DEVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENT LAB

# IMAGES & EMOTIONS: HOW THE IRISH PUBLIC ENGAGE WITH DEVELOPMENT

7 December 2024 Dóchas Worldview @DevEngageLab developmentengagementlab.org

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# CONTENTS

# ABOUT THIS DECK

- This deck reports a subset of findings from the Worldview survey (Wave 5), analysing the impact of images on emotions and engagement.

- The data were collected as part of the Worldview annual panel survey of Irish adults (18+) by B&A. Fieldwork was conducted 23 June – 12 August 2024 (base sample n= 2,504). Data are weighted to be nationally representative.

- The survey consists of approximately 40 question items, including a final section on images, emotions, and engagement.

- The research was originally designed by the DEL team to provide insights for development organisations in France, Germany, Britan and the US. To better support Dóchas' partners needs, a revised version was created and analysed by Professor David Hudson (Birmingham) and Professor Jennifer Hudson (UCL).

# DESIGN & APPROACH
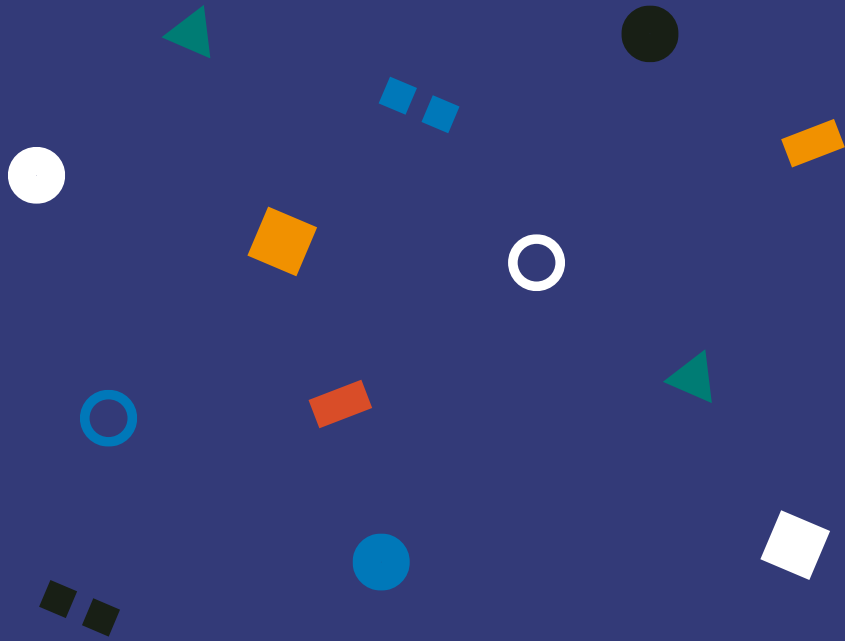
Images of development submitted by Dóchas partners and research team

# DESIGN & APPROACH: THE IMPACT OF IMAGES ON ENGAGEMENT

In this research, we sought to understand 1) which images motivate respondents to engage with a campaign appeal and 2) what emotions do images trigger and how does that matter for engagement?

Research has shown that citizens' engagement with appeals (of all types) based predominantly on emotional, rather than cognitive responses

Emotions are a pathway to engagement

DEL research shows:

Negative or pity-based images elicit the strongest emotional responses and generated donations, but have unintended consequence of reducing people's sense that they can make a difference to reducing poverty

Positive or empathy-based images elicit feelings of hope, which make people more likely to donate and feel like they can make a difference

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# DESIGN & APPROACH: EVALUATING IMAGES

- Each respondent was shown 5 images (at random) from a bank of 71 images contributed by Dóchas member organisations (thank you!)

- Each image was seen by a minimum of 175 respondents and a maximum of 179 respondents

- For each image respondents were asked:
  - The extent to which they felt any emotions (emotional clusters based on the psychological constructs of positive and negative valence and activated or deactivated)
  - Whether the image made the respondent want to find out more about an appeal featuring the image

# DESIGN & APPROACH: EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

·We use the circumplex model of emotion, building on research by Russell (1980) that has been widely tested, applied, and replicated in behavioural psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and neuroimaging

·The circumplex model of emotion, or affect, proposes that emotional states are a combination of two neurophysiological systems: (1) valence (a pleasure-displeasure continuum) and (2) activation (arousal or alertness)

