

mastercard  
foundation

Scholars Program



The  
Imprint of  
Education



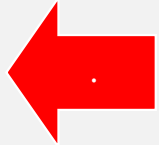
Progress and Pitfalls

23 to 29 July, 2023

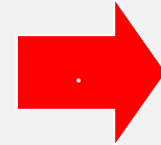
Diamonds Leisure Beach & Golf Resort  
Diani Beach, Kenya

# SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS: SERVING, LEADING, GIVING

Alude Mahali and Sharlene Swartz



## THE KEY TENSIONS



---

**Social consciousness **VERSUS** Self-care and personal growth**

---

**Individual give back **VERSUS** Collective, collaborative action**

---

**Doing what you can **VERSUS** Growing spheres of influence**

---

**Being an apolitical Foundation **VERSUS** Encouraging systemic change**

---

**An 'all sorts' approach **VERSUS** Guided common objectives for transformative leadership**

# TENSION I

Social consciousness

**VERSUS**

Self-care and personal growth



# “GIVE ME A CHANCE TO ACHIEVE”



“[I can’t] solve everything... [I can’t be] the **Jesus** of the home”

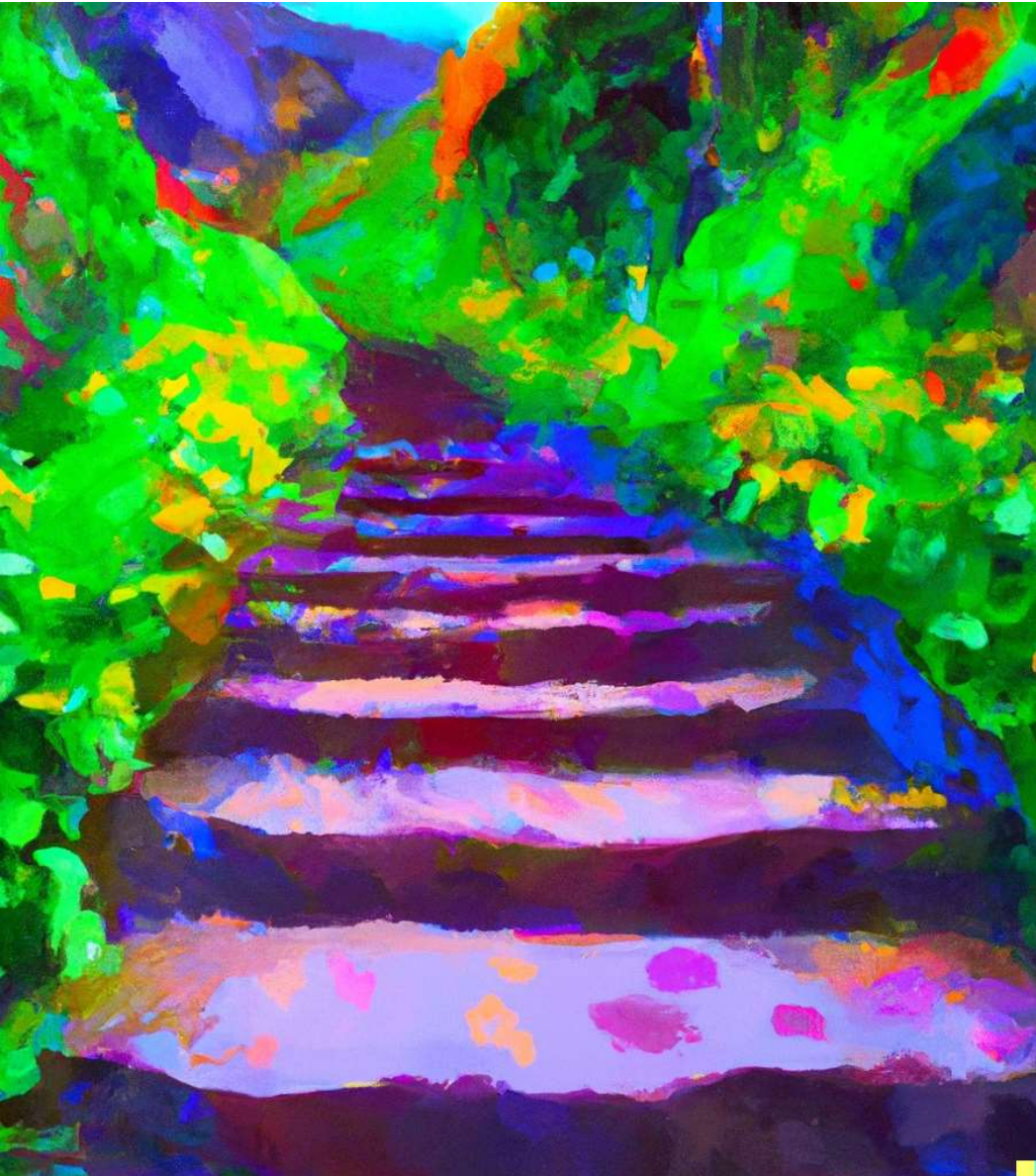
(Deborah/Uganda\_2019\_F25\_2022\_III)

“Every minute I am **not a burden** to someone else, I am changing the world”

(Bathsheba/Ethiopia[SA]\_2019\_F29\_2022\_III)

“Sometimes, I’m **into basically my career** and I am not giving anywhere else, and **sometimes** I’m putting my **energy and time into the world than in my career**”

(Clarence/DiasporaUU\_2018\_M27\_2022\_III)



