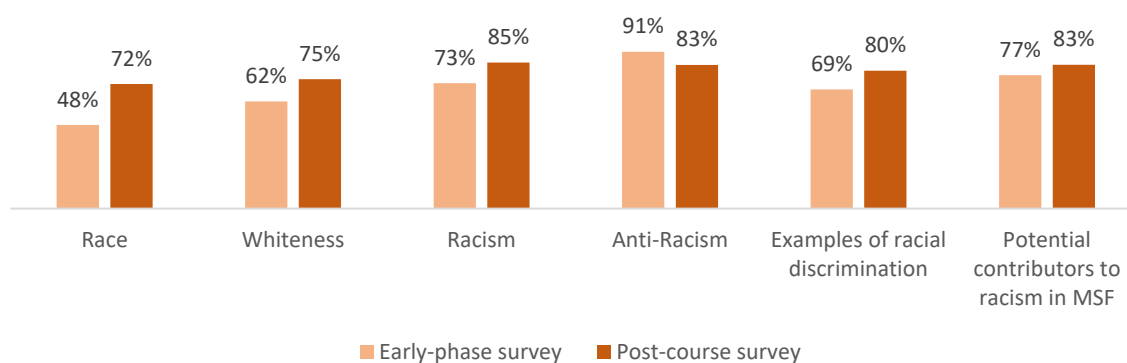


Concepts covered in the surveys included Anti-Racism, Race, Racism, and Whiteness. Part of the reason for selecting these four concepts was to align the assessment of conceptual knowledge and understanding with the content in the eLearning modules. The modules were intended to run alongside the Conversational Cohort sessions to build on the conceptual understanding of the Conversational Cohort participants. However, the implementation of the modules was delayed until after the end of the Conversational Cohort sessions.

2.1.2 Differences between concepts

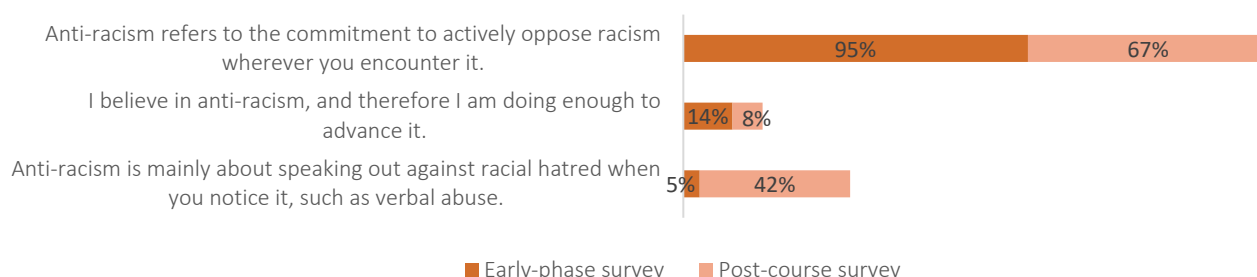
Further analysis of the survey results suggests differences in understanding between the four concepts covered in the surveys. The results in Chart 2 below indicate that respondents increased their conceptual understanding of all concepts except for “anti-racism”. The concept of “anti-racism” experienced an 8% decrease from 91% in the early-phase survey to 83% in the post-course survey.

CHART 2



As Chart 3 shows, further analysis of the survey results suggests that this decrease is associated with 50% of respondents choosing the incorrect definition of anti-racism, with 42% defining anti-racism as "mainly about speaking out against racial hatred when you notice it, such as verbal abuse." Feedback from the Anti-Racism Project team suggests that this is related to the emphasis in the Conversational Cohort sessions on the importance of taking action in anti-racism work. For example, participants were encouraged to use their power and privilege to speak up against racism in the organisation.

CHART 3



Analysis of the survey results by exclusively correct answers (i.e., where respondents receive a mark for the question only if they select the correct answer and none of the incorrect answers), indicates further variation in conceptual understanding between concepts. When analysing the change in the correct answers for "race," results suggest that few respondents exclusively chose the correct definition for this term. Furthermore, there was only a 6% increase between the two surveys, from 27% to 33% of participants who exclusively selected the correct definition. Further analysis shows that 67% of respondents in the post-course survey defined "race" as referring "to biological traits and cultural distinctions due to its social and biological significance." The Anti-Racism Project team suggested that this slight increase in understanding of race was related to the limited focus on race theory in the Conversational Cohort sessions.

Finally, the concept of "whiteness" had the second highest percentage increase in respondents' ability to correctly identify the correct definition between the early-phase and post-course surveys and the highest increase from 45% in the early course survey to 58% in the post-course survey when analysed by awarding a mark for exclusively correct answers. Triangulation between the survey and interview findings suggests that "whiteness" was conceptually new for many participants in the Conversational Cohort. Furthermore, interviews highlighted that the early sessions of the Conversational Cohort focussed heavily on concepts related to white culture and white race. After receiving participant feedback, the facilitators introduced new concepts to the discussion, such as "intersectionality."

The survey results indicate that, overall, respondents' understanding of anti-racism and racism concepts increased during the Conversational Cohort. However,

How did the Anti-Racism Project deepen participants' understanding of key concepts?

"The concept of a decentring we talked most specifically about decentring whiteness, and I was really I think early on in the understanding of the fundamental importance of that, I constantly come back to that in my mind, in conversations with people inside and outside of MSF"

"I realized that the understanding that I had of racism was wrong... that even unconscious unintended behaviour that are based on not knowing or and can lead to racist behaviour"

"The main shift is about... understanding how this kind of system of power is operating all the time. It's this idea that you are part of dismantling the system. You can't be neutral."

"I don't think...that I could... continue to learn about anti racism just by reading and that's why the Cohort - because it was participatory - was particularly useful and engaging."

Box 1

this increase varied between concepts and decreased for "anti-racism." This variation can partly be explained by the emphasis on the concept of "whiteness" and less focus on other racism and anti-racism concepts in the early sessions of the Conversational Cohort. This may explain why "whiteness" saw the most significant increase between the early-phase and post-course surveys. Future learning initiatives that aim to achieve increased knowledge and understanding of racism could benefit from working with MSF to agree on conceptually relevant terms and definitions of racism and anti-racism concepts in the organisation.

2.2 Heart: Creating a conversational framework to discuss racism

This section of the report examines how the Conversational Cohort created a framework to discuss racism among participants across the movement.

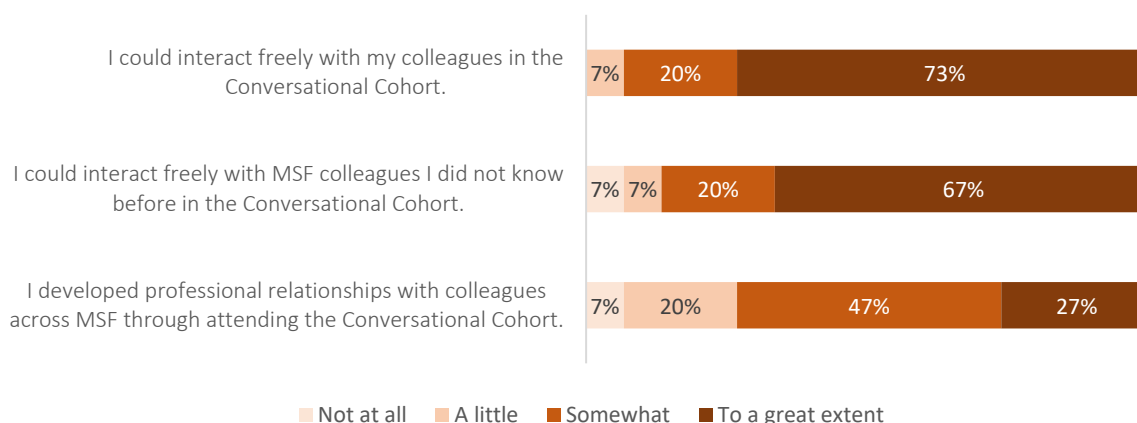
The Anti-Racism Project assumes that becoming aware of racism can be overwhelming, unsettling, and disruptive. According to the project's logic, these emotions can further cultivate avoidance and denial and maintain the status quo. The design of the Anti-Racism Project assumes that for any long-lasting anti-racism change to occur and become embedded in practices in MSF, constant productive discussions must take place to identify, analyse and rectify issues related to racism in the organisation.² In this way, the project relies on psychologically safe spaces to allow participants to overcome the paralysis often associated with an emergent "consciousness" and engage in productive conversations.

The findings in this section draw mainly from the qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews to illustrate the main components of the conversation space for participants, as well as the surveys and the conversation model implemented by the external consultants, ReosPartners. Furthermore, the report identifies and explores the key enablers and inhibitors to engaging in a productive conversation space about racism.

2.2.1 The conversation space

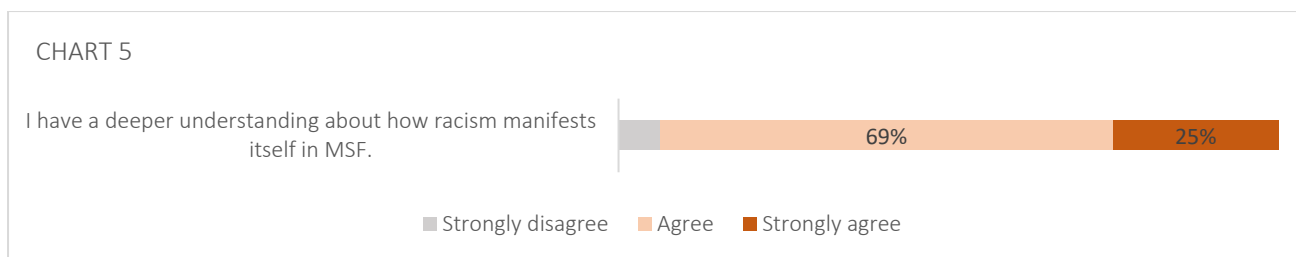
The survey results indicate that the Conversational Cohort provided a learning environment where participants could exchange with one another. 93% of respondents reported they could freely interact with their colleagues in the Conversational Cohort, and 87% reported that they could interact freely with colleagues they did not know before. Furthermore, respondents were able to develop professional relationships with colleagues across MSF (74%).

CHART 4



In addition, 94% of respondents felt they had a deeper knowledge of racism and how it manifests in MSF after participating in the Conversational Cohort. Analysis of the qualitative survey data reveals that respondents felt that listening to the stories and personal histories of peers from across the movement deepened their understanding of racism.

² MSF, "Anti-Racism Project Concept Note", (2022)



The next part of this section explores these findings in more depth to understand the main components, barriers, and enablers of a productive conversation space about racism.

2.2.2 Components of the conversation space

The section draws on data from the interviews, surveys, and the model outlined by ReosPartners to identify components of the conversation space and to illustrate the enablers and barriers to a productive conversation space about racism. The findings explain why many participants could engage in the conversation space. It also highlights factors that may have undermined the conversation space for some participants.

Coding of the qualitative data revealed five components of the conversation space, including: i) creating psychological safety, ii) acknowledging the differences and commonalities in experiences and understanding of racism, iii) discomfort, iv) empowerment, and v) empathy. The components are mapped in figure 2 and described below.