·Constructs = Valence and activation

- Positive activated = Happy, excited, alert, elated Positive
- deactivated = Calm, relaxed, serene, content Negative
- activated = Upset, stressed, uncomfortable, anxious Negative
- deactivated = Tired, bored, depressed, sad

# DESIGN & APPROACH: QUESTION WORDING & RESPONSE OPTIONS

- Looking at the image above, and using the scale where 1 means "Not at all" and 5 means "A great deal", please tell us the extent to which **you** feel the following emotions (1 Not at all - 5 A great deal)
  - Happy, excited, alert, elated Calm,
  - relaxed, serene, content Tired, bored,
  - depressed, sad
  - Upset, stressed, uncomfortable, anxious
- Imagine you saw the image above in an appeal from an international development charity/NGO. Based on this image, would you want to find out more about the appeal (e.g., by clicking a link to a website where you can find out more information about the appeal, or signing up to the organization's mailing list)?
  - Yes, I want to find out more about the appeal No, I
  - do not want to find out more about the appeal

# WORLDVIEW SEGMENTS

•The Worldview research has identified six clearly defined and targetable audiences among the Irish public ranging from young (18+) to old and less to highly engagedacross a range of socio-economic demographics and measures including issues of importance, life guiding principles and values and worldviews.

•For further information please see here: https://www.dochas.ie/resources/world

view/meet-the-worldview-segments-and-personas/
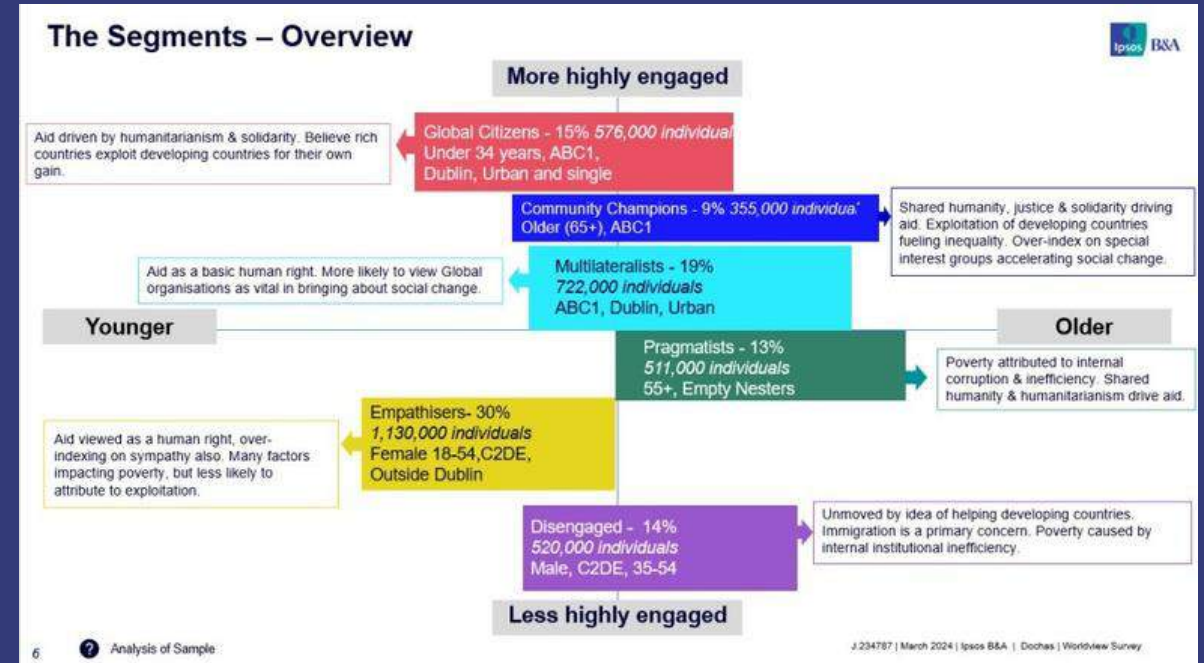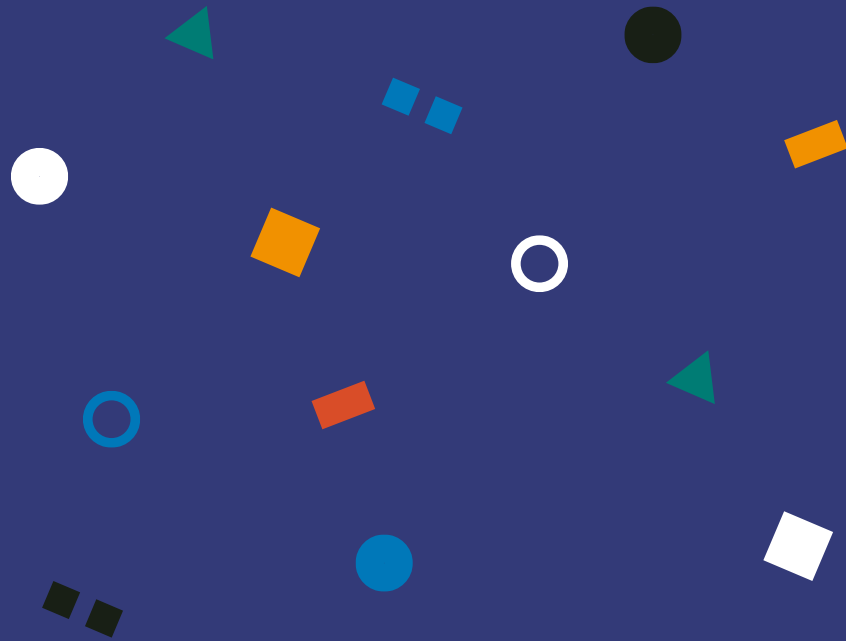
# IMAGES