## STRONG BUT EVOLVING SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

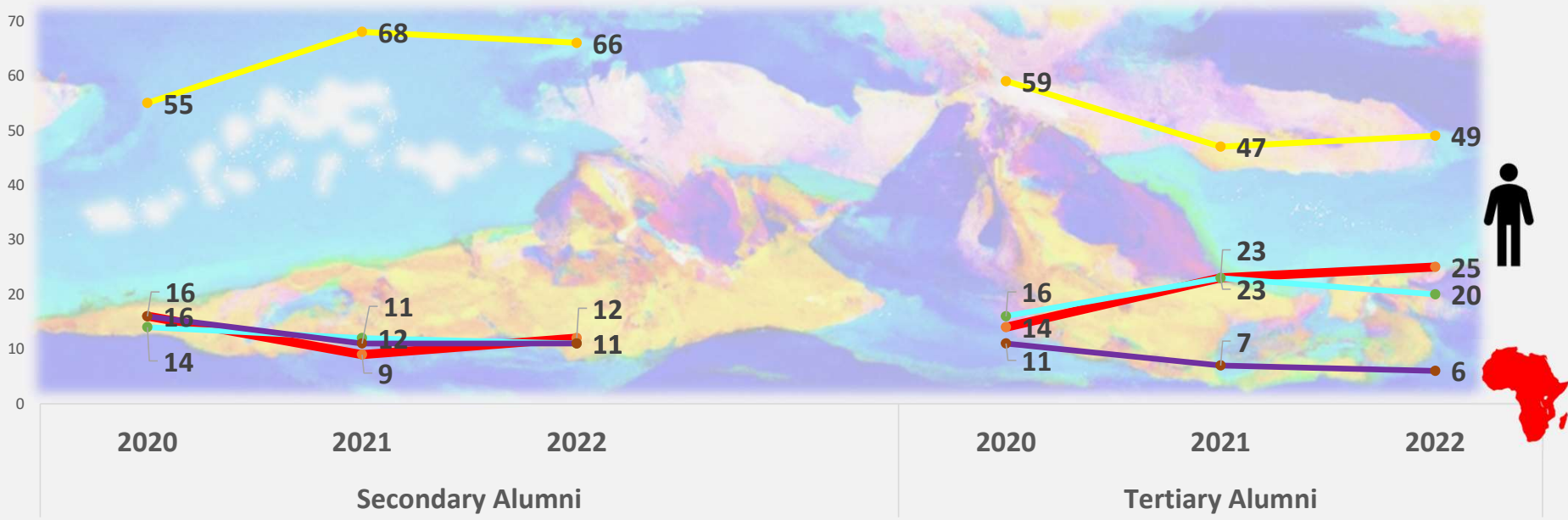
*“There are social problems in my community that need to be solved”*

**97%** Secondary Alumni agree

**99%** Tertiary Alumni agree

- ✓ Both show a **continuum** of giveback and leadership **over time**
- ✓ Depends on **experience**, **circumstances** and **context**

# ALUMNI ARE INCREASINGLY BECOMING MOUNTAINS FOR OTHERS TO LEAN ON – BUT IN SLOW STEPS



■ I am definitely a mountain that other can lean on    
 ■ I am becoming a mountain that others can lean on  
■ I am mostly a mountain that others can lean on    
 ■ Right now I am mostly someone who leans on others



# CONUNDRUMS

1. Is it too much to expect a graduate in their twenties to **change an unjust system**?
2. How do you change the world when you have **no backup**?
3. Is **entrepreneurship** changing the world?
4. Is **social justice** a key outcome of give back and transformative leadership?
5. Is **social consciousness** a good collective term for what we want from graduates?

# TENSION 2

Individual give back

**VERSUS**

Collective, collaborative action





# THE GIVE BACK CONTINUUM

Give back begins as an individual act

To family

Then to community

Then collectively [and formally]



	Secondary Alumni (N=8650)		Tertiary Alumni (N=839)	
	2020	2022	2020	2022
Household chores	63	65	29	33
Emotional support	35	44	51	65
Time	30	36	45	56
Money/Financial	23	45	85	91
Material goods (food, clothes, furniture etc)	22	35	51	68
Skills/Expertise	12	28	37	39
Funding siblings' education	6	15	39	57
None	2	1	0	0,4
Other	2	6	2	2

HELP GIVEN TO **FAMILY** IS MAINLY FINANCIAL AND INCREASES OVER TIME FOR TERTIARY ALUMNI, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE EMPLOYED

“At home I succeeded to pay university fees for my younger brother and now he’s graduating. .. I finance[d] some of my younger siblings to pursue small businesses. I built our home. I think that was the kind of give back that I did”

(Josiane/Rwanda\_2017\_F3I\_2022\_III)

“I don't know whether I should call this a give back project, but this is like a personal thing. I send money back home and for them to buy either ... groceries and give to the homeless people... I've been doing this for more than two years, but I’ve intensified it. I'm trying to increase my coverage since I moved to the US because I think that my finances is better”

(Everson/Ghana\_2019\_M29\_2022\_III)

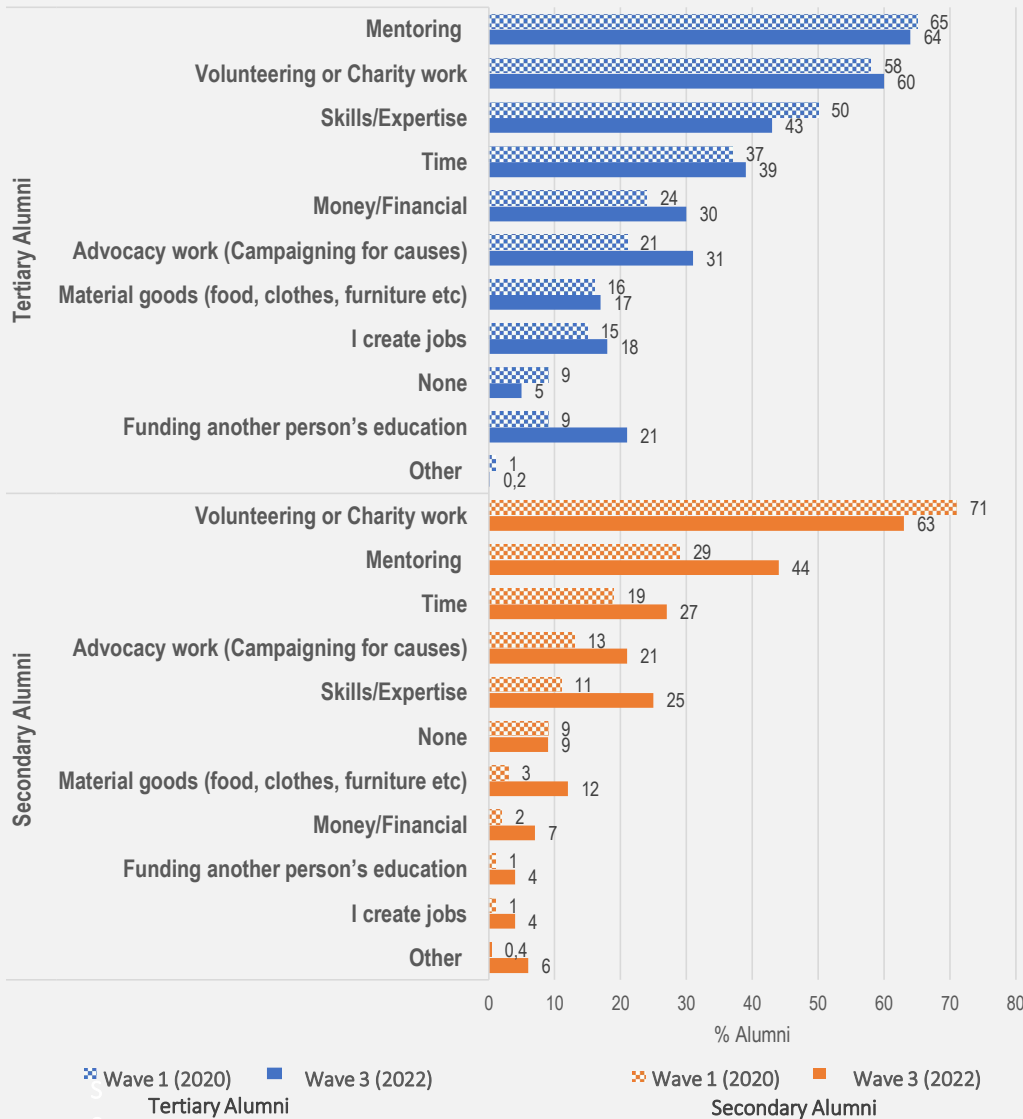
MORE MALE  
ALUMNI GIVE  
BACK  
MONEY;  
MORE  
FEMALE  
ALUMNI GIVE  
EMOTIONAL,  
TIME AND  
HOUSEHOLD  
CHORES  
SUPPORT