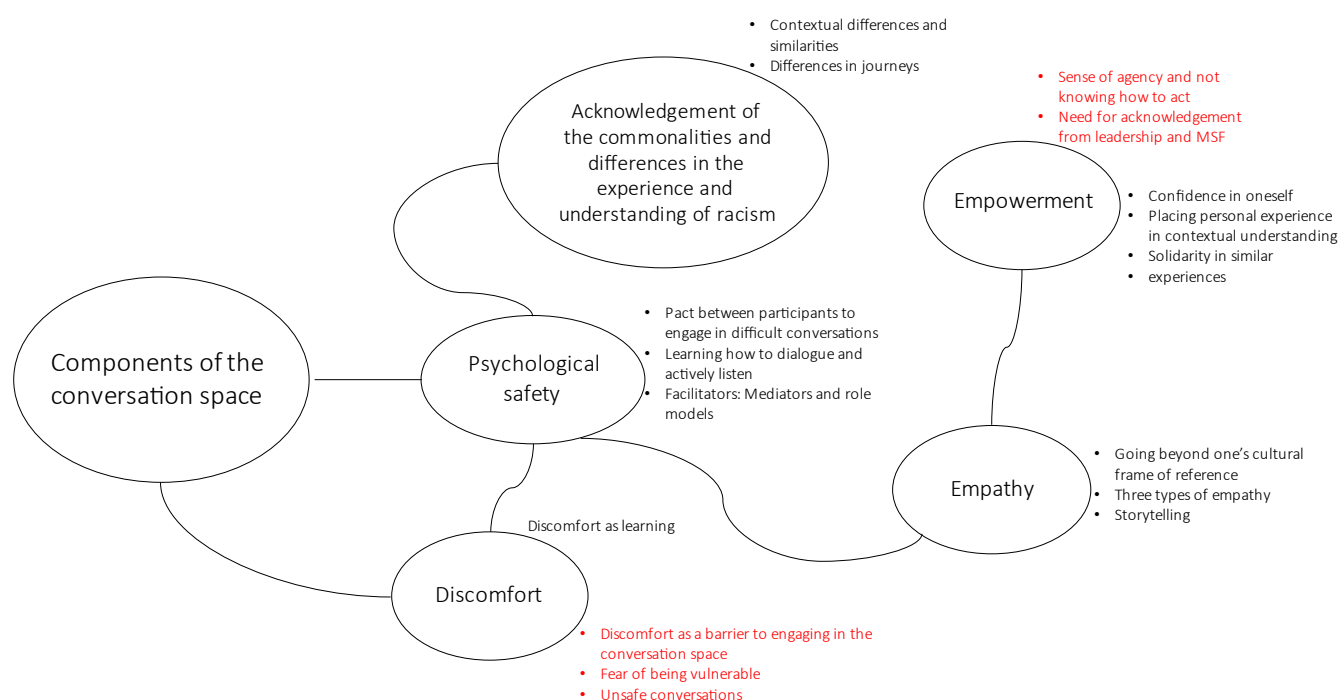


Fig. 2

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

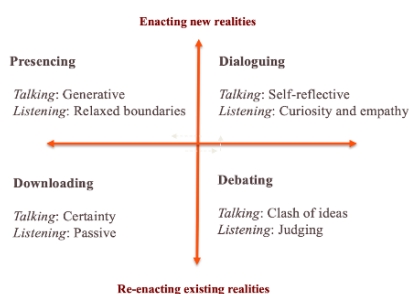
For many respondents, the Conversational Cohort was successful in creating psychological safety. Psychological safety is understood in this report as the shared belief that members of a group feel comfortable taking interpersonal risks. When it exists, members feel safe to share their perspectives without retaliation. It promotes teamwork, encourages authenticity, and fosters learning and innovation.³

Coding of the qualitative data reveals three factors that contributed to the sense of psychological safety in the Conversational Cohort: i) the creation of a pact or agreement between participants, ii) learning how to dialogue and actively listen iii) the facilitators as role models and mediators. These factors led to the development of trust and belonging, which enabled the participants in the cohort to have productive conversations about racism.

"Looking back, I think what... they really managed to create psychological safety in that group... so it created a community where people felt safe to be vulnerable, to be emotional, to share the struggle."

Creating an "agreement between people that were going to be engaging in this conversation" was a crucial factor in creating psychological safety because it provided a "level of protection on both sides and a level of compassion that's needed on both sides." In this way, participants could have conversations about racism while setting boundaries. One respondent noted that "it was very eye opening in terms of developing a framework that feels good for both parties involved". This was contrasted with previous experiences of conversations that felt unsafe because of not wanting to "rock to boat" when others were uncomfortable.

Four Ways of Talking and Listening



The Conversational Cohort sessions showed participants how to use dialogue to shift culture, including guiding participants on using active listening skills when discussing racism. According to ReosPartners, listening skills are essential when discussing race to ensure people feel heard, contributing to a safe space. Responses highlighted the importance of navigating when to listen and when to ask questions in the conversation space. Furthermore, responses describe learning by listening to other people's experiences.

"I didn't feel like I was in the position to tell stories myself. I was in a learning position."

Fig. 3

Ways of Talking and Listening (figure 3), an activity used in the Conversational Cohort for participants to practice talking and listening about racism.⁴

Lastly, the external facilitators were critical in creating psychological safety in the group by acting as mediators and role models for participants. The facilitators mediated discussions by checking in with the group, were "emotionally...connected", and could see when participants "disengaged". By closely following the discussion, facilitators could "follow what was needed in the moment [and] ...able to adjust the agenda". External facilitators were crucial for creating trust in the group and feeling like "no one was listening".

Furthermore, the facilitators acted as role models for the participants in the Conversational Cohort by demonstrating how to develop safety and trust in a conversation space about racism.

³ Gartner, [Leader Guide to Fostering Psychological Safety During a Crisis \(gartner.com\)](https://gartner.com/leader-guide-to-fostering-psychological-safety-during-a-crisis), 2020

⁴ ReosPartners, "MSF TIC Anti Racism Project: Facilitating anti-racism conversation spaces and building the capacity of conversation navigators", (2023)

"The moderators talked very slowly and looked for words sometimes very carefully. And I did realize what quality it needs in order to do this work... They really were the role models...that I would like to aspire to."

"You have to move at the pace of who you're having the conversation with. Constantly checking in, and I think seeing that, seeing how they had to do that with us was really, really meaningful for me."

DISCOMFORT

Discomfort as learning

Responses under this theme describe discomfort in the conversation space as a productive part of learning and unlearning how to converse about racism and a barrier to constructive conversations.

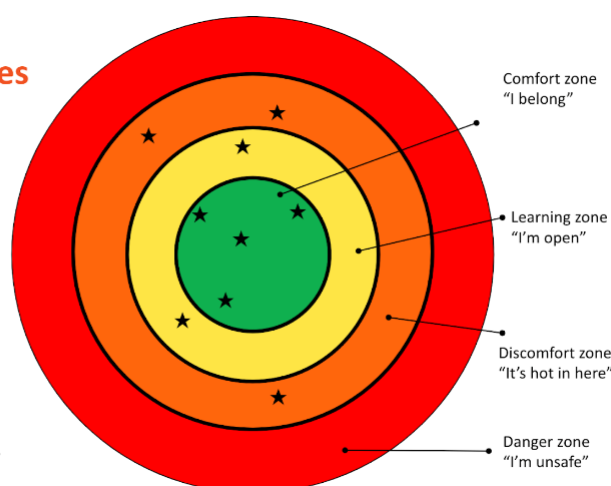
Responses in this theme show that learning to discuss racism in a group of participants with different

understandings and perspectives of racism was challenging at times. Participants described learning how to interact in conversations by moving outside their comfort zones.

"It can be a difficult one, but maybe that's another learning of the cohort...to take a deep breath and still let things be difficult and uncomfortable."

The responses subsumed under the theme of discomfort reflect the four zones of learning in figure 4, adapted by ReosPartners from Freeth and Caniglia.⁵ According to ReosPartners, the four learning

Four zones



Adapted from Freeth & Caniglia, 2019, following Senninger, 2008

Fig. 4

zones offer a framework for engaging in productive conversations about racism. ReosPartners notes that spending time in the discomfort zone is essential because it breeds new thinking and knowledge, expanding the potential for true change.

"You have to feel it so that you can almost tell people. I have been there. It was really uncomfortable, but I was able to get out of that."

Discomfort as a barrier to engaging in the conversational framework

As referenced above, discomfort was also experienced as a barrier to engaging in the conversation space.

Responses suggest that the diverse learning needs and different levels of understanding of racism may have caused challenges for some to participate in the space.

"I'm well aware of the fact that it was really hard and maybe even triggering for some to listen to the... questions I raised... I needed them. I needed these to be answered because I didn't know who else to ask... But I'm well aware that it must have been really, really hard for some...people."

⁵ Rebecca Freeth and Guido Caniglia, "Learning to collaborate while collaborating: advancing interdisciplinary sustainability research" *Sustainability Science*, V. 15, pp247–261 (2020)

Not all perspectives and views were accommodated in the conversations, demonstrating that psychological safety was not there for all participants.

"I often felt that I couldn't express myself if I have something upsetting to share. Given the zen kind atmosphere of these sessions, I was very reluctant to talk about my opinions that can make people angry."

While responses suggest that the Conversational Cohort successfully created psychological safety for participants, for others, the vulnerability of opening up to colleagues in a large virtual session was a barrier to engaging in conversations.

"I really enjoyed the smaller 'homework' discussions I would have with colleagues from my section - felt a lot more comfortable to be vulnerable and share with people I had an existing relationship with... Speaking out in the plenary felt really overwhelming, especially virtually -- it's hard to know how your comments are landing... I felt uncomfortable to have such vulnerable conversations with colleagues around the world I'd never met - never really got past that feeling."

ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENCES AND COMMONALITIES IN EXPERIENCES AND UNDERSTANDING

Many respondents described the importance of acknowledging both the similarities and differences in the understanding and experience of racism for participants in the Conversational Cohort. Themes that emerged from the responses suggest that these differences related to the contextual and cultural experience of racism and the different places of participants in their anti-racism journeys. The Anti-Racism Project's logic assumes that providing a shared understanding of racism is a crucial step in creating a conversational framework to discuss racism at MSF. However, for many participants, recognising the differences in experience was a key component for engaging in the conversation space.

Responses described how the diversity in knowledge and experience enhanced the understanding of racism and anti-racism for participants.

"We were able to bring to the table all of our different perspectives and that added to a richness in discussion that I in my context wouldn't have and would never have been able to touch upon."

Responses showed that participants from different cultural contexts were able to find common threads in their experiences.

"I was really surprised... we have a very connected history... I really like connecting with people... because there are a lot... of similarities".

Differences in understanding and experience among participants emerged in the discussion of the concept of "white supremacy" which did not resonate with the cultural understanding of racism for all participants. Furthermore, responses questioned whether achieving a common understanding of racism is possible in a diverse group of participants from across the movement.

"On some level the learning is meant to take us to a common place, but there're ways in which that commonplace doesn't exist...the concept and the importance of it and foundations are integral, but we will think about it... in different ways."

EMPATHY

The creation of empathy was a common theme in the participants' responses. Responses highlighted the role of storytelling in creating trust and belonging, enabling participants to develop group connections. Furthermore, storytelling was a means through which participants deepened their understanding of racism by exploring new dimensions outside of their cultural frame of reference.

Sharing stories was crucial for creating empathy and trust in the group. Responses illustrate that storytelling enabled participants to connect with each other and provided a sense of belonging in the group. By the end of the sessions, the group "grew bigger than the sum of our parts".

"People sharing their personal and intimate experiences, lived experiences. I found that really useful. That was part of my kind of opening in my head and in my heart."

Responses underlined how the session on "intersectionality" opened participants' eyes to the "things that connect us." A recurrent theme highlights how sharing personal histories and testimonies opened participants' eyes to individual and contextual experiences not evident in their cultural frame of reference.

"[It was] a kind of awakening of becoming more aware of the word that I use, the perception of reality that is different because I'm in the place of privilege."

"The most memorable event, I think, was a couple of colleagues who shared this struggle inside their entity, as they were struggling to be acknowledged or... struggling to have the issue of anti-racism being seen as it should, and so those interventions were quite emotional. And I think for me and many other people ... it gave a broader perspective of how racism and anti-racism is being looked at MSF."

While storytelling was a vehicle for creating empathy in the group, responses highlighted that sharing personal histories often involves reliving emotional trauma and should not be taken for granted in anti-racism discussion spaces.

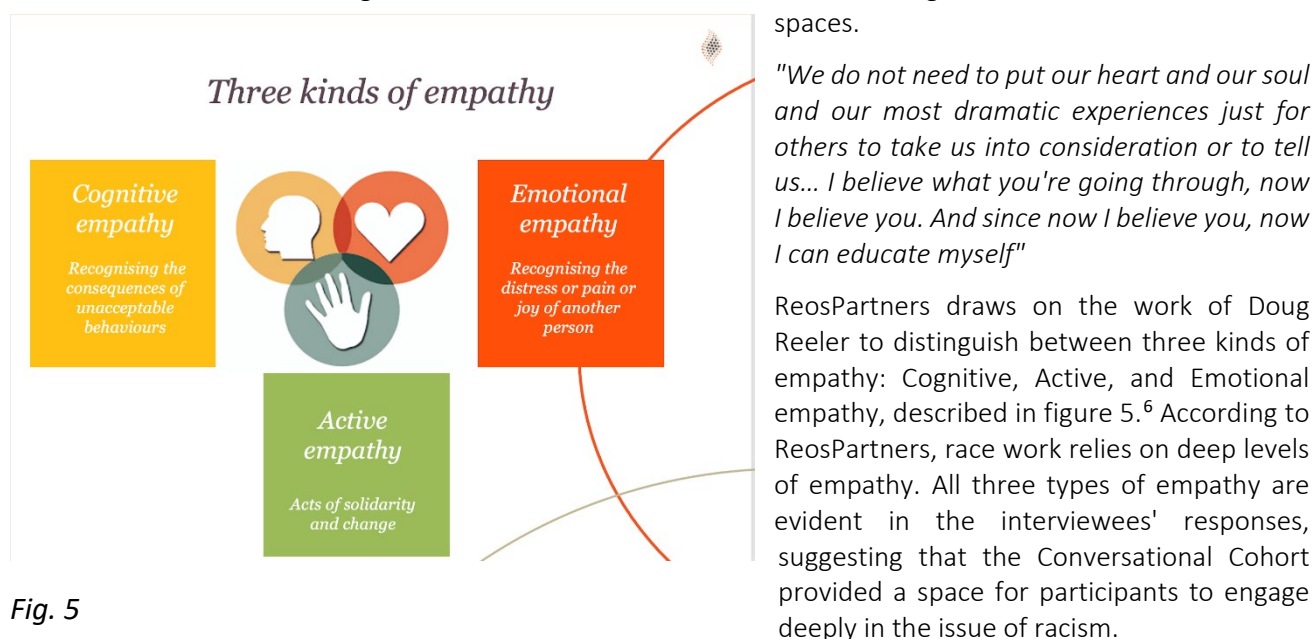


Fig. 5

EMPOWERMENT

Increased agency

In addition to empathy, respondents noted the sense of empowerment they felt as a result of participating in the conversation spaces. Responses under empowerment include i) solidarity in similar experiences, ii) feeling confident in one's ability to make a change, iii) placing personal experiences in a contextual understanding of racism.