Images of development submitted by Dóchas partners and research team

1



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3



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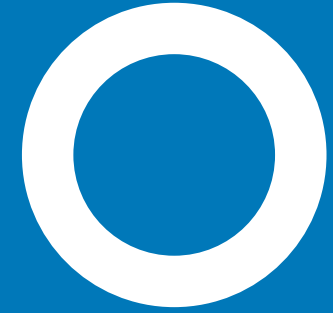
63



64



65



66



67



68



69



70



71

# IMAGES THAT ENGAGE: RANKING
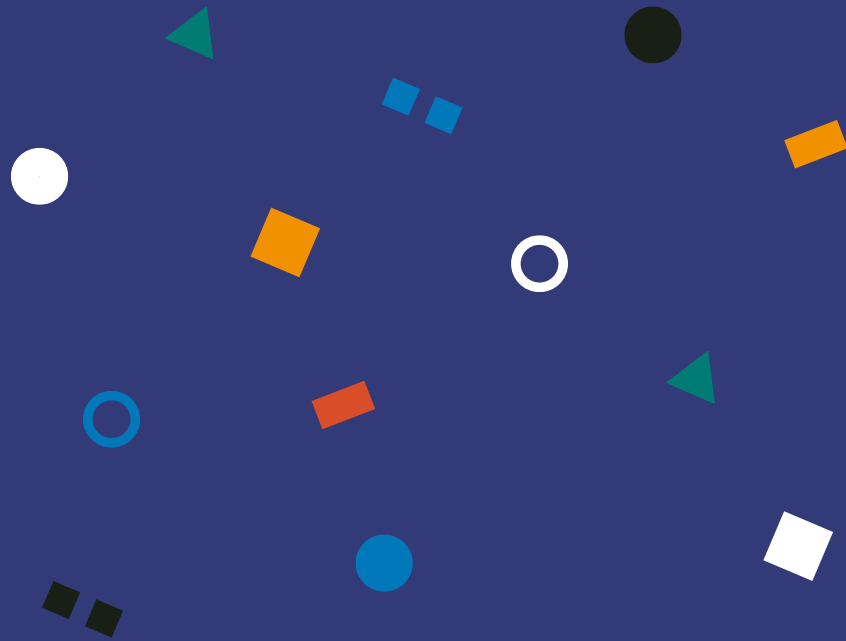
How the Irish public evaluate appeal images

# OVERALL RESPONSE TO ALL IMAGES

On balance (all images aggregated), when shown an image, respondents are more likely to say they want to find out more information about the appeal than not, just.

Across all images, 53% of respondents said they wanted to find out more information about the appeal and 47% said they did not want to find out more information.