# MOST ALUMNI INVOLVED IN INFORMAL **COMMUNITY** GIVE BACK

1. Small, Once off, Responsive, Single outcome action
2. Fewer involved in formal, (Collaborative, Documented, Funded, Sustained, Evaluated) give back

# COMMUNITY GIVE BACK IS THE **NEXT STEP** AFTER FAMILY



- 60%** Alumni involved in **NGO/charity work** – mentorship and volunteering highest
- 20%** Male Tertiary Alumni said **they created jobs for others** (9% for females)
- 30%** Tertiary Alumni in paid employment gave financial help to **their community** (15% of those not in paid employment)



“I support one girl, with secondary school education and I have another one who is a nanny... I’m looking forward to take her to school, I think next year”

(Clementine/Kenya\_2018\_F33\_2022\_III)

“I have been helping at least four students, I’ve been paying their school fees... it’s not that expensive but their parents cannot afford that”

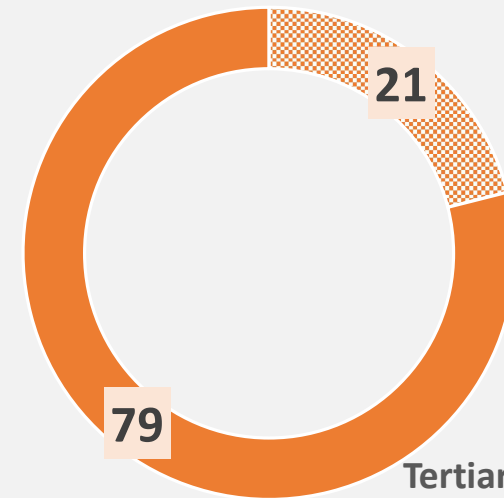
(Charlotte/Kenya\_2017\_F28\_2022\_III)

# TERTIARY ALUMNI ARE BIG ON COLLECTIVE GIVEBACK

1. Most Tertiary Alumni's **give back initiatives started with classmates, peers and colleagues** - seldom alone
2. Working with others allows **trial and error**, and opportunity to gain experience
3.  $\frac{1}{2}$  interviewed could describe how to **scale up current projects to have systemic impact**

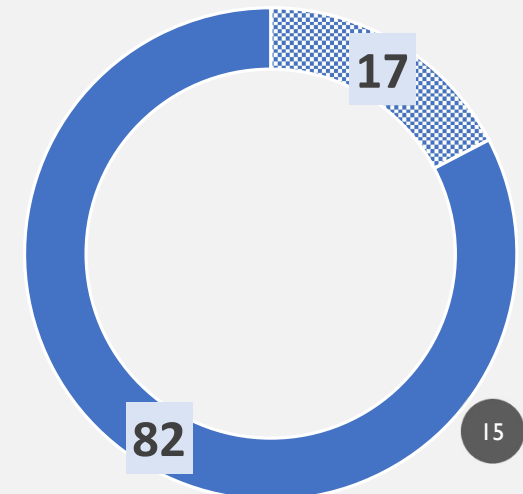
Secondary Alumni

1 (not at all) to 5    6 to 10 (to a great extent)



Tertiary Alumni

1 (not at all) to 5    6 to 10 (to a great extent)