Responses related the feeling of empowerment to a sense of being part of a community of like-minded people.

"After that, it felt like we kind of had this community. We had gone through something together, but then there was part of the community that took a more, I guess, proactive or active approach and some responsibility. You could tell the ones that... were very, very much engaged. Cameras were always on. They always had input...it was very nice to like be able to have this community that I was building of people who at least I knew like wanted to be part of this journey, wanted to learn more."

Empowerment was expressed as an increased self-confidence in one's ability to make a change in the organisation.

⁶ Doug Reeler, "Looking where the light is better: Exploring the ironies of organisational culture change" (Tamarind Tree Associates, 2022)

"Before racism was in a way a black box but also a don't touch, don't talk about it, don't even go there... And now I know it's a system, it's that's the way we were raised it's built into our society it's there and we need to do something about it. So, I feel a lot more empowered to really do something. My level of understanding, but also the level of empowerment has risen enormously."

Respondents described a sense of empowerment due to a change in their perception and understanding of racism.

"We are all capable in our own different ways, and so it gives me confidence regardless of where I come from that I have the same opportunities, the same capability of achieving anything that somebody in Europe can achieve or somebody in Asia can achieve or somebody in Africa can achieve, so it gives me the sense of being one is a human being, and the rest become details of life."

Need for guidance on anti-racism actions

Responses highlighted that the increase in empowerment among participants in the Conversational Cohort resulted in the need expressed by respondents to take action to advance anti-racism in their workplaces. Responses reflect a sense of responsibility and frustration at not knowing how to act.

"And I think some people maybe got a little frustrated with that in the cohort I maybe that was part of the numbers dropping off everybody you know, and every workplace MSF is different, people are busy and people, if they don't see it, feel it... and at moments I would have liked some a little bit more of [the practical side of anti-racism work] too."

"More follow-up on the practical level because I think we finished when we were ready to spread more what we learned...And the risk is that [now] maybe everything could disappear."

Respondents noted that having more clarity around the goals of the Conversational Cohort would've helped set their expectations.

"I guess it had we known what to aspire to like had we known the bigger picture, the bigger strategy it would have been easier ... And only afterwards you realize that it that it is an iterative process and that the goal is not there, but that we were supposed to be empowered and then come up with our own goal, but I think we were too diverse as a group to be able to do so."

The report discusses the limited progress on anti-racism practices in the Conversational Cohort and the role of the Accompaniment Sessions in further detail in section 2.4.

Need for acknowledgement from MSF

Responses suggest that the feelings of empowerment also led to a need for acknowledgment that decision-makers in MSF are supportive of anti-racism.

A recurrent theme in the responses shows that the limited participation of leadership in the Anti-Racism Project was seen as a barrier to advancing conversations on anti-racism to take practical steps to implement anti-racism change.

"The fact that we didn't have a lot of management participation, the leadership participating, I think that was not on the side of the TIC, but on the side of MSF leadership not being available to...discuss, but being part of the conversation, I think that strengthens it more."

"People were frustrated to see the buy-in [from leadership] is lacking and we really need that to push these things forward in a meaningful way."

The issue of decision-maker participation in the Anti-Racism Project is covered in more detail in Section 2.4.

The Conversational Cohort provided a conversational framework for MSF staff from different entities to discuss racism. The responses show that the conversation space created empathy among participants, partly due to the participant testimonies, which raised awareness about experiences of racism beyond participants' cultural frame of reference. Responses reflect the growing empowerment among the group in the Conversational

Cohort and the desire to develop action plans through which they could contribute to MSF becoming an anti-racist organisation. Responses show that participants felt they needed more guidance on developing anti-racism action plans in the Conversational Cohort, leading to frustration for some due to not knowing how to act.

The Conversational Cohort did not provide a framework for productive conversations about racism for all participants. The Cohort started with 43 participants, and by the final session, only 16 remained. Responses indicate that discussions may have triggered some participants and that the conversation space did not allow all participants to express their opinions freely.

The following section explores how far the Conversational Cohort, and the Conversation Navigation training built the capacity of participants to have and host conversations about racism with colleagues outside of the Anti-Racism Project.

2.3 Hand: Building capacity of participants to host conversations about racism and identifying anti-racism actions.

This section of the report analyses the impact, so far, of the Conversational Cohort and the Conversation Navigation training on the capacity of participants to have and host conversations about racism, a core objective of the Anti-Racism Project.

This evaluation distinguishes between the capacity to engage in conversations about racism in a workplace setting and the ability to host conversations about racism in a formal discussion space with colleagues in MSF.

The final part of this section explores additional initiatives and actions identified by participants in the Conversational Cohort to advance anti-racism work in their workplaces.

Findings from the surveys and interviews with participants, and a review of program documents were considered.

2.3.1 Building capacity for having and hosting conversations

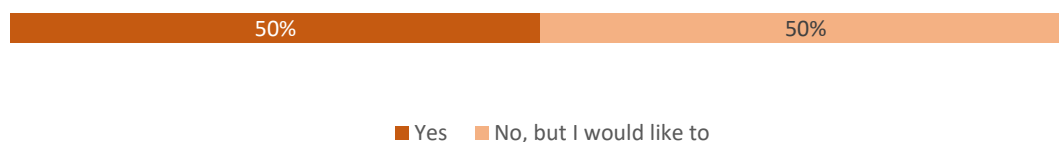
Over half (56%) of the respondents who attended only the Conversational Cohort reported engaging in conversations about racism with their colleagues. Furthermore, half of the respondents who participated in the Conversation Navigation training said they had hosted conversations about racism with colleagues since attending the training. It is important to note that due to the high attrition rate, 16 participants remained in the final sessions of the Conversational Cohort and approximately 6 participants in the Conversation Navigation training in December 2022.

Box 2 includes quotes from participants' feedback on how the Conversational Cohort and Conversation Navigation training prepared them for conversations about racism.

CHART 6: Since attending the Conversational Cohort have you engaged in conversations about racism and anti-racism with your colleagues?



CHART 7: Since attending the Conversation Navigation training, have you hosted conversations with your colleagues using the skills and knowledge you learned in the training?



How did the Anti-Racism Project prepare participants for conversations about racism?

"Previously, I wasn't very comfortable having these conversations due to lack of understanding. Now, with the knowledge gained and opinions exchanged through these sessions, I feel more confident in interacting with people/colleagues about this sensitive issue. I even feel confident about talking on this issue with colleagues who are not very close to me. Basically, this cohort helped me in going beyond my comfort zone."

"I think the main way that it prepared me was through providing a sense of solidarity - that there are a lot of other people in MSF who care about the fight against racism, and being able to share experiences of these conversations with other people in the cohort."

"The space to learn and reflect also made me more likely to pick up on comments/situations in which racism manifests itself in MSF"

"I would never have dared to conduct a conversation around racism had it not been for the Conversation Navigation training."

Box 2

The survey results suggest that the Conversational Cohort and Conversation Navigation training increased the respondents' confidence to explain anti-racism concepts to a friend. There was an increase in confidence for all four concepts covered in the surveys. "Whiteness" saw the most significant increase in confidence of 21%, from 73% in the early phase survey to 92% in the post-course survey.

Due to methodological limitations, it was only possible to match some of the responses from the early-phase survey with responses from the post-course survey. In addition, there was a lower response rate for the post-course survey (n=16) than for the early-phase survey (n=22). This limitation introduces the possibility that the participants who remained in the Conversational Cohort were more motivated than participants who dropped out of the project and, therefore, more likely to report a higher level of confidence. For this reason, the possibility of bias cannot be excluded from the results.

In the early-phase and post-course survey, respondents were asked to report their confidence in conversing about racism with their teams. Chart 9 shows that while most respondents agreed with the statement "I feel confident in my ability to have conversations about racism and related topics with my team" in both surveys, there was a 14% decrease between the early-phase and post-course survey.

CHART 8: How confident are you explaining the following concepts to a friend?

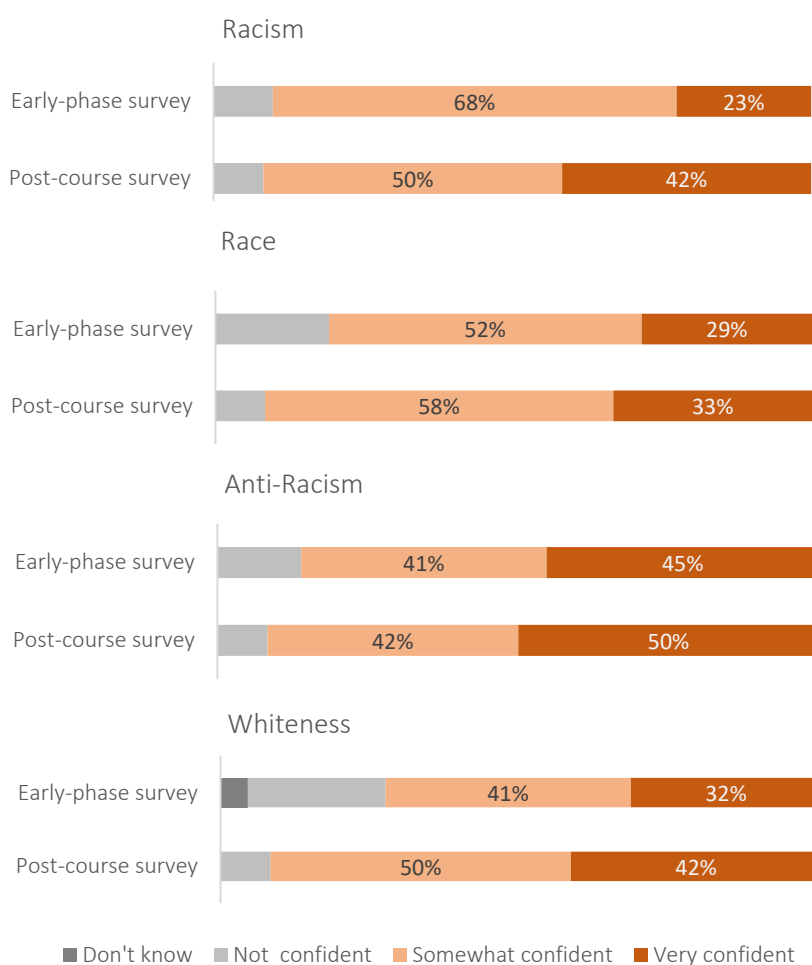


CHART 9: I feel confident in my ability to have conversations about racism and related topics with my team.



Cross tabulation in Table 1 shows the difference between self-reported confidence for survey respondents who participated in the Conversation Navigation and Conversational Cohort. As Table 1 shows, there was a stronger agreement with the statement "I feel confident in my ability to have conversations about racism and related topics with my team" among the respondents who attended the Conversation Navigation training and the Conversational Cohort compared with respondents who only participated in the Conversational Cohort.

Table 1

Did you attend the Conversation Navigation training?		I feel confident in my ability to have conversations about racism and related topics with my team.			
		Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Row Totals
Did you attend the Conversation Navigation training?	No	2	5	2	9
	% of row	22%	56%	22%	60%
	Yes	0	3	3	6
	% of row	0%	50%	50%	40%
	Column totals	2	8	5	15
	Column %	13%	53%	33%	100%

When triangulated with the qualitative findings in Section 2.2 The Heart, this decrease in confidence could reflect the feelings of fear and discomfort related to an emerging consciousness of racism and participating in challenging conversations.