Percentage of respondents wanting more information

| 53 | 47 |

Yes, I want to find out more about the appeal — No, I do not want to find out more about the appeal
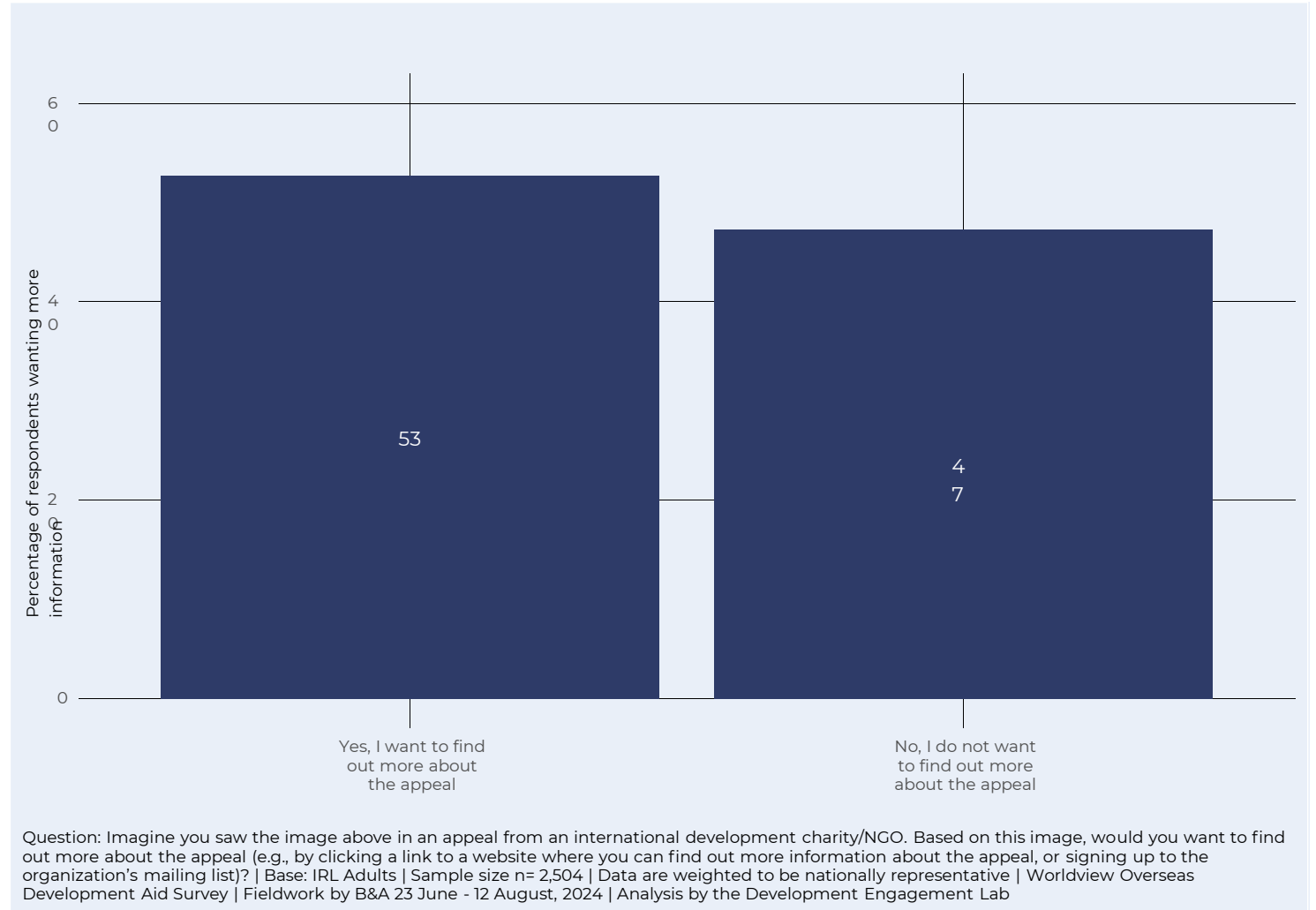
# SEEKING INFORMATION BY SEGMENT

When we cut the sample by the Worldview segments, we can see that there is significant variation across the six segments as to their average predisposition to seek information regardless of the images they are shown.

The Disengaged are much less likely to seek information - only wanting to find out more 20% of the time. This is significantly lower than all other segments

In fact, Community Champions are the most likely to want to find out more having been shown an image (75% of the time). This is more than Global Citizens, the second most information seeking segment (64%).