# TENSION 3

Doing what you can in give back and leadership

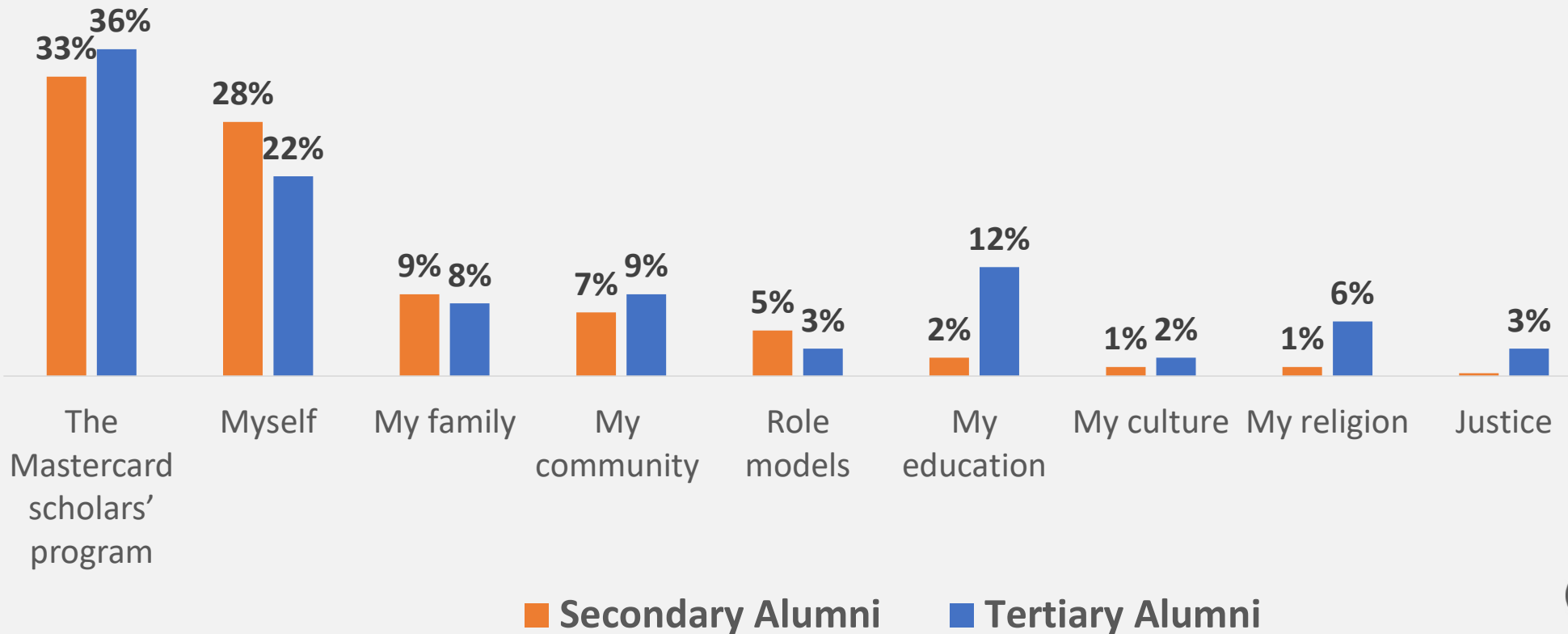
**VERSUS**

Growing spheres of influence and impact





# MOTIVATION TO GIVE BACK DRIVEN BY MULTIPLE FACTORS



## “MY WORK/STUDY/BUSINESS IS MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD”

“I do not have [any giveback] actually, but **the work we are currently doing** is more of like give back to the community”

(Mehlet/Ethiopia[L]\_2017\_M34\_2022\_III)

“landscape architecture research... that is a give back because **the research ... goes to the councils they put in policies** ... That’s also a form of giving back. I don’t necessarily have to go to a soup kitchen every Saturday to be giving back”

(Samantha/SouthAfrica\_2020\_F25\_2022\_III)

“**It's a business, but it's also a give back project** I'm doing to break the cycle of recidivism in Ghana”

(Everson/Ghana\_2019\_M29\_2022\_III)

# BARRIERS TO GIVE BACK ARE BROAD BUT CHANGING

1. Tertiary Alumni measure **IMPACT** in formal, workplace or study projects
2. Twice as many Female Tertiary Alumni selected money as a barrier
3. Barriers to systemic change are ageism, gatekeeping and bureaucracy



Location

Distance

Losing  
your  
team

Time

Opport-  
unity

Money



# BARRIERS OF RED TAPE, RESISTANCE, AGE, MONEY

“We are **struggling to get our organisation registered**... [to] start operating ... working on getting papers... recommendations from different [district] offices”

(Gatete/Rwanda\_2017\_M29\_2022\_III)

“We were working ...on a project about women in STEM...and we had a little resistance... going to the Minister for Science and technology and getting to them, it's crazy... [there] are so many barriers around, a lot of protocol, **a lot of people are not willing to listen to young people**”

(Shirley/Uganda\_2020\_F25\_2022\_III)

“When you go to the community, they feel like you are a donor there. ... They will expect you to ... solve the problem, but you **first have to pay them to allow you to solve the problem**”

(Jendyose/Uganda\_2018\_M28\_2022\_III)



# INTERNAL PRESSURE FELT BY MALES AND THOSE UNEMPLOYED

1. **60%** of Alumni feel more pressure to support their families than communities
2. **20%** more Male Alumni feel pressure to support their family and community than female Alumni
3. Alumni not employed felt greater pressure to support their families and communities, than those in paid employment



Scholars Program



Progress and Pitfalls

23 to 29 July, 2023  
Diamonds Leisure Beach & Golf Resort  
Diani Beach, Kenya

# TENSION 4

Being an apolitical Foundation

**VERSUS**

Encouraging systemic change in leadership



# MOST STRONGLY AGREED THEY WERE LEADERS

	Secondary		Tertiary	
	2020	2022	2020	2022
<b>Strongly agree</b>	30%	53%	53%	63%
<b>Agree</b>	69%	45%	44%	35%
<b>Disagree</b>	1%	2%	3%	2%
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	0%	0%	1%	0%

## ALUMNI DESCRIBED LEADERSHIP IN GENERAL TERMS

- “a leader to my siblings”
- “ tutoring and teaching in schools”
- “ a leader is a servant... called to serve”
- “ bringing solutions”
- “ saving lives... [bringing] productivity in Africa”
- ✓ Described give back as leadership
- ✓ Distinguished between ‘large’ and “everyday” actions of leadership
- ✓ Described poor leadership in Africa

# TERTIARY ALUMNI GRATEFUL TO SCHOLARS PROGRAM FOR LEADERSHIP INPUTS

“[Not just ] a scholarship for education... support[s] them through that process... I think they

**revolutionize** in ...scholarship[s]”

(Hermoine/Uganda\_2018\_F28\_2022\_III)

“At work... [I do] things in a different way... that **background of leadership**, if I didn't get Mastercard, I don't think I would have been like this”

(Deborah/Uganda\_2019\_F25\_2022\_III)

“I'm a more **all-round trained person** than some of my colleagues who got different scholarships ”

(Henry/GhanaKG\_M34\_2022\_III)

“We were given **leadership opportunities** as Scholars... in organisations, in your community”

(Solomon/Kenya\_2016\_M35\_2022\_III)





“next-generation leaders supporting social transformation and economic growth... in Africa”

(Mastercard Foundation, 2014, p. 3)