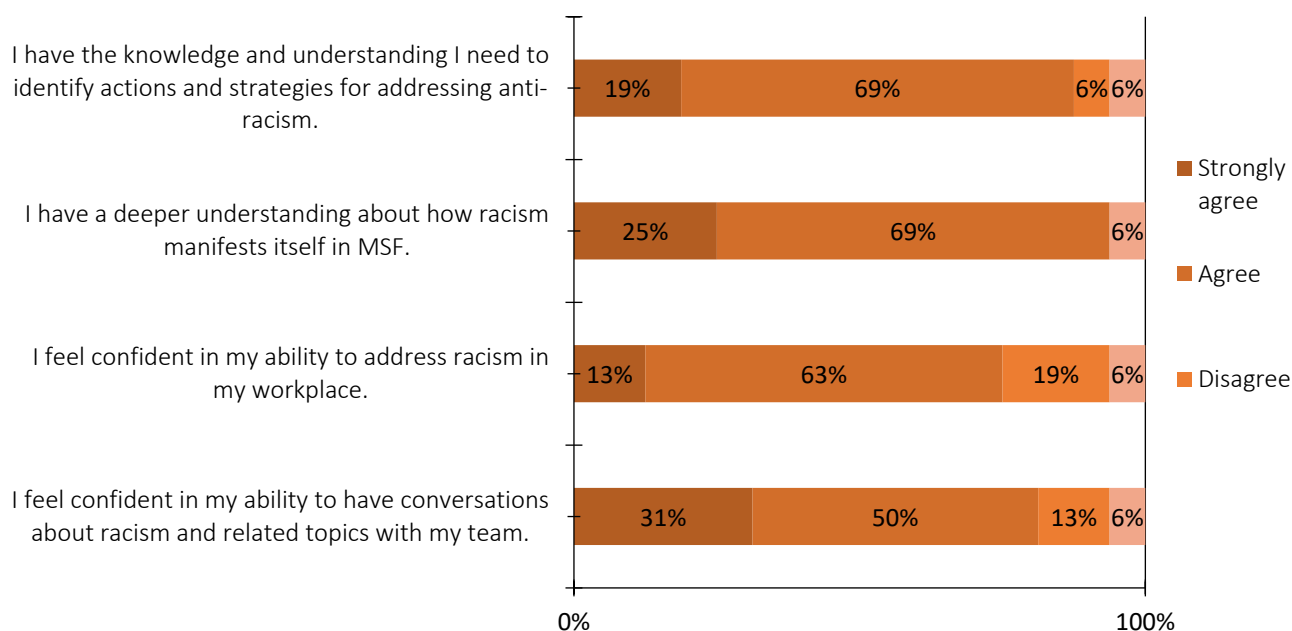
This quote from an interview illustrates the challenge of having conversations about racism.

"I still worry about leading those conversations from a confidence, from a getting it wrong perspective, and this gets it at the nub of I think something for me that's continual is the worry to get things wrong, as much as we talk about a safe space which... includes being wrong and then learning from that."

Nevertheless, as Chart 10 shows, participants rated their confidence in their ability to discuss racism higher than other outcomes, such as identifying or implementing anti-racism actions in their workplaces.

These mixed results are explored in the case study on the Anti-Racism Project's impact on participants' ability to engage in conversations about racism (Case Study 1 in Annex III). The case study illustrates that while the Conversation Navigation training provided participants with practical experience in conversing about racism, there were differences in the impact on the participants' capacity to take the next step and introduce these conversation spaces in their workplaces. The case study highlights that the level of commitment in the participants' workplaces influenced their feelings of self-efficacy. The mixed survey results and the case study

CHART 10



2.3.2 Taking action and doing things differently

In the fourth and fifth sessions of the Conversational Cohort, the participants were encouraged to think of initiatives they could implement to advance anti-racism work in their MSF entities. Table 2 demonstrates the range of initiatives identified by participants and indicates that having and hosting spaces for conversations about racism is a key mechanism through which participants plan to forward anti-racism work.

Survey results suggest that the Conversational Cohort encouraged participants to identify other anti-racism actions beyond conversation spaces. As Chart 10 shows, 88% of survey respondents reported having the knowledge and understanding needed to identify anti-racism actions and strategies. Table 2 displays the range and diversity of anti-racism practices identified by participants in the surveys and interviews.

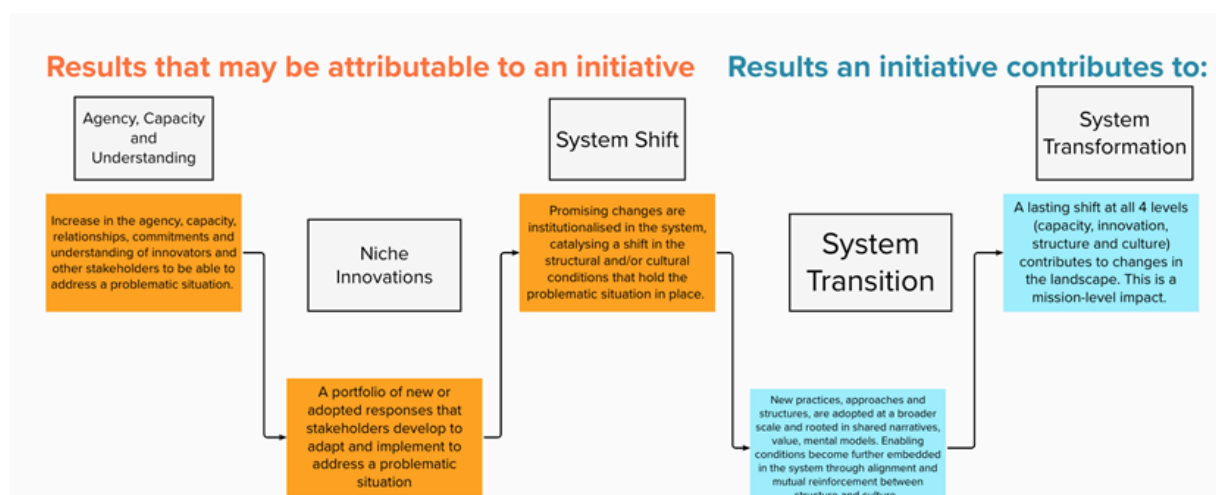


Fig. 6

ReosPartners identifies these actions as "Niche Innovations," the second step in the Anti-Racism Project's results framework in figure 6 above. These initiatives can be considered responses to racism in participants' workplaces and indicate that the increase in agency and capacity has resulted in tangible initiatives for some participants. However, the results framework suggests that a collaborative alignment in developing anti-racism practices is

needed to bring about shifts in the structural or cultural conditions in the organisation and achieve a system shift.

The following section (section 2.4) provides further insight into how the challenges faced in designing and implementing Pillar I and II limited their ability to go further into anti-racism practice.

Table 2

Creating spaces for exchanging views and ideas	
-	Creating an anti-racism-themed book club for members of coordination, who are often disconnected from other DEI initiatives in the office.
-	Implementing discussion platform for monthly exchange.
-	Discussing anti-racism in weekly meetings.
-	Strengthening anti-racism conversation spaces.
-	Hosting conversation spaces with the management team.
HR	
-	Including new scenario-based questions in recruitment interviews
-	Designing a recruitment policy that focuses on how to be an equal opportunity employer
Communications	
-	Creating guidelines for language and communication that include DEI and an Anti-Racism direction.
-	Sharing digital posters in the office.
-	Changing artwork in office spaces to challenge stereotypical views of MSF operational contexts.
EDI strategy	
-	Creating the implementation plan for a DEI strategy which includes anti-racism. The plan includes: making the workforce more diverse, reviewing policies/ recruitment procedures on EDI and anti-racism, encouraging to develop spaces to share for BIPOC colleagues.

An example from one interviewee illustrates how the project supported the development of a DEI strategy. The participant noted that, while her role involves DEI work, the project enabled her to draw on other participants' best practices, which, as she explains, gave credibility to her input to embed anti-racism in the DEI strategy.

"The credibility that I was able to bring to the table, that rose enormously, and so that helped the project or the process that I set up within our office."

Furthermore, the Anti-Racism Project gave her a new understanding of how to develop her strategy to gain the buy-in from stakeholders in her office by assigning responsibilities and empowering stakeholders to engage in the work. Furthermore, rather than focussing only on the process of setting up a project, she reflected on the importance of including the emotional side of anti-racism work in the development of her strategy.

"I did realize that it's not just the process but it's also the emotional side that needs to be addressed... This topic is not just a factual it's so much emotional. But if the emotions are not touched upon, they're not discussed I'm assuming that you would never get through to the people and that's what it needs in order to get the real change done."

In addition to actions and strategies, respondents were also asked whether they had done anything differently since attending the Anti-Racism Project. These responses indicate other less tangible outcomes related to anti-racism on an interpersonal level. Responses were coded, and three common themes were identified, including speaking up, working with others, and peer-to-peer collaboration.

Speaking up

Respondents gave examples of how the Anti-Racism Project raised their awareness of the impacts of structural racism, which led them to speak up for their colleagues and themselves.

I am much more aware of systemic structure of power / white supremacy and confident to challenge others and hold this type of difficult conversation

Furthermore, many responses indicated that participants see themselves as allies in the workplace.

[I] remind management team during team calls to make an effort to have a diverse and inclusive team.

Working with others

There is evidence in responses from participants that the project has led participants to reflect on how they contribute to an anti-racist workplace through their interactions with colleagues.

It made me think that I had to be more conscious of the way that I was talking to others and how I was referring to them.

Furthermore, concepts covered in the course raised awareness about how positions of privilege affect relationships with colleagues.

I have tried to be more aware of my rank, and the privilege that entails, and ensure that I leave space for others to speak and express their opinions.

Peer-to-peer collaboration

Lastly, findings indicate that the project led to increased organisational learning through exchanging information and expertise between participants and the desire to sustain peer-to-peer learning outside the Anti-Racism Project.

Planning on including peers from the Cohort in the project in MSF section to have them as a peer-to-peer support and a critical group of friends.

Furthermore, peer support was expressed in terms of providing emotional support for those seeking to advance anti-racism work.

I would like to keep in contact with some of these colleagues, sharing experiences, venting, and being someone to brainstorm ideas with.

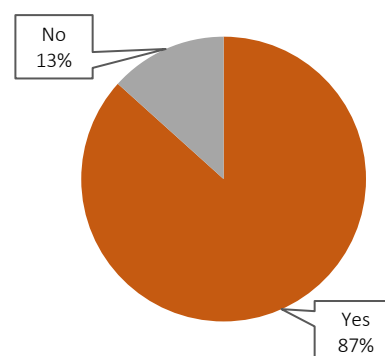
Other responses highlighted the desire to draw on the expertise that exists in the movement.

Have regular dialogues specially with colleagues from South Africa and Brazil who are way ahead in terms of implementing a DEI policy.

Furthermore, some participants plan to participate in a community of practice set up by the Anti-Racism Project for former participants.

The survey and interview findings suggest that participants developed interpersonal awareness, organisational learning, and "niche innovations," which indicate a commitment to continuing anti-racism work after participating in the Anti-Racism Project. Future learning initiatives could benefit from building on the capacity of this group of former participants to support their development of further sustainable anti-racism actions.

CHART 11: Do you have plans to collaborate professionally with the colleagues you met through the Conversational Cohort?



2.4 Designing a journey with different entry points into anti-racism awareness and actions

This section assesses how the Anti-Racism Project provided learning opportunities for MSF staff with different learning needs to engage in anti-racism awareness and actions.

This section discusses the challenges in designing and implementing the Conversational Cohort and Accompaniment sessions and how these may have presented a barrier to participants who joined the project to further their work on anti-racism actions.

This section draws on evidence from the interviews, surveys, program documents, and meetings with the Anti-Racism Project Lead.

2.4.1 Motivations and Learning Needs

Table 3 below shows the range and diversity of motivations for enrolling in the Anti-Racism Project, based on coding of the free-text responses in the surveys and interview transcripts. The motivations are divided into two categories: "Doing inner work" and "Giving back".

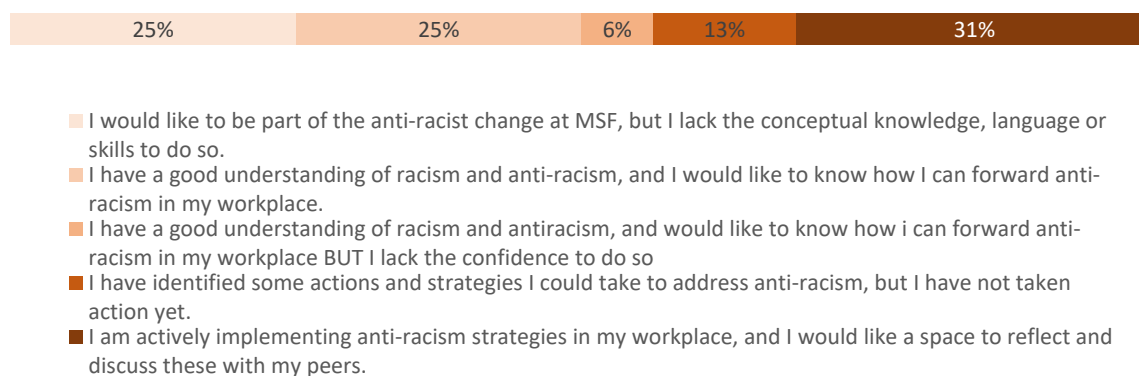
Table 3

Doing Inner Work	Example	Giving Back	Example
<u>Self-knowledge</u>	<p><i>"To better myself as a person, to educate and spread awareness, to make my contribution to the solution of the problem."</i></p> <p><i>"To learn about my own biases, my own privilege"</i></p>	<u>To build on professional work</u>	<i>"To be better at my work in MSF, to help tell stories in a way that uses inherent dignity, rights and human connection between patients-staff and supporters-donors"</i>
<u>Learning from others</u>	<i>"I want to help in making the change and having understanding of common challenges and not only my context helps a lot."</i>	<u>To share knowledge and experiences with others</u>	<p><i>"I felt like I needed to add my voice to bring about change or at least start some necessary conversations about the topic."</i></p> <p><i>"it was... something that that happens here inside MSF and...we are not used to speak[ing] it out loud... So it was much more important -- my assistance"</i></p>
<u>Shared experiences</u>	<i>"I wanted to hear what are the issues and not just for myself, but from other people too...Is it only me who is experiencing or seeing things the way they are or other people are seeing it in the same way, or are there new dimensions that I'm... not aware [of]."</i>	<u>Expected for role at MSF</u>	<i>"In the beginning it was a bit more reluctant but...I understood it more from the way that we need to be present."</i>
<u>Confirmation</u>	<i>"I wanted to see...what's happening... for me it was very important to see... if it was something that it was happening for real or if it was... performative activism."</i>	<u>Allyship</u>	<p><i>"To be aware enough to speak up for myself and others who are getting affected even by subtle racism."</i></p> <p><i>"to understand more deeply the experiences of racism and systems of oppression my BIPOC colleagues, friends and others face"</i></p>

<u>Safe space to share</u>	<i>"It feels like a safe space to talk my personal view"</i>	<u>To be able to have conversations with colleagues</u>	<i>"To be proactive in being antiracist"</i> <i>"To learn how to get through hard conversations about race and racism with others, to learn how to talk about race in a way that keeps conversations going."</i> <i>"To initiate dialogues within my department on this issue on regular basis."</i> <i>"To feel safe in tough conversations."</i> <i>"To learn language and stories and how to listen to people's thoughts and experiences."</i>
----------------------------	--	---	---

The responses illustrate the personal and professional motivations for enrolling in the Anti-Racism Project. The survey results also reflected these motivations, where respondents were asked to identify their anti-racism learning needs. Chart 12 shows the disparate learning needs among the survey respondents. Just over half (56%) of the respondents reported needing more knowledge or ideas of how to forward anti-racism in their workplaces. The need to increase anti-racism knowledge is contrasted with the learning needs of almost half (44%) of respondents who had identified anti-racism actions and strategies and either had yet to take action or wanted space to discuss these strategies with their peers.