All other segments are more likely than not to want more information – so we infer that all segments apart from the Disengaged are open to influencing.
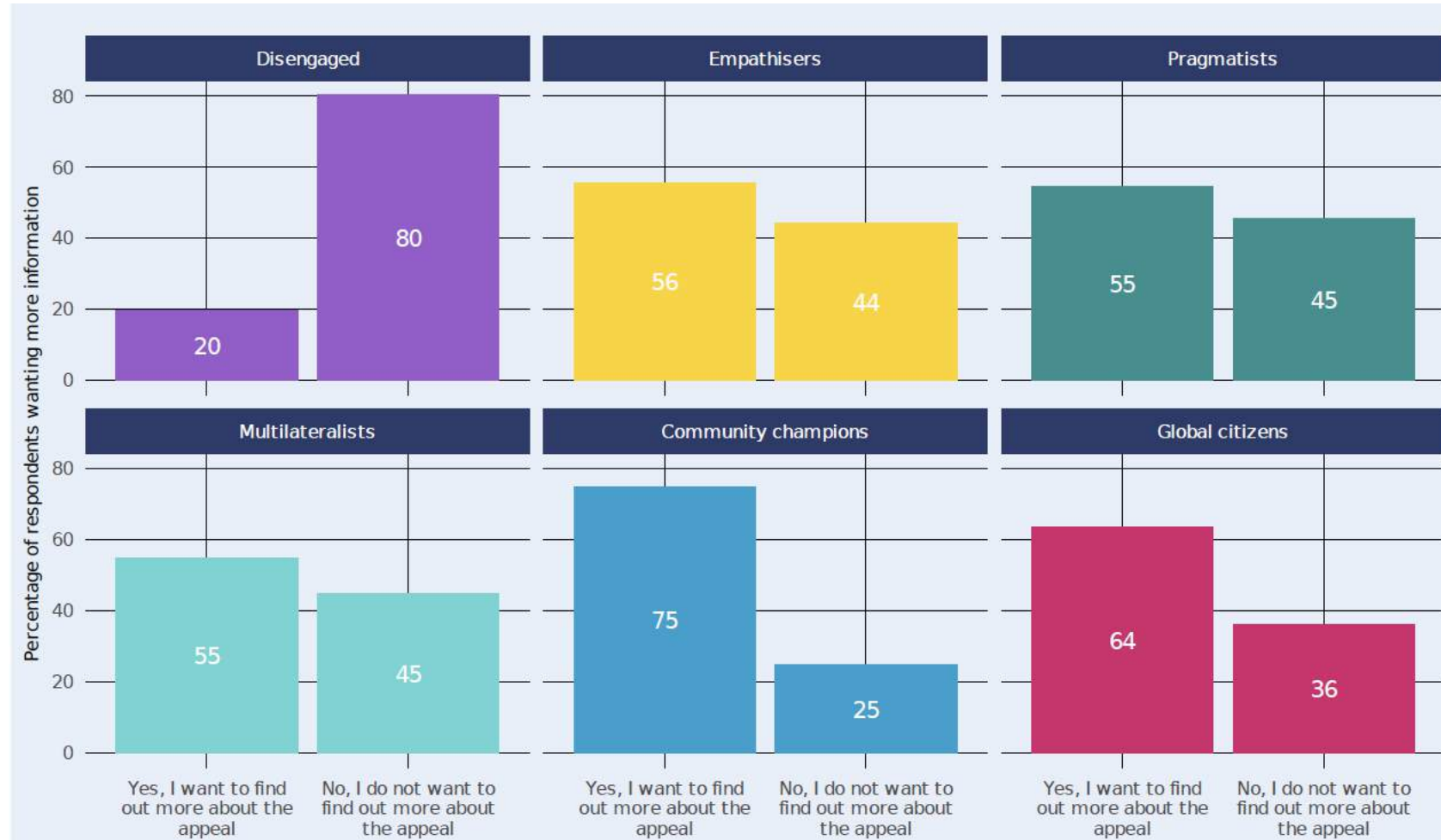


Question: Imagine you saw the image above in an appeal from an international development charity/NGO. Based on this image, would you want to find out more about the appeal (e.g., by clicking a link to a website where you can find out more information about the appeal, or signing up to the organization's mailing list)? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,504 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 23 June - 12 August, 2024 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab

# IMAGES & INFORMATION LEAGUE TABLE

The chart shows a 'league table' of the percentage of respondents who said 'Yes, I want to find out more about the appeal' by image number. Those image furthest to the left are the most effective at getting respondents to say that they would want to find out more (Image 66 elicited a positive response 68% of the time) and those to the right are the least effective (Image 23 elicited a positive response only 28% of the time).