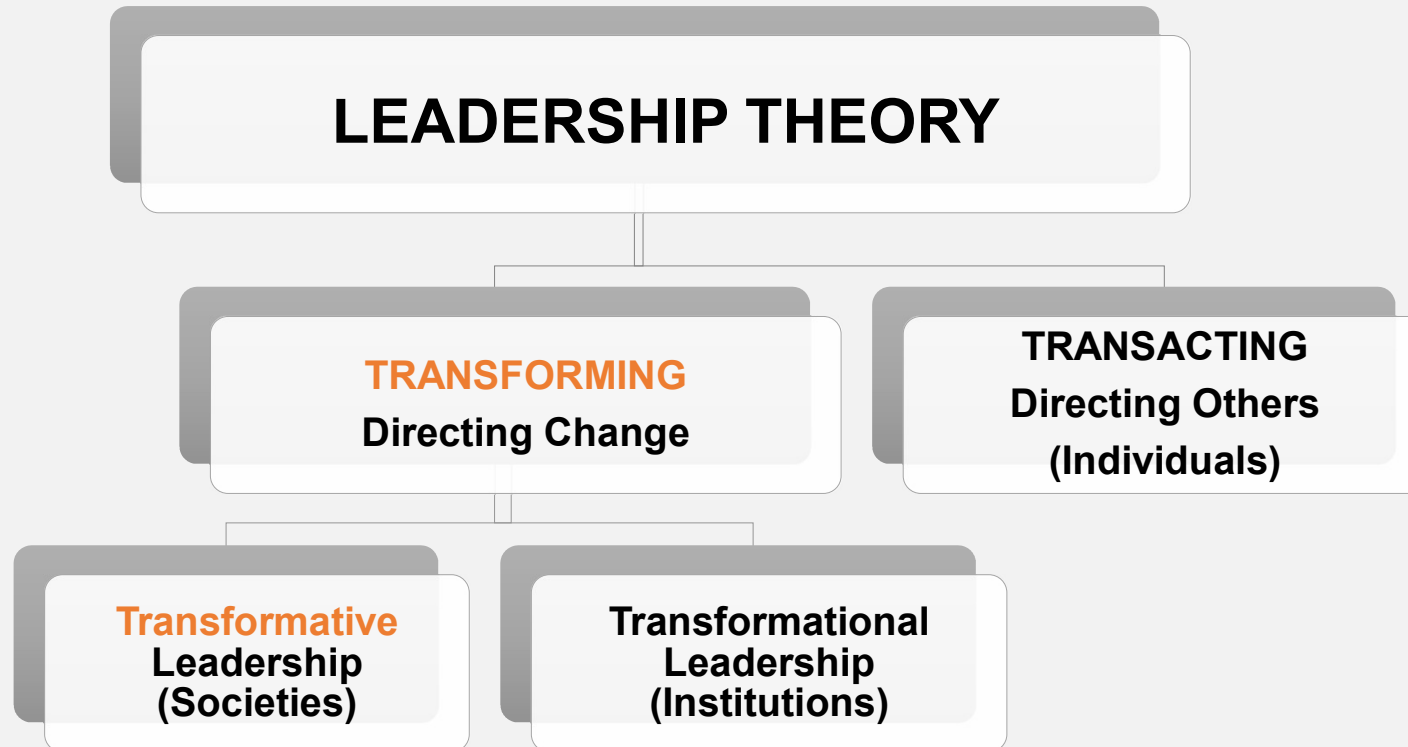
“engaging others, in an ethical manner, to generate positive and lasting change... teamwork, relationships, networks and peer support... creative visionaries who exhibit courage, empathy, resilience and a desire to give back”

(Mastercard Foundation, 2016, p. 26)

THE FOUNDATION  
UNDERSTANDS  
TRANSFORMATIVE  
LEADERSHIP AS  
**ETHICAL SERVICE  
AND SOCIAL  
TRANSFORMATION**

- **86%** of Secondary Alumni
  - **91%** of Tertiary Alumni
- AGREED

# LITERATURE DISTINGUISHES THREE 'SPECIES' OF LEADERSHIP

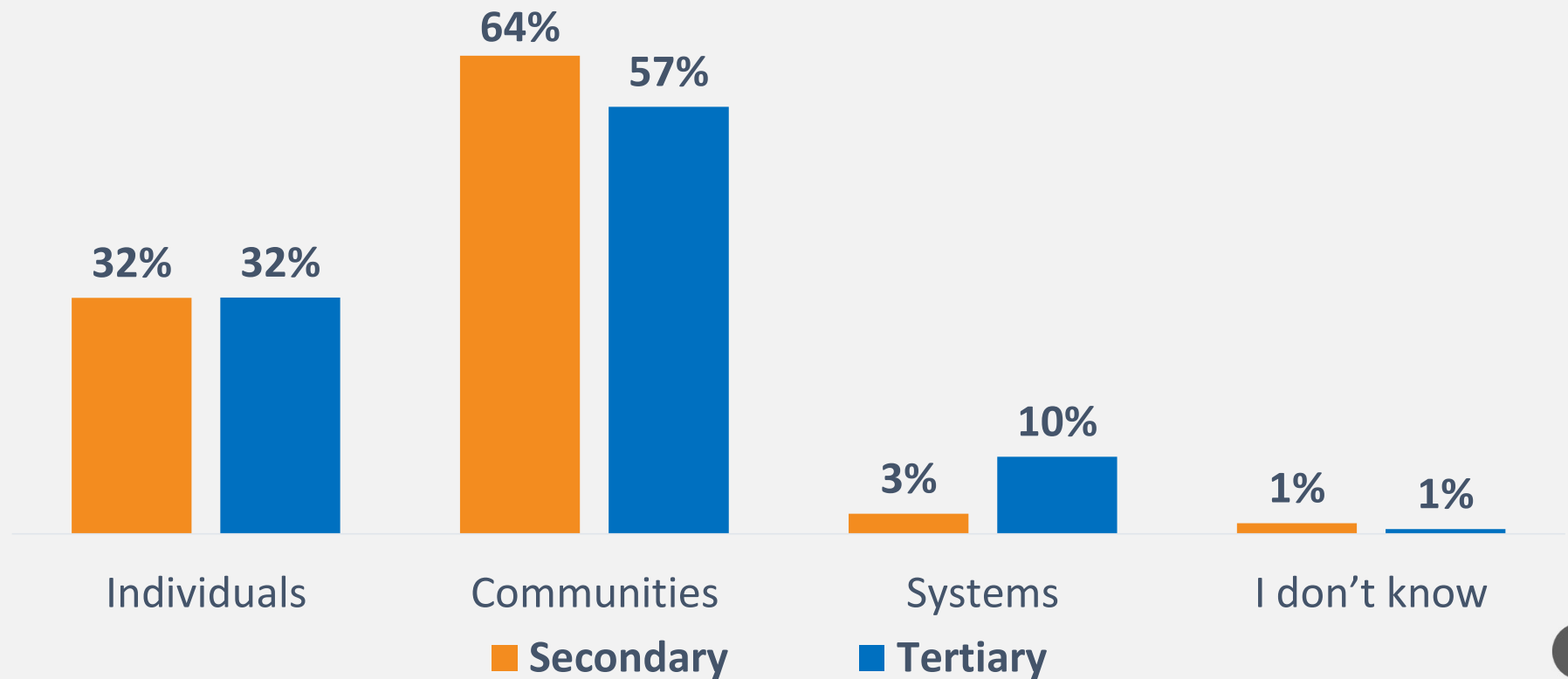




# ALUMNI DO NOT UNDERSTAND 'TRANSFORMATIVE' AS SOCIAL JUSTICE OR SYSTEMS CHANGE

1. Some don't use the **language** of transformative leadership
2. Few aim for the "**systems change**" component of transformative leadership
3. Many saw give back and entrepreneurship as transformative leadership