CHART 12



The remainder of this section discusses the implications of the diversity and range of learning needs for how far the Anti-Racism Project was successful in providing an entry point into anti-racism awareness and actions.

2.4.2 Entry Points into Anti-Racism Awareness and Action

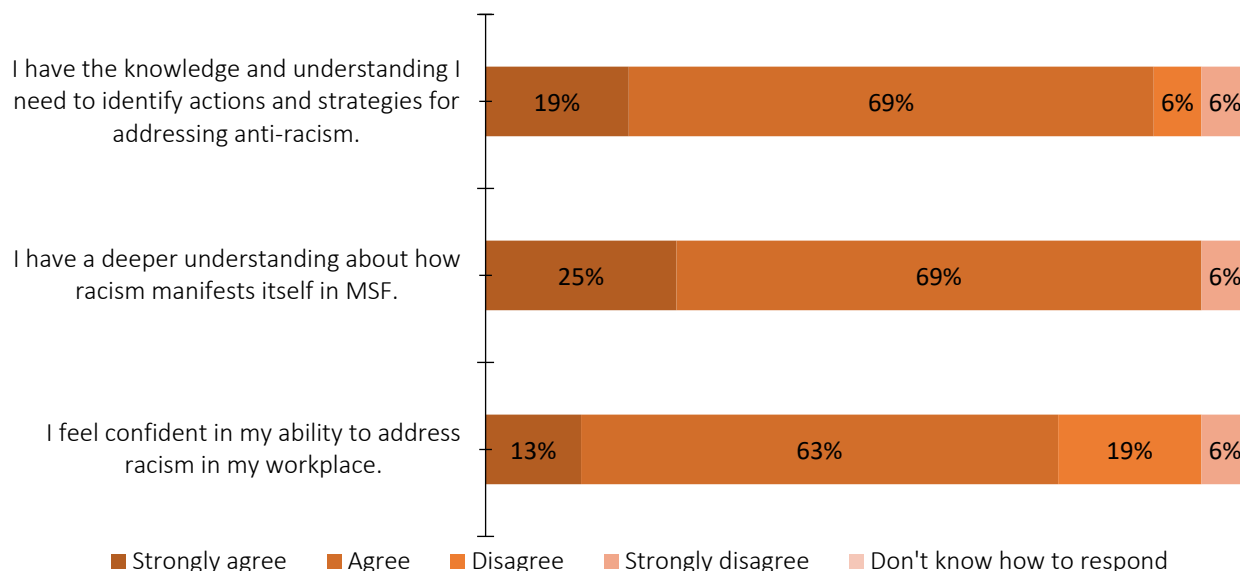
The Conversational Cohort intended to raise awareness of the importance of addressing "the ills and effects of racism across MSF as a whole" by equipping participants with "the knowledge and the skills to listen, comprehend and communicate differently on issues of race and racism."⁷ It was also intended that the spaces would provide an entry point into the topic of anti-racism "that ties theoretical concepts to practical changes to implement."⁸

⁷ ReosPartners, "MSF TIC Anti Racism Project: Facilitating anti-racism conversation spaces and building the capacity of conversation navigators", (2023)

⁸ MSF, "Anti-Racism Project Concept Note", (2022)

The findings in the first two sections on the Head and the Heart suggest that the Conversational Cohort successfully addressed the need to increase conceptual knowledge and understanding of racism. 94% of respondents agreed that the Conversational Cohort deepened their understanding of how racism manifests in MSF.

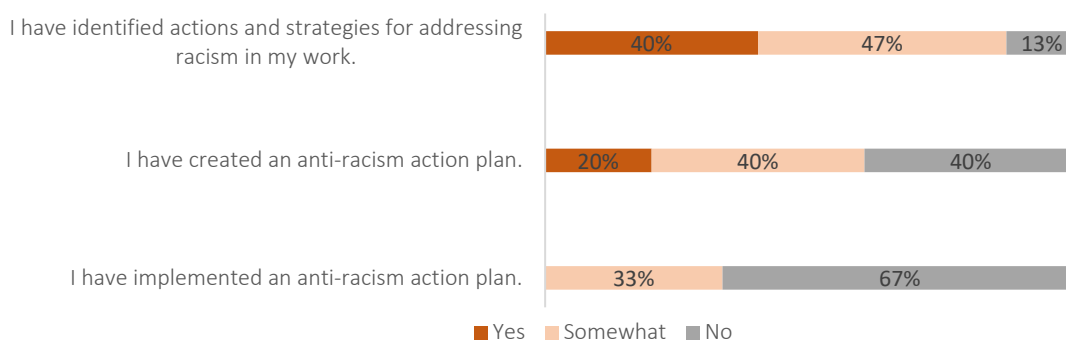
CHART 13



Case Study 2 in Annex IV compares how the Anti-Racism Project deepened awareness of racism and anti-racism for two participants at different stages in their anti-racism journeys. This case study shows how the Anti-Racism Project provided a valuable learning opportunity for one participant already working on anti-racism strategies in his workplace and another participant who joined the project in the early stages of her understanding of racism and related concepts.

Findings from the surveys and interviews illustrate that the Conversational Cohort faced challenges in providing an entry point into anti-racism action. Chart 13 shows that participants reported the least confidence in their abilities to address racism in their workplaces. This is further reflected in Chart 14 below which shows that 87% of respondents report identifying (40%) or somewhat identifying (47%) actions and strategies for addressing racism in their work. Examples of these actions are discussed in more detail above in section 2.3. The percentage decreases for respondents who report having created (20%) or somewhat created (40%) an anti-racism action plan and drops to 33% for respondents who reported having somewhat implemented an anti-racism action plan.

CHART 14



It is evident from the interview and survey data that participants from the Conversational Cohort needed practical guidance on advancing anti-racism work in MSF. The findings from the evaluation do not indicate a particular cause for the limited progress on the anti-racism actions for the Conversational Cohort. However, they indicate context and design-related factors that may have impacted the project's ability to provide an entry point into anti-racism actions.

The first half of the Conversational Cohort (sessions one to five) taught the knowledge of racism and anti-racism concepts and how they apply to participants' experiences in MSF. These sessions covered topics including organisational culture change, everyday racism, whiteness, and intersectionality. There is evidence that the focus on teaching and learning in the early sessions of the Conversational Cohort may have inhibited the engagement of participants who joined the Anti-Racism Project to develop anti-racism strategies and actions. One interviewee described how some participants were discouraged by the emphasis on teaching anti-racism and racism concepts instead of practices and "feeling like they're [t]here once again to teach." The quote below illustrates how the challenge of accommodating diverse learning needs in the group prevented some participants from engaging in the Anti-Racism Project:

"You don't realise how much time is taken up by teaching. If you're somebody that already has that knowledge, you're not going to stick around for that. You're going to just say, 'call me when we get into the part where I get to learn, I'm not learning anything at this point'...I think there were people that were very much ready, like the doers and the people that were like, 'I need to be taught first before I can feel comfortable doing.'"

Furthermore, another interviewee reflected on how the need to learn may have clashed with participants with experience in anti-racism work.

"I had the feeling that the cohort for many was a challenge because we were this different set of people with so many different experiences, lenses, frames, EDI dimensions, and many [participants] were experts in EDI or anti-racism and were so aware and conscious. I'm well aware of the fact that I'm that it was really hard and maybe even triggering for some to listen to the... questions I raised."

There is anecdotal evidence from the interviews that the challenge of accommodating the different groups of "doers" and "learners" in the Anti-Racism Project may have contributed to the high rate of attrition (over 50%) during the project.

"We didn't get as deep as I expected us to go because there was so much teaching that was needed."

The focus of the final sessions of the Conversational Cohort shifted to becoming an anti-racist organisation. Part of the intention for the later sessions was to support participants in identifying ways to address structural racism in MSF. For some participants, the lack of clarity about the goal of these last sessions may have impacted their engagement in anti-racism actions.

"I would have named from the beginning what the goal of the cohort was, set it up more strategically in a way so that we had the bigger picture from the beginning ...I think it was starting from session four or five that we then didn't know what the sessions were about any more like it was kind of like a black box and only once you were there you knew."

Furthermore, many responses indicate that the lack of engagement of leaders and decision-makers was a barrier to advancing anti-racism practices in the Anti-Racism Project. Responses suggest that the lack of leadership engagement posed a challenge for participants for two reasons: i) the lack of engagement signals a limited commitment to anti-racism work at MSF, ii) the involvement of decision-makers is essential for advancing anti-racism work because they have the power to bring about structural change.

"I think there was an expectation that these conversations would be happening with leadership... I think people felt like they're talking in an echo chamber...Yes, we're supposed to be having conversations, but there is this expectation of leadership there. And then people felt like what am I doing? I'm already having these conversations."

The Anti-Racism Project invited leaders from across the movement to participate in the penultimate sessions of the Conversational Cohort. In this session, participants shared their reflections on racism in MSF with leadership and expressed their vision of becoming an anti-racist organisation.

The discussion below outlines how the challenges in implementing the Accompaniment sessions may have limited participants' progress in developing and implementing an anti-racism action plan.

2.4.3 The Accompaniment Sessions

The Accompaniment Sessions were implemented in early August 2022 and facilitated by ReosPartners. A total of eight two-hour sessions were held between early August and December 2022. Participants could decide how many sessions they wished to attend.

The Anti-Racism Project initially designed the Accompaniment Sessions to build MSF's capacity in anti-racism actions by providing tailored guidance to staff and teams already working on institutionalising anti-racism change in the organisation. The sessions were designed to support the development of the Conversational Cohort participants' anti-racism action plans.

The Accompaniment Sessions faced several challenges in their design and implementation, which impacted their ability to advance anti-racism action in the participating sections.

CHALLENGES IN THE DESIGN OF THE ACCOMPANIMENT SESSIONS

Although the Accompaniment Sessions were designed to provide tailored guidance on anti-racism strategies, the majority of participants who registered their interest and attended the sessions were primarily interested in learning from their peers and had yet to identify tangible actions.⁹

Review of the registration data for the Accompaniment Sessions shows that only 4 out of the 34 motivations for registering for the training related to a specific intervention. Since the majority of participants had yet to identify a need for tailored guidance, the facilitators abandoned the initial framework for the sessions. Instead, they focused on providing an unstructured lesson plan and supported peer-to-peer learning.¹⁰

Findings from the interviews suggest that ReosPartners faced a challenge in accommodating diverse learning needs in the Accompaniment Sessions. An interviewee described how participants were divided into different groups based on whether or not they had a specific learning initiative. He recounts how this decision to split the group impacted his ability to learn from the experiences of his peers with more expertise.

"How can we create a space to learn from those who are experts?...Because what they are learning could be useful for us to accelerate our own learning process"

CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCOMPANIMENT SESSIONS

The issues in the design were compounded by challenges faced in the implementation of the Accompaniment Sessions. The Accompaniment Session registration system faced problems that prevented the project team from sending follow-up communications to participants and tracking attendance. This issue contributed to the fluctuation in participation in the Accompaniment Sessions, ranging from approximately 3 to 19 people per session.

Furthermore, because of the issues with the registration system, ReosPartners could not access information on how many participants were expected to attend each session. Moreover, they could not confirm what actions or initiatives participants were working on prior to the sessions. In this way, designing the sessions to provide tailored guidance to participants was impossible.