This means that there's a large range of 40% between the most and least effective images. The rest of this deck examines respondents' emotional reactions to the images as well as analysing what drives respondents to want to find out more about an appeal.
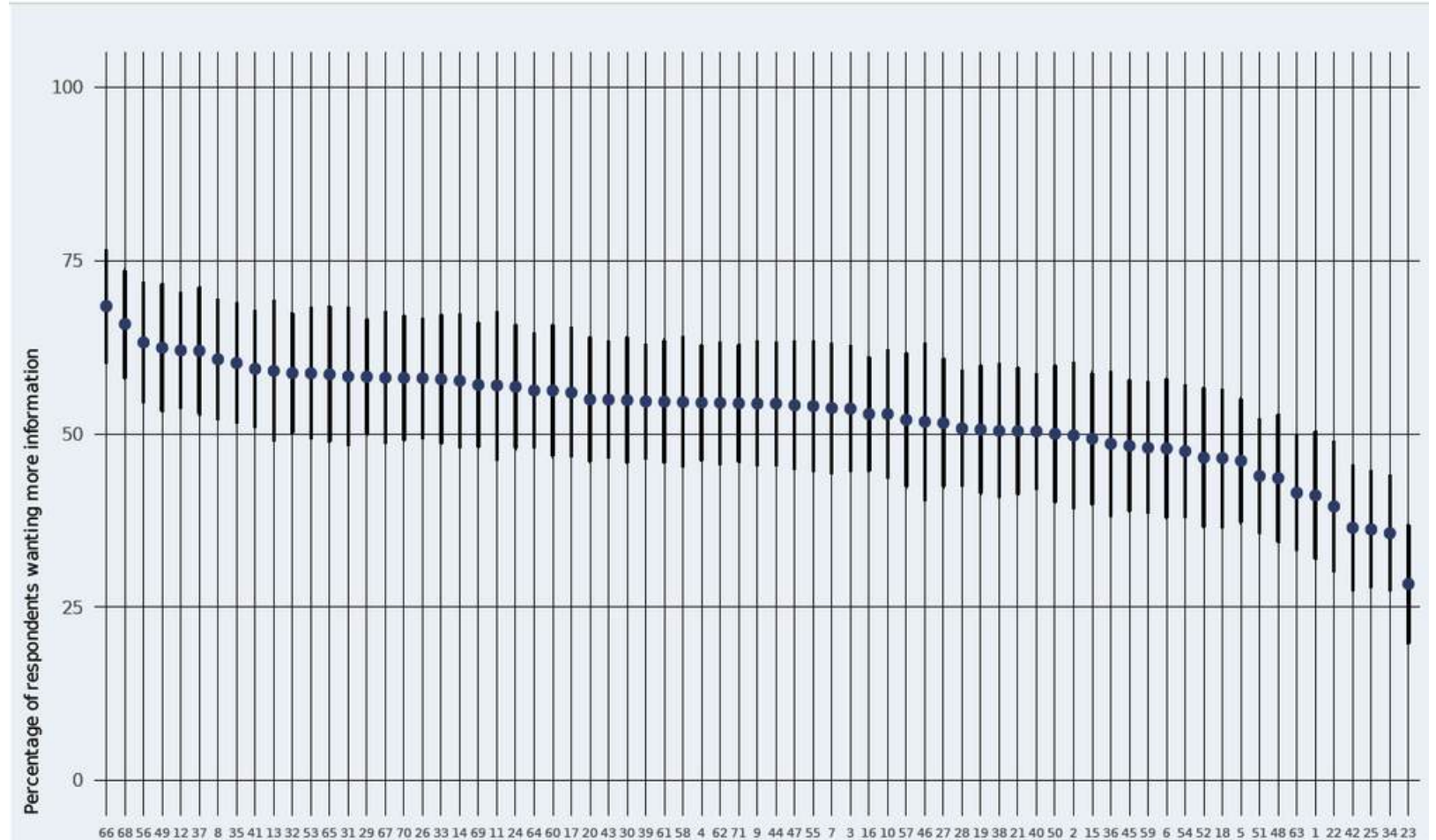