## 10% OF TERTIARY ALUMNI AIM CHANGE AT SYSTEMS, MOST FOCUS ON COMMUNITIES

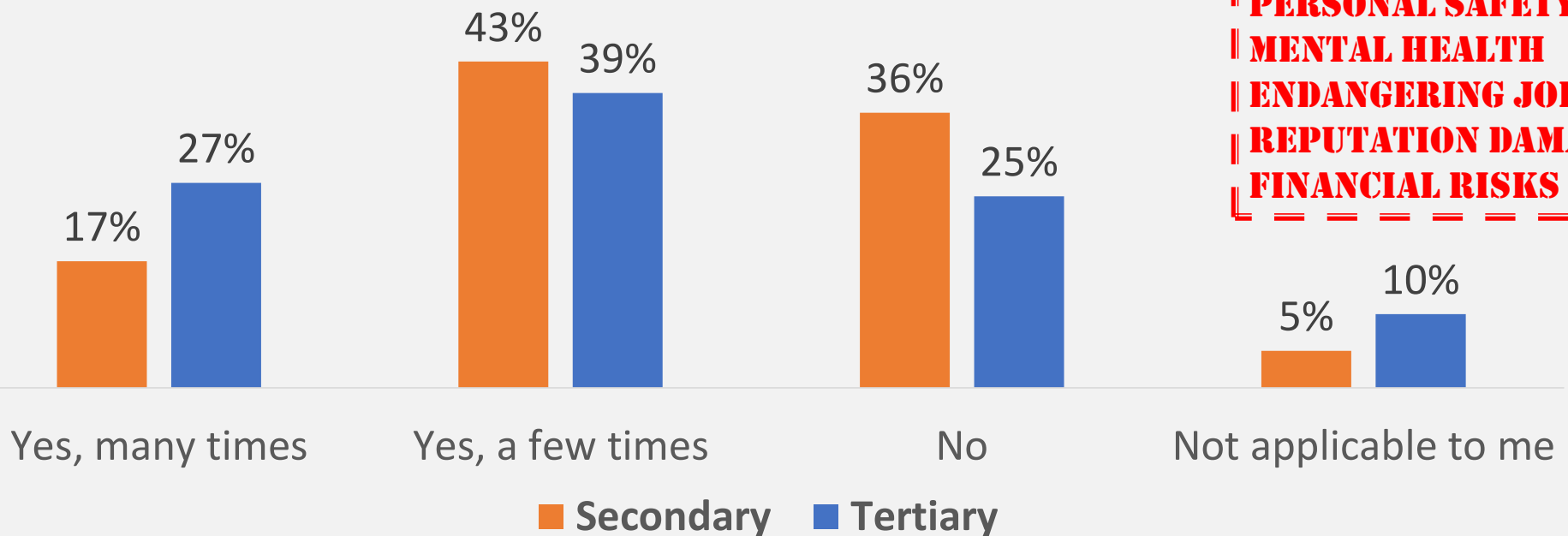


## DIFFERENCES BY PLACE OF STUDY AND SEX

1. More Tertiary Alumni who had studied **off continent** focussed on systems change
2. More **Males** focused on **community** change
3. More **Females** focussed on **individual** change



# 2/3 OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPT SYSTEMS CHANGE HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES



**1/4 OF INTERVIEWED PARTICIPANTS SPOKE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AS THE AIM OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP**

**0% SECONDARY ALUMNI AND 3% TERTIARY ALUMNI NAME JUSTICE AS A MOTIVATOR FOR GIVE BACK [ATS SURVEY]**

“Girl and human rights... not being silent about things that happen in the society”

**(Lydia/Kenya\_2017\_F25\_2020\_III)**

“What’s driving me is the leadership actually.... trying to change the face of education in Uganda”

**(Emmett/Uganda\_2018\_M27\_2022\_III)**

“Transformational leadership... leadership that makes long term change. You touch people around you ... the community and the society. ... we were taught how to be transformational leaders”

**(Conor/Kenya\_2019\_M33\_2022\_III)**

“Social justice is synonymous with politics and the Foundation has made a serious effort to be apolitical. However, this is a complicated tension since much change required to ensure the social and economic transformation of the African continent is political in nature, for example, gender equity, inclusion, dignified employment and eliminating corruption”

**The Imprint of Education**





# TENSION 5

An 'all sorts' approach to transformative leadership

**VERSUS**

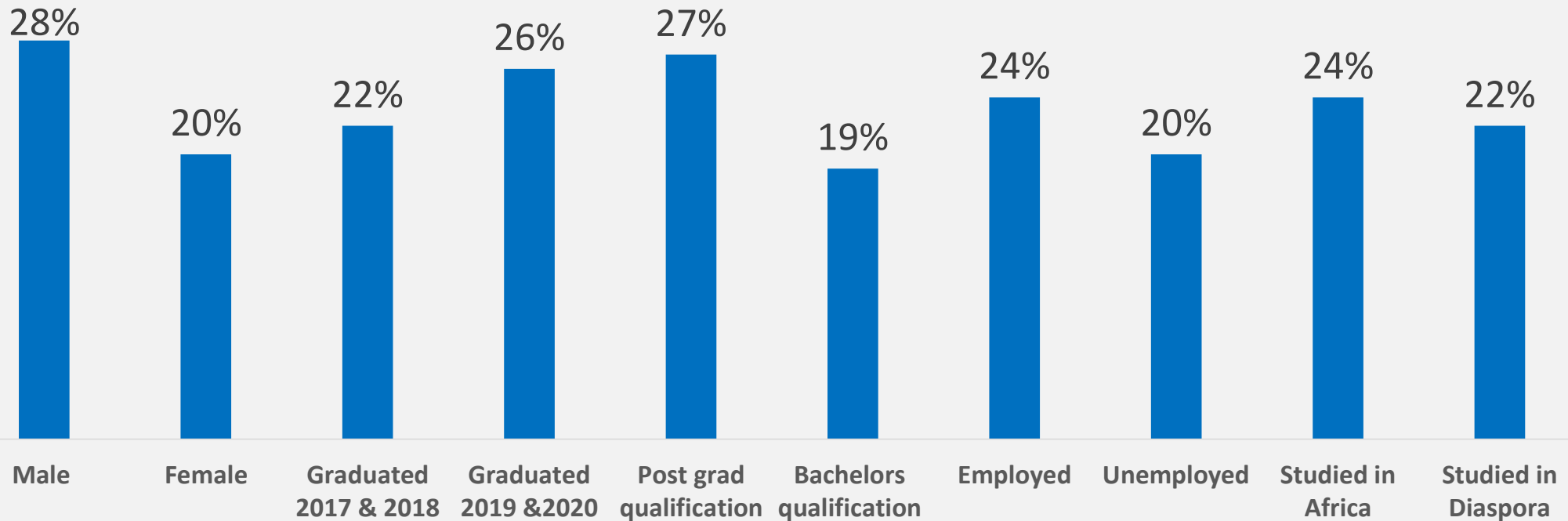
Guided common objectives for transformative leadership