⁹ ReosPartners, "MSF TIC Anti Racism Project: Facilitating anti-racism conversation spaces and building the capacity of conversation navigators", (2023)

¹⁰ ReosPartners, "MSF TIC Anti Racism Project: Facilitating anti-racism conversation spaces and building the capacity of conversation navigators", (2023)

This issue with the implementation of the sessions is evident in participants' feedback that the purpose of the Accompaniment sessions needed to be clarified. Responses indicate that the lack of continuity between sessions and the fluctuation in participation meant that the participants could not engage in peer-to-peer learning throughout the course of the sessions.

“Maybe what was not very useful in terms of hands on experiences was the Accompaniment sessions because it was a very diverse group... it was really open. So, we had some colleagues that joined us for just one session, and they had really good initiatives... but then I never saw them again.”

The Accompaniment Sessions faced similar challenges to the Conversational Cohort in accommodating diverse learning needs, which impacted the development of anti-racism actions for participants in the Anti-Racism Project. A learning and development needs analysis could support the design of more targeted training for staff at different stages in their anti-racism journeys. This is an important lesson learned for developing future learning initiatives seeking to build the capacity for anti-racism work for a diverse pool of MSF staff and teams.

2.5 Way forward

This section discusses the feedback on the Anti-Racism Project. The findings here draw on the surveys on participants' experience with the Conversational Cohort, and the qualitative data on the project's strengths and challenges. The section closes with a review of the key barriers to forwarding anti-racism in the movement as described by the participants in the Anti-Racism Project.

2.5.1 Feedback

Overall, the feedback on the Conversational Cohort was positive. 82% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience, and 88% reported that they would recommend the Conversational Cohort to their colleagues.

CHART 15: OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE CONVERSATIONAL COHORT?

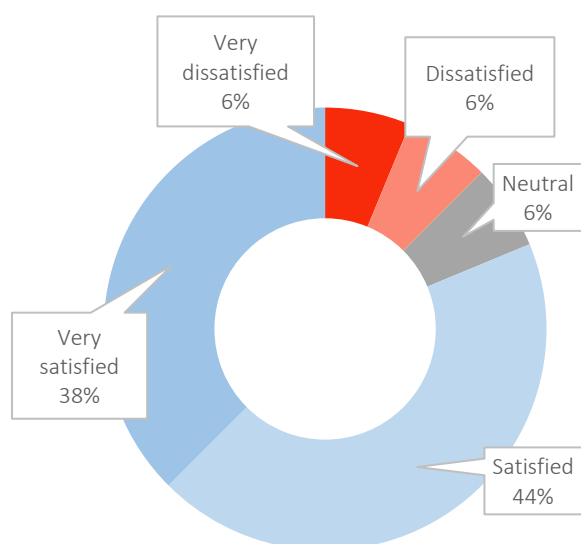
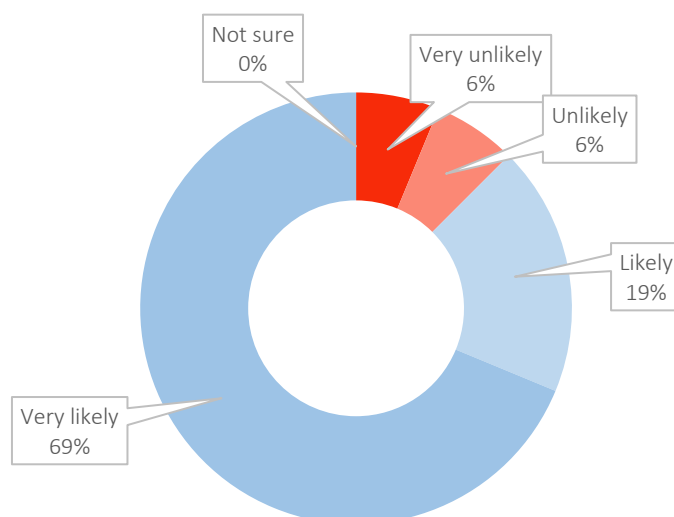
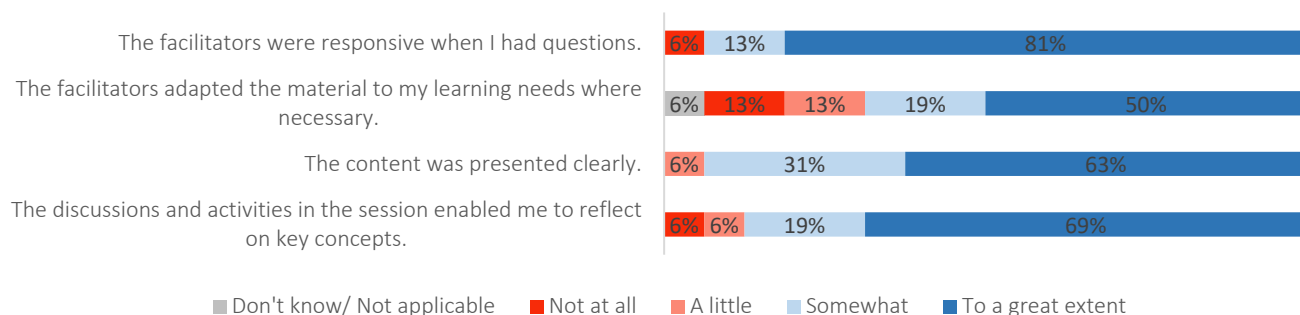


CHART 16: HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO RECOMMEND THE CONVERSATIONAL COHORT TO YOUR COLLEAGUES?



As Chart 17 shows, the majority of respondents gave positive feedback on the learning environment in the Conversational Cohort. Respondents gave the least positive feedback to the statement "The facilitators adapted the material to my learning needs where necessary" to which only half responded "to a great extent." The less favourable responses here may reflect a finding described throughout the report that the diversity of learning needs in the Conversational Cohort was a barrier to learning for some participants.

CHART 17



2.5.2 Program Benefits and Challenges

Table 4 below presents the range of feedback on the benefits and challenges of the Anti-Racism Project from the surveys and interviews. Many of the responses under project benefits are explored in detail in section 2.2.2 Components of a Productive Conversation Space.

Table 4

<u>PROGRAM BENEFITS</u>	<u>PROGRAM CHALLENGES</u>
Expertise of the facilitators in moderating a conversation space for discussing racism.	Challenges in the design and implementation of the Accompaniment Sessions.
Different learning methods and materials provided which accommodated different learning styles.	Need for more representation from offices across the movement.
Productive and safe discussion space.	More guidance on developing practical steps to address racism and advance anti-racism work.
Sharing of participant testimonies.	Lack of clarity of the Conversational Cohort's overall objective.
Peer-to-peer learning.	Difficulties accommodating disparate learning needs in one learning event.
	Limited participation of leadership in the project.
	High attrition rate and fluctuation in participation.

The expertise of the facilitators was a common theme in the responses about the program benefits. The facilitators were credited for creating a safe discussion space, adapting the pace to the group's needs, and checking in with participants to reflect on the impact of the material on the Cohort.

"They paid attention to every comment, didn't brush off any comment, didn't say any comment was right or wrong, but checked in to see, especially if something was a little bit controversial or they perceived it that it could have been, to really check in with the group."

In addition, responses highlighted how the learning methods used in the Conversational Cohort and Conversation Navigation training accommodated the different learning styles of participants. According to respondents, learning methods included theoretical readings, interactive discussion spaces, sharing stories, and experiential learning, such as role plays. The quote below demonstrates how the different learning methods enabled participants to engage with conceptually new learning material.

"It helped me to grasp the topic from this theoretical side because this is how I know how I work... I feel safe once I understand things and I'm then able to get to the emotional side."

Lastly, the opportunity to learn from peers with different experiences addressing racism in their sections benefited participants. This benefit has been discussed elsewhere in the report. Chart 11 in section 2.3 demonstrates that 87% of respondents plan to collaborate with their peers from the Conversational Cohort. Anti-Racism Project could harness the continued peer-to-peer collaboration to develop organisational learning that could create sustained anti-racism change in different entities across the movement.

Program challenges are related to both the design and implementation of the learning initiatives and contextual factors in the organisation.

The challenges in implementing and designing the Accompaniment Session have been covered in detail in 2.4.3 Accompaniment Session. Further feedback about the program's implementation reflects the challenge for participants to attend long sessions on two consecutive days each month.

Several responses noted that while the Conversational Cohort group was diverse, there was a large contingent from European offices, and some MSF offices and regions were underrepresented. This is partly related to the enrolment process for the Conversational Cohort, which prioritised the enrolment of staff from the Co-Sponsoring entities.

Further challenges related to the design and implementation of the sessions have been addressed in more detail in the previous sections (Lack of clarity of objectives - Section 2.2, Disparate learning needs — Section 2.4, Need for concrete actions and strategies – Section 2.4.3).

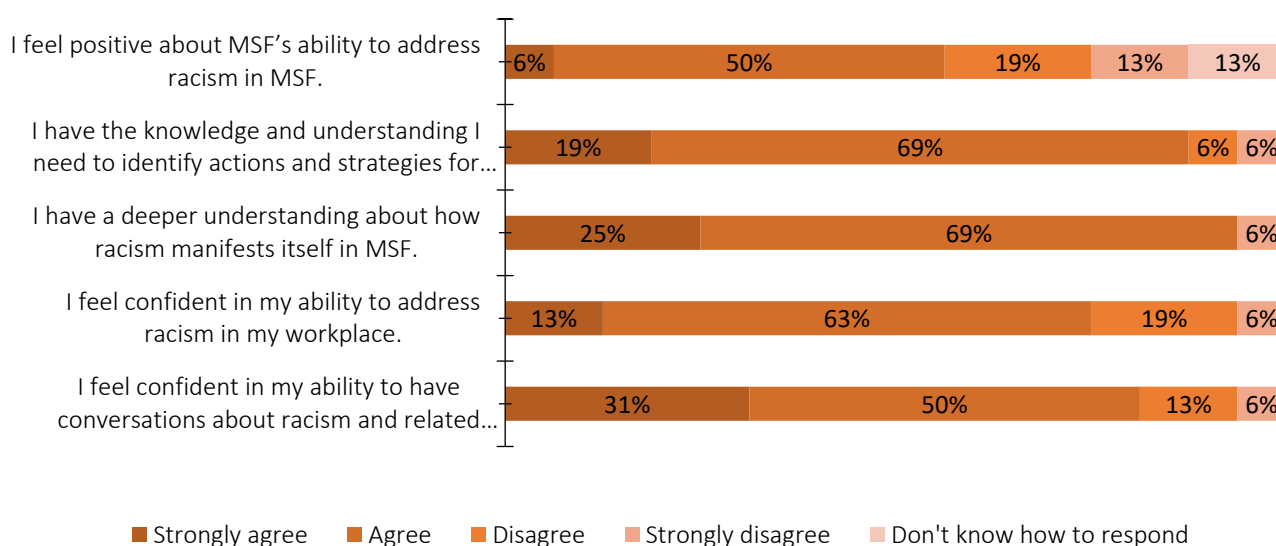
Leadership engagement was also identified as a challenge and is covered throughout this report in section 2.2, 2.4 and the following discussion on barriers to advancing anti-racism.

2.5.3 Barriers to Anti-Racism work in MSF

Survey respondents and interviewees identified several barriers to advancing anti-racism in the movement. These barriers can be considered contextual and organisational factors that prevent MSF from moving anti-racism forward in the movement and are relevant for future anti-racism initiatives seeking to achieve a systemic shift in the organisation.

The post-course survey asked participants to rate their perception of the impact of the Conversational Cohort on several outcomes related to their advancement of anti-racism work in the organisation. The respondents rated their perception of MSF's ability to address racism in MSF least highly, with only 6% strongly agreeing and 50% agreeing with this statement.

CHART 18



Participants were asked in the interviews and surveys what they believed were the main contributing factors to racism in the organisation. Interview transcripts and free-text responses from the survey were coded. Table 5 outlines the nine barriers related to the organisation's culture and structure.

The lack of commitment to anti-racism among MSF decision-makers and the need for alignment on an anti-racism strategy in MSF are two barriers that are particularly significant for the ability of future anti-racism learning initiatives to institutionalise systemic shifts in the organisation. These two barriers are explored in further detail below.

Table 5

Organisational culture	Structural factors	Other
<i>Fear</i> Fear of speaking out due to fear of repercussions (losing job/ being misrepresented)	<i>Most OCs and decision-making power located in European countries</i>	<i>Challenge of keeping up momentum for anti-racism due to the tendency for headline issues to fade</i>
<i>Lack of an effective anti-racism reporting mechanism</i> Lack of trust due to previous experiences of racism not being properly investigated People don't feel safe reporting on racism There is no official process to report incidents of racism	<i>Need for organisational alignment on an anti-racism strategy</i> The need for actions tailored to cultural contexts. Lack of clarity about how to forward anti-racism Lack of sharing of resources across sections Inequitable resourcing for anti-racism in the movement Decentralised structure	
<i>Need for commitment for anti-racism among MSF decision-makers</i>	<i>Inequality in treatment of internationally mobile and locally hired staff in programs</i>	
<i>Persistence of unsafe conversations</i> Polarization of the issue in MSF Defensiveness among MSF staff		

NEED FOR ORGANISATIONAL ALIGNMENT ON AN ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY

Where participants identified the need for alignment on an anti-racism strategy as a barrier to advancing anti-racism in MSF, three of the common contributing factors included:

- There is a need for clarity about how to create intersectional alignment while acknowledging the importance of localised anti-racism actions. According to respondents' views, the contextual significance of racism indicates that anti-racism work should be adapted to the context in which racism is experienced. However, the lack of intersectional alignment is problematic for advancing anti-racism racism as a movement. This contradiction contributes to the lack of clarity about addressing racism as an organisation.
- MSF's decentralised structure and the lack of a centralised resource-sharing platform lead to dispersed and siloed anti-racism initiatives.
- The inequitable resourcing for anti-racism between MSF entities means that some sections have dedicated focal points tasked with moving issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion forward in their sections. In contrast, other entities rely on volunteers to advance anti-racism work.

These factors are illustrated in the quotes below:

"Even if it's normal that all the activities are contextualized, if there is no minimum alignment, it's going to be difficult."

"In MSF International, I would say it's...due to the different contexts [and the] different intercultural criteria. There's no generic way [to address racism] and this is when it's so difficult because on the strategic level there's everything there but then when it comes to the context and to the... individual country level it's not clear."

"[The Conversational Cohort] was a place to learn, but also to share information and ... it still brought up moments where it was clear that information sharing and access to the learning and so on still isn't happening in some pretty glaring ways in MSF".

The need for a common understanding of racism was identified by participants in the Conversational Cohort and was one of the themes addressed in the conversation with MSF leadership in the penultimate session. This is a significant barrier to scaling up activities to address anti-racism as an organisation, a necessary step in order to achieve the systemic shift outlined in the results framework in Section 2.3.

NEED FOR COMMITMENT FOR ANTI-RACISM AMONG MSF DECISION-MAKERS

Reflecting on the barriers to advancing anti-racism, respondents noted that there is a need for commitment and acknowledgment in the organisation that anti-racism is a priority. Participants commented on the following contributing factors:

- Decision-makers need to actively commit to anti-racism work for MSF to achieve a cultural shift that allows systemic changes to occur.
- Without leaders committing to anti-racism, it will be challenging to coordinate and agree on an organisational anti-racism strategy to address the dispersed nature of anti-racism work in the movement.
- The lack of commitment from leadership in the Anti-Racism Project discouraged participants from engaging in the sessions, suggesting that future learning initiatives may face a similar challenge, further preventing the advancement of anti-racism work in the organisation.

This barrier is highlighted by the quotes below.

"This was a frustration with the cohort with a why a lot of people dropped off is not seeing that leadership a This was for leadership and for staff but only staff attended. How are you supposed to get all the big work done? Do we put it all on our back? We need that leadership buy in and I think that was that's lacking in order to move this work forward."

"I feel like there was transparency and vulnerability to say, 'we're not doing enough', so there was that recognition...But then there was the opinion. I think this is from people that are just tired of it that were like, we're still missing 16... You know, people were frustrated that the buy in is lacking, and we really need that in order to push these things forward in a meaningful way."

Without the engagement of decision-makers and a more unified response to racism in MSF, it may be difficult to achieve the Ant-Racism Project's long-term outcomes of embedding cross-sectional anti-racism practices throughout the organisation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Anti-Racism Project successfully increased conceptual knowledge and understanding of racism and related concepts among participants in the Conversational Cohort. Furthermore, it provided a conversational framework that enabled participants to engage deeply about how racism manifests in the organisation. Evidence shows that the Anti-Racism Project increased confidence in discussing anti-racism concepts with colleagues. Analysis of the survey results provides an early indication that participants have engaged in or hosted conversations about racism with their colleagues at MSF outside of the Anti-Racism Project. However, a comparative case study of the experiences of three participants illustrates that the project has had mixed results in building participants' capacity in this area. The evidence suggests that more support is needed for participants to feel confident in having or hosting conversations about racism in their workplaces.

The Anti-Racism Project faced various challenges that impacted its ability to advance anti-racism actions further in MSF. These challenges are related to both the design and implementation of the learning initiatives and the contextual factors in the organisation. The main findings from the first phase of the Anti-Racism Project are outlined below, with specific recommendations for developing future learning initiatives.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR HAVING AND HOSTING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACISM

The Anti-Racism Project's overarching objective focused on building the participants' capacity to have and host conversations about racism in MSF. Findings suggest that the Conversational Cohort and Conversation Navigation training had mixed results in strengthening the capacity of participants to discuss racism and related topics.

Respondents increased their confidence in explaining anti-racism and racism concepts between the early-phase and baseline surveys. However, there was a decrease of 14% in their confidence to discuss racism and related topics with colleagues at MSF.

Over half (56%) of the respondents who attended only the Conversational Cohort reported engaging in conversations about racism with their colleagues. A further 50% of the respondents who participated in the Conversation Navigation training reported hosting conversations about racism with colleagues since attending the training.

A case study illustrates that the role of professional contexts, such as the level of commitment to anti-racism in the working environment, may have impacted how far the participants felt confident engaging in conversations about racism in their entities. Participants would benefit from additional follow-up training to continue building their capacity to have and host conversations about racism in MSF entities.

Recommendation: Conduct research to identify the consistent barriers to holding and having conversations about racism for former participants to design further capacity-building training. This could include a community of practice for participants to share best practices and brainstorm solutions to the challenges faced in having and holding conversations about racism in their workplaces.

DESIGNING AN ENTRY POINT INTO ANTI-RACISM ACTION

Analysis of the survey results and interview transcripts suggests that the project successfully provided an entry point into anti-racism awareness for participants at different stages of their anti-racism journeys. However, findings indicate that the project could do more to support participants in the Conversational Cohort and the Accompaniment Sessions to develop anti-racism actions.

Evidence points to two main challenges that contributed to the limited progress on anti-racism actions:

i) The goal of the Accompaniment Sessions, the pillar that aimed to build capacity in anti-racism actions by providing tailored guidance on the anti-racism initiatives of MSF staff and teams, was broadened to accommodate any MSF staff with a general interest in working on anti-racism in their workplaces.

ii) The Conversational Cohort faced the challenge of accommodating participants' diverse learning needs and motivations. The project initially prioritized providing baseline knowledge to all participants over guidance on anti-racism actions, creating a barrier to building capacity for anti-racism action for those further along in their journey.

Given the high attrition rate and fluctuating participation in the Anti-Racism Project, these are important considerations for developing future anti-racism learning events.

Recommendation: Conduct learning and development needs analysis to design future learning events that will strengthen anti-racism capacity for staff with diverse needs and motivations for engaging in anti-racism work.

Recommendation: Where possible, design learning initiatives with separate and shared spaces for participants at different stages of their anti-racism journeys to accommodate diverse learning needs and encourage peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.

Recommendation: Create a framework that would allow participants to place to identify their anti-racism learning needs and self-direct their learning to support their anti-racism journeys.

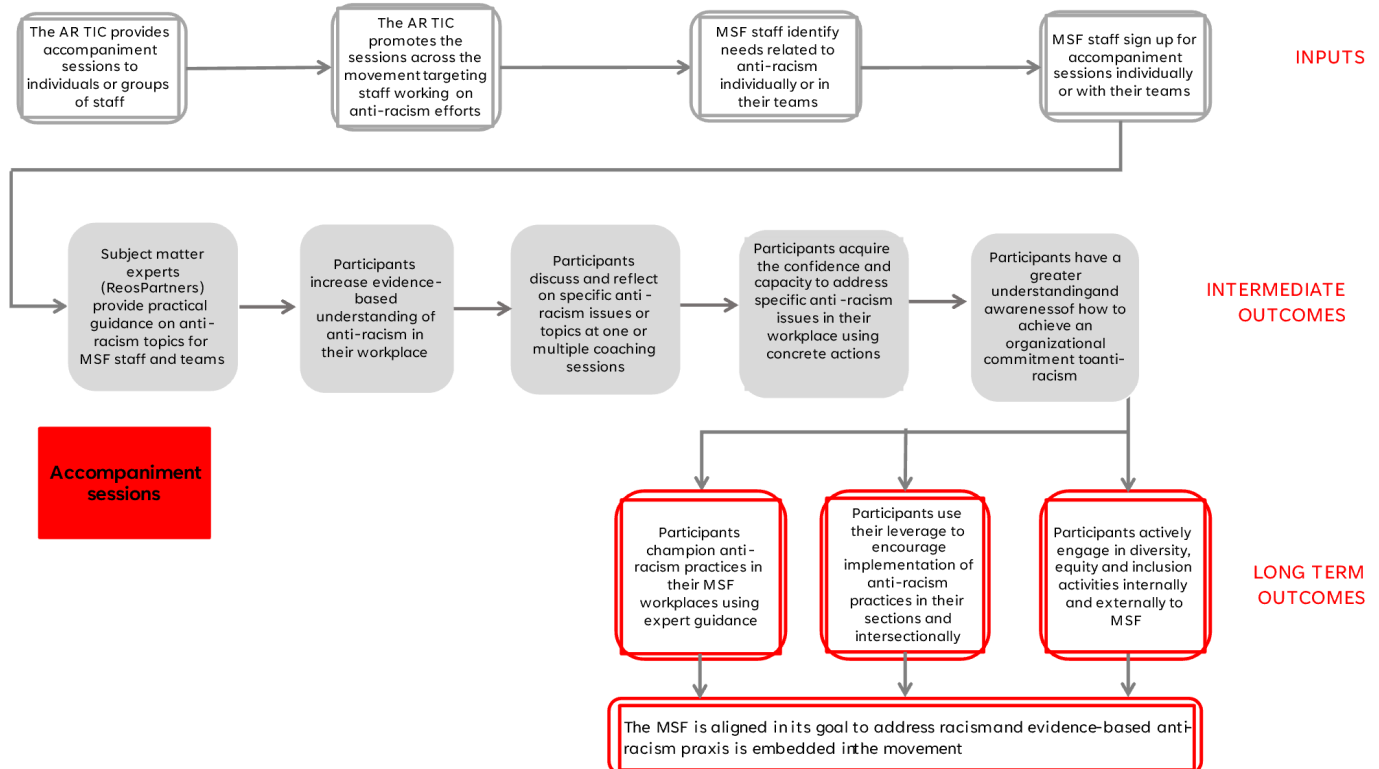
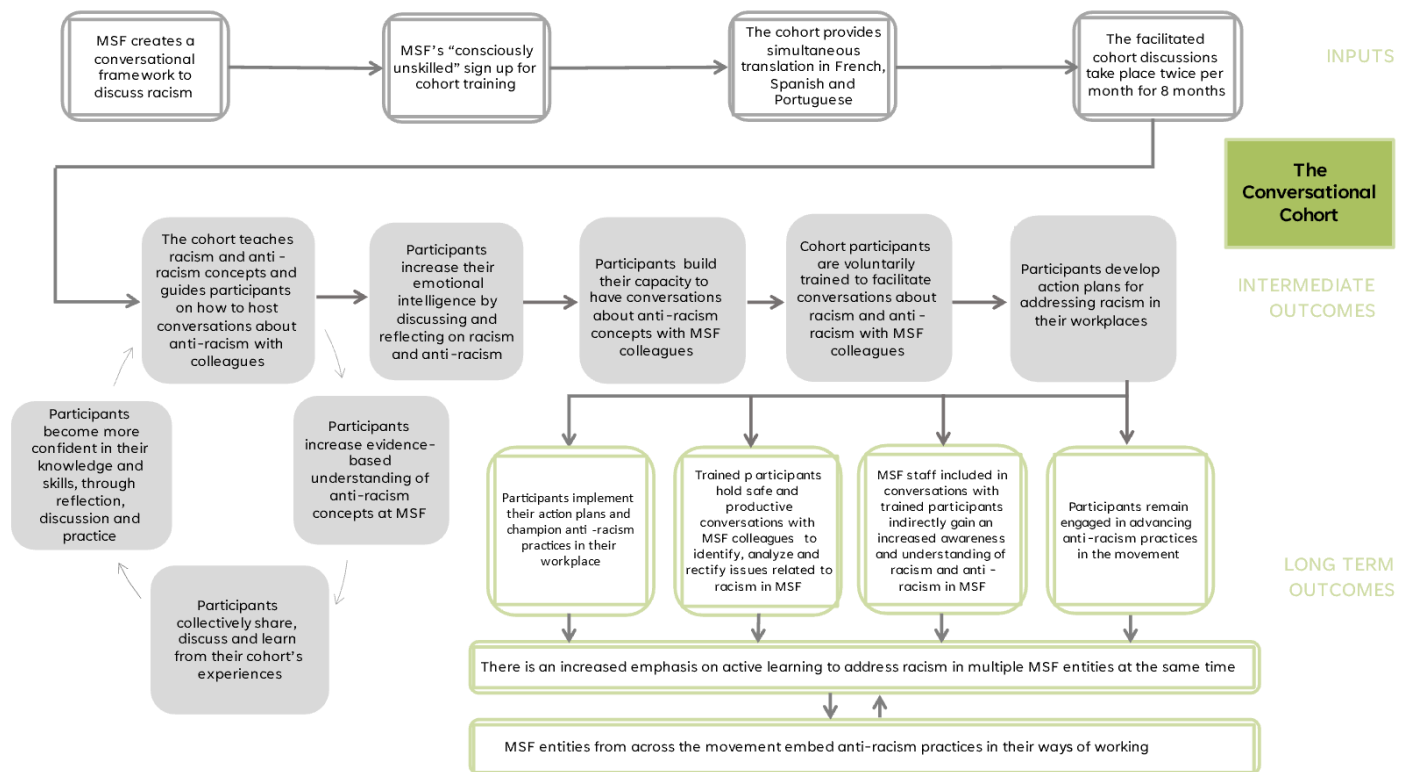
DEEPENING AWARENESS OF RACISM AND BUILDING THE CAPACITY TO ACT

The Conversational Cohort provided a conversational framework for MSF staff from different entities to discuss racism. The responses show that the conversation space created empathy among participants, partly due to the participant testimonies, which raised awareness about experiences of racism beyond participants' cultural frame of reference. Responses reflect the growing empowerment among the group in the Conversational Cohort and the desire to develop action plans through which they could contribute to MSF becoming an anti-racist organisation. Responses show that participants felt they needed more guidance on developing anti-racism action plans in the Conversational Cohort, leading to frustration for some due to not knowing how to act.