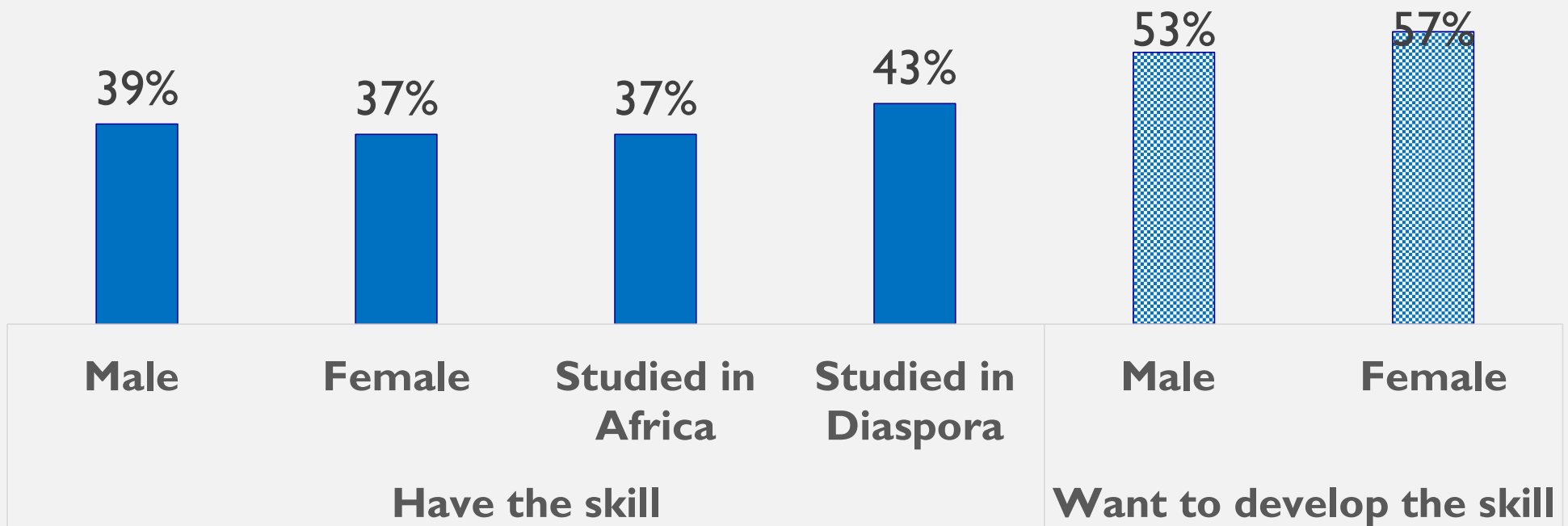
LEADERSHIP SKILLS		Secondary Alumni		Tertiary Alumni	
		2020	2022	2020	2022
<b>Motivate people to work towards a common goal</b>	<i>Have it</i>	70	78	69	73
	<i>Want it</i>	29	22	31	27
	<i>Don't need it</i>	1	0	0	1
<b>Transform good ideas into action</b>	<i>Have it</i>	64	60	63	52
	<i>Want it</i>	36	40	37	47
	<i>Don't need it</i>	0	0	0	1
<b>Describe the small steps needed to solve big problems</b>	<i>Have it</i>	46	52	62	64
	<i>Want it</i>	53	48	38	35
	<i>Don't need it</i>	1	1	0	1
<b>Recognise people's strengths and put them into an effective team</b>	<i>Have it</i>	40	52	49	62
	<i>Want it</i>	59	47	49	38
	<i>Don't need it</i>	1	1	2	1
<b>Use disagreements in a group to find new ways of solving problems</b>	<i>Have it</i>	41	54	42	43
	<i>Want it</i>	55	42	55	54
	<i>Don't need it</i>	4	5	3	4
Use government policies to solve problems ("Policy skills")	<i>Have it</i>	19	25	21	23
	<i>Want it</i>	75	69	72	72
	<i>Don't need it</i>	6	6	7	5
Show how all forms of injustice are related e.g. racism, sexism, disability, immigrants (Systemic justice skills")	<i>Have it</i>	32	43	35	38
	<i>Want it</i>	66	54	60	55
	<i>Don't need it</i>	2	3	5	6

LEADERSHIP SKILLS		Secondary Alumni		Tertiary Alumni	
		2020	2022	2020	2022
Motivate people to work towards a common goal	<i>Have it</i>	70	78	69	73
	<i>Want it</i>	29	22	31	27
	<i>Don't need it</i>	1	0	0	1
Transform good ideas into action	<i>Have it</i>	64	60	63	52
	<i>Want it</i>	36	40	37	47
	<i>Don't need it</i>	0	0	0	1
Describe the small steps needed to solve big problems	<i>Have it</i>	46	52	62	64
	<i>Want it</i>	53	48	38	35
	<i>Don't need it</i>	1	1	0	1
Recognise people's strengths and put them into an effective team	<i>Have it</i>	40	52	49	62
	<i>Want it</i>	59	47	49	38
	<i>Don't need it</i>	1	1	2	1
Use disagreements in a group to find new ways of solving problems	<i>Have it</i>	41	54	42	43
	<i>Want it</i>	55	42	55	54
	<i>Don't need it</i>	4	5	3	4
<b>Use government policies to solve problems ("Policy skills")</b>	<i>Have it</i>	19	25	21	23
	<i>Want it</i>	75	69	72	72
	<i>Don't need it</i>	6	6	7	5
<b>Show how all forms of injustice are related e.g. racism, sexism, disability, immigrants, (Systemic justice skills")</b>	<i>Have it</i>	32	43	35	38
	<i>Want it</i>	66	54	60	55
	<i>Don't need it</i>	2	3	5	6

# MORE MALES, RECENT GRADUATES, POSTGRADS, EMPLOYED, STUDIED ON CONTINENT TERTIARY ALUMNI HAD “POLICY SKILLS”



# MALES AND THOSE WHO STUDIED OFF CONTINENT HAD GREATER “SYSTEMIC SOCIAL JUSTICE” SKILLS; MORE FEMALES WANTED THESE SKILLS



# SYSTEMIC CHANGE ADDRESSES THE CAUSES OF PROBLEMS

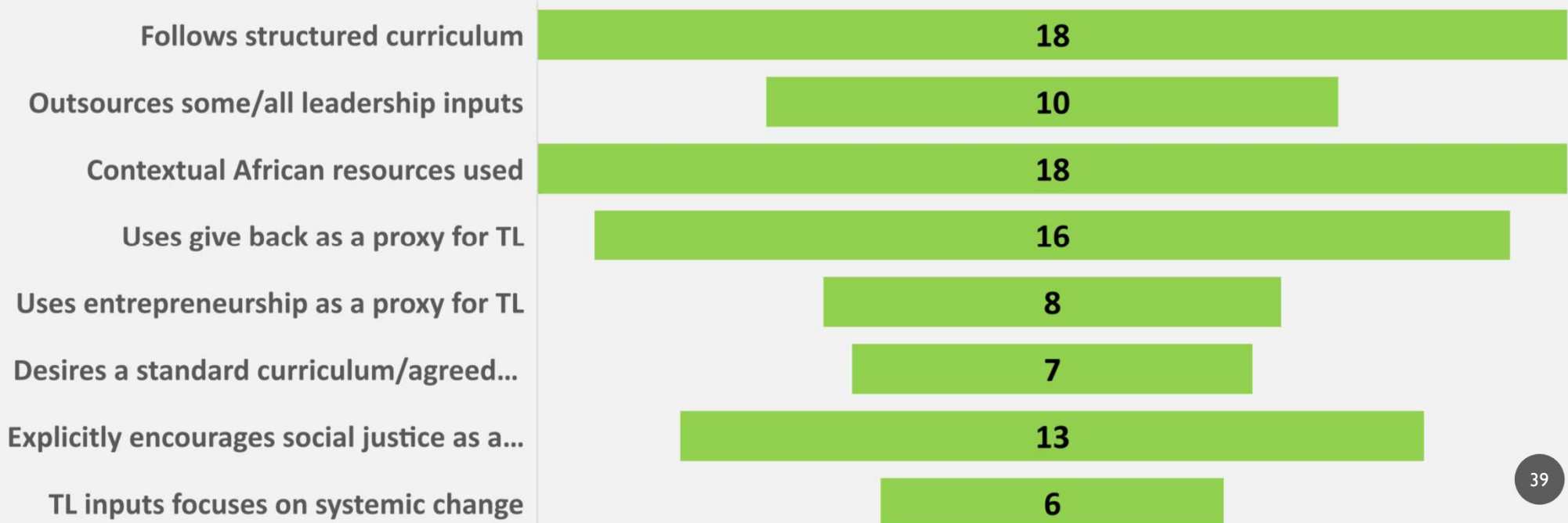
“there comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river and **find out why** they are falling in”

(Desmond Tutu, in Ledwith, 2015, p. 134)



# TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP INPUTS DIFFER BY INSTITUTION – NO SINGLE MESSAGE ON “SYSTEMIC CHANGE”

Institutional partners and how they engage with transformative leadership (n=19)



# A DEFINITE DECISION NEEDS TO BE MADE ABOUT SYSTEMS CHANGE

“*Transformative leadership is leadership that brings about social justice as a clear goal. I don't know if that was a message I've heard of in terms of transformative leadership from the Foundation. That's what we need on the continent, it's not about just educating them and expecting them to find good jobs.... I think if we could push toward that direction ... it could be **sexism, corruption***”

(Institution S, 2022)

“If you look at social justice ... it looks like something quite political ... people like might feel like you might be **touching a live wire**, so **you have to be careful**”

(Institution B, 2022)



## PARTNERS ASK FOR GUIDANCE

“[Partners] are just saying my interpretation of transformational leadership is this... getting involved in your community and do this. It could be completely missing this idea of justice and not maliciously... There’s **some sort of standardisation that’s required**”

(Institution A, 2022)

“Social justice ... it’s a very sensitive topic ... because it challenges many views, culturally, religiously. I think maybe **a bit more structure from the Foundation ... even definitions might be useful**”

(Institution Q, 2022)

# WHAT MUST CHANGE

## FOUNDATION

1. Decide on place of “systems change”
2. Link give back, transformative leadership, entrepreneurship into “social consciousness”
3. Focus on support and progress over time
4. Develop a common curriculum

## UNIVERSITIES

1. Course on policy and justice
2. Discuss consequences of transformative leadership

## BUSINESS

1. Recognise social consciousness efforts
2. Offer rewards

## WOMEN

1. Explicit outputs and inputs on policy skills for women
2. Consider burden of care “definitely being a mountain for others”

## RESEARCH

1. Trace longitudinal journeys of transformative leadership – individual and collaborative
2. Expand Ubuntu ethos into give back

# GRADUATES NEED NAVIGATIONAL CAPACITIES THAT DEVELOP SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

networks for change, access to influence

volition, responsibility, knowing when to act, when to preserve yourself



policies matter, root causes for adversity

justice is justice, intersectional effects

ripple effects, achieve more together, amplify

# A TWEET/THREAD TO SUMMARISE



Changing the world needs vision, power, will, knowledge, resources and backup. Young graduates need navigational capacities, support and input to do so. #ChangeTheWorld #WorkTogetherForChange #BackupNeededToChangeSystems



# WHAT WE'D STILL LIKE TO KNOW

1. What struck you about the presentation you have just heard on “Social consciousness: serving, leading and giving?”
2. What do you think of adding a statement like “Transformative leadership should focus on social justice, structural and systemic change” to the existing definition?
3. What kinds of inputs and supports need to be provided to students who are eager to embark on this type of leadership (policy, systems and structural change)? What help should they be given to help navigate the political consequences of their actions?
4. How can we increase collaboration (with peers, colleagues, other Alumni) in give back? What stories of collaboration can you tell?