The survey and interview findings suggest that the Anti-Racism Project encouraged participants to do things differently in their workplaces. Responses indicate that the project impacted participants' interpersonal awareness, leading them to adopt a more inclusive approach in their roles. Furthermore, the project encouraged organisational learning by developing peer-to-peer collaboration among the Conversational Cohort participants. Lastly, participants identified several "niche innovations" to continue anti-racism work in their MSF entities. These outcomes suggest the participants are committed to continuing anti-racism work after participating in the Anti-Racism Project. Future learning initiatives could benefit from building on the capacity of this group of former participants to support their development of further sustainable anti-racism actions.

Recommendation: Continue investing in the cohort of former participants who are strongly engaged and motivated to advance anti-racism in the organisation. Building anti-racism awareness takes time, and while the number of participants may have reduced during the project's implementation, the Conversational Cohort was a transformative experience which deepened the understanding and awareness of racism among the participants that remained until the end.

Annex I: Theories of Change



Annex II: Methodology and Data Collection

Evaluation Objective	Method	Analysis
To assess to what extent the Conversational Cohort increased evidence-based knowledge and understanding of racism and anti-racism among the participants.	Early-phase (n=22) and post-course surveys (n=16)*	Analysis of difference in test scores between early-phase and post-course surveys. The surveys used Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs). Questions were developed as a collaborative effort between the Anti-Racism Project Lead, the Content Team, and the Evaluator. The MCQs were graded by subtracting the incorrect responses from the correct responses.
To explore how the project created a conversational framework to discuss racism in MSF and to identify the enablers and barriers of a productive conversation space.	Post-course survey (n=16) Semi-structured interviews (n=11) Review of program documents	Triangulation of post-course survey data with findings from interviews. Coding of interview transcripts.
To analyse how far the Conversational Cohort and the Conversation Navigation training strengthened the capacity of participants to host conversations about racism.	Early-phase (n=22) and post-course surveys (n=16) Semi-structured interviews (n=11)	Comparison of baseline results and post-course results on measures of self-reported ability and confidence. Coding of interview transcripts Cross tabulation of survey results of participants who attended the Conversation Navigation and Conversational Cohort vs. the Conversational Cohort only. All available documents related to the Anti-Racism Project were reviewed.
To examine whether the Anti-Racism Project provided a journey with different entry points into anti-racism awareness, practices, and actions.	Post-course survey (n=16) Semi-structured interviews (n=11) Review of program documents Interview with Anti-Racism Project Lead	Triangulation of post-course survey data with findings from interviews. Coding of interview transcripts. All available documents related to the Anti-Racism Project were reviewed.

*The evaluator was requested to work on the interim evaluation in mid-May, after the Conversational Cohort sessions had started and therefore a true baseline survey was not possible.

Conversational Cohort Participants

Section	# of Conversational Cohort Participants enrolled	# of Conversational Cohort Participants in the final session
CAMINO	6	6
MSF Canada	4	2
OCBA	5	1
WACA	3	
MSF Southeast Asia	4	
OCB	3	1
MSF East Africa	1	
MSF USA	1	1
MSF South Africa	3	1
MSF Brazil	5	
MSF Norway	2	1
OCG	1	
MSF Italy	2	2
MSF India	1	
MSF Germany	1	1
OCA	1	
Total	43	16

Interviewees

Section	Interviewees
CAMINO	3
MSF Canada	2
MSF East Africa	1
MSF South Africa	1
MSF Norway	1
MSF Italy	1
MSF Germany	1
HACE	1

Survey Distribution

ONLINE SURVEYS SENT TO CONVERSATIONAL COHORT PARTICIPANTS.	DISTRIBUTION	RESPONSE RATE
Early-Phase Survey	43	51%
Post-Course Survey	43	37%

List of Documents Reviewed

Documentation

MSF Anti-Racism Project Concept Note, 2022

MSF Terms of Reference, Accompaniment Sessions, 2022

MSF Anti-Racism Project Presentation, 2022

MSF Anti-Racism Project Theory of Change, 2022

Dissemination Strategy, Anti-Racism Project, 2022

Project Summary: Anti-Racism Building Awareness and Changing Practices TIC, 2021

Conversational Cohort Feedback and Insights, 2022

ReosPartners Evaluation Scope of Work, 2022

ReosPartners, MSF TIC Anti Racism Project: Facilitating anti-racism conversation spaces and building the capacity of conversation navigators, 2023

ANNEX III CASE STUDY 1: THE IMPACT OF THE ANTI-RACISM PROJECT ON THE CAPACITY TO HOST CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACISM

This case study explores the experiences of three participants who were motivated to build their capacity to host conversations about racism and anti-racism in MSF by attending the Conversation Navigation training. The case study compares the journeys of the three participants to explore the personal and contextual factors that impacted the participants' capacity to host conversations about racism.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The three participants are all women. Two participants work for a European MSF partner section, and one for an MSF partner section in North America. Two participants work in a DEI-related role, and the third works in Human Resources. One of the women identifies as black, and the two other participants identify as white.

WHAT WERE THE MOTIVATIONS FOR ENROLLING IN THE PROJECT?

Reflecting on their motivations for joining the Anti-Racism Project, the three participants described their different intentions. Two participants explained that they were expected to enrol in the project because of their roles in DEI. In contrast, another participant joined the project to learn how to discuss racism and anti-racism to support internationally mobile staff returning from an assignment. In addition, she describes being strongly motivated by anti-racism work since the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020 and had attended an online learning event on anti-racism the year before.

WHAT WERE THE PARTICIPANTS' PRIOR EXPERIENCES WITH ANTI-RACISM?

When they enrolled in the project, the three participants were at different points in their anti-racism journeys. The two participants from European partner sections noted that they joined the project early in their anti-racism journeys and were looking to increase their understanding and knowledge of anti-racism concepts. The third participant described being advanced in her anti-racism understanding and already engaged in anti-racism work in her entity.

HOW DID THE PROJECT BUILD CAPACITY TO DISCUSS RACISM AND ANTI-RACISM?

All three participants highlighted that the Conversation Navigation training built their capacity for hosting conversation through experiential learning opportunities such as role-playing and practicing facilitating conversation spaces. Furthermore, the Conversation Navigation training enabled the participants to move outside their comfort zones, which, according to the participants, built their confidence to discuss racism through different methods. For example, one participant describes how the training allowed her to move from the "listener" role she had occupied in the Conversational Cohort to *"push [her]self out of [her] comfort zone and actually talk."*

One participant described that engaging in awkward and uncomfortable conversations taught her to identify when someone is in a "fear space". In addition, she highlighted the importance of learning to have conversations about racism in a psychologically safe space moderated by trained facilitators. Reflecting on the uncomfortable conversations, she noted that: *"I was really, really thankful that I got to do it there and had some prep before having to do that with somebody else."*

WHAT ARE THE PLANS TO HOST CONVERSATIONS?

While the three participants felt that the Conversation Navigation training had built their capacity to engage in conversations, only one planned to host a conversation space in her workplace. While this participant notes that forwarding anti-racism in her office is part of her role in DEI, she also explains that her experience in the Anti-Racism Project was pivotal in her decision to host a conversation space. *"I would have never done it had I not had the [Conversational] Cohort experience because something about it stirred something inside of me."*

While the two other participants have not made plans individually to host conversations about racism, one described her experience engaging in a discussion about racism due to an incident in her workplace. The participant described having felt the commitment to bring what she learned in the project to her workplace but felt she put herself in a difficult position and needed more preparation to navigate these "painful" conversations. She reflected that she would have liked more training on de-escalating discussions when they get uncomfortable.

WHAT WERE THE DIFFERENCES?

After attending the Conversational Cohort and the Conversation Navigation training, the three participants were strongly motivated to move anti-racism forward in their workplaces. Their experiences suggest that their personal and professional contexts influenced how far they felt comfortable having conversations about racism.

Having a working environment that is supportive and conducive to anti-racism work was a key factor in the decision to host conversations. The participant planning to host an anti-racism conversation space reflected that her office is more advanced in addressing anti-racism than many other MSF offices.

In contrast, one participant noted that racism is not discussed in her workplace, which has impacted her ability to have anti-racism conversations. She explains, "*[racism is] not a topic, even though it is a topic, but it's not yet out in the open.*" Instead, this participant decided to embed anti-racism in an organisational strategy she is developing as part of her role in DEI. Furthermore, given the sensitive nature of the conversations about racism in her workplace, another participant noted that she would prefer to engage in discussions about racism outside of her team with people she does not interact with daily. It is also important to note that two participants suggested that their ethnicity as white women made them question whether they were the right people to move the conversations about racism forward in their offices.

The case study illustrates the challenges of hosting and engaging in conversations about racism in a workplace setting. More support may be needed for participants to feel safe taking on the responsibility of engaging in conversations about racism in their workplaces.

ANNEX IV CASE STUDY 2: AN ENTRY POINT TO ANTI-RACISM AWARENESS

This case study illustrates how the Anti-Racism Project provided an entry point to anti-racism awareness for two participants at different places in their anti-racism journeys.

DEMOGRAPHICS

One of the participants is an African man from an office where MSF has operations and is actively working on implementing anti-racism actions in the movement. The other participant is a European woman from a European partner section who had limited experience engaging in anti-racism before joining the Conversational Cohort.

WHAT WERE THE REASONS FOR ENROLLING IN THE ANTI-RACISM TIC PROJECT?

One interviewee was strongly motivated to enrol in the Conversational Cohort to contribute his knowledge of anti-racism work to the discussions and to hear about the similarities and differences in colleagues' experiences across the movement.

The second interviewee explained that the decision to enrol came from a recommendation from a colleague in her entity. The interviewee expressed feeling reluctant to join the Anti-Racism Project but felt it was something she had to do because of her role in DEI.

WHAT WERE THE PARTICIPANTS' PRIOR EXPERIENCES WITH ANTI-RACISM?

The participants had differing experiences with anti-racism work before enrolling in the project. One participant joined the Conversational Cohort early on in her anti-racism journey. She described that it was through participating in the Conversational Cohort that she realised how much she didn't know about racism and anti-racism. The other participant was already actively working on several anti-racism initiatives in MSF and firmly committed to advancing anti-racism work across the movement.

HOW DID THE CONVERSATIONAL COHORT SUPPORT THEIR ANTI-RACISM JOURNEYS?

Both participants describe their participation in the Conversational Cohort as a transformative experience. One participant explained that, despite being actively involved in anti-racism work before enrolling, the conversation space changed how he thought about racism in MSF. He described becoming aware of structural and institutional racism, which led him to understand racism in the context of economic, social, historical, and ancestral factors. He described this learning as empowering as it gave him confidence that everyone "is capable in [their] own different ways" and a "sense of being one as a human." After participating in the project, he noted that racism is "not just about colour", but about "how you use your language, how you use your words". He reflected that "we all have a part to play."

Despite being reluctant to join the Anti-Racism Project, the second participant described that after participating in the initial sessions of the Conversational Cohort she "*realised what a gift it was, what a treasure chest it was.*" The Conversational Cohort provided a transformative learning experience that involved unlearning concepts and definitions of racism and related topics. She described getting "hooked" and later joining Accompaniment sessions and training as a facilitator of conversation spaces through the Conversation Navigation.

"Having been part of this cohort and of this learning process, I did realize what I don't know, and I really pushed my boundaries."

WHAT DOES THIS SAY ABOUT THE ANTI-RACISM JOURNEY?

The experiences of these interviewees suggest that the Conversational Cohort provided an entry point into anti-racism awareness for two participants with different experiences and understanding of racism and anti-racism.

For both participants, listening to participants' stories and opinions provided a new perspective of racism which has been transformative in the way they approach their anti-racism work in MSF.

“When we had peer-to-peer conversations, I think it left me with a lot of reflection that I need to do more to understand racism and even to understand how myself as an individual can contribute either negatively or positively towards racism... I think those conversations were very self-realizing that we all have a part to play.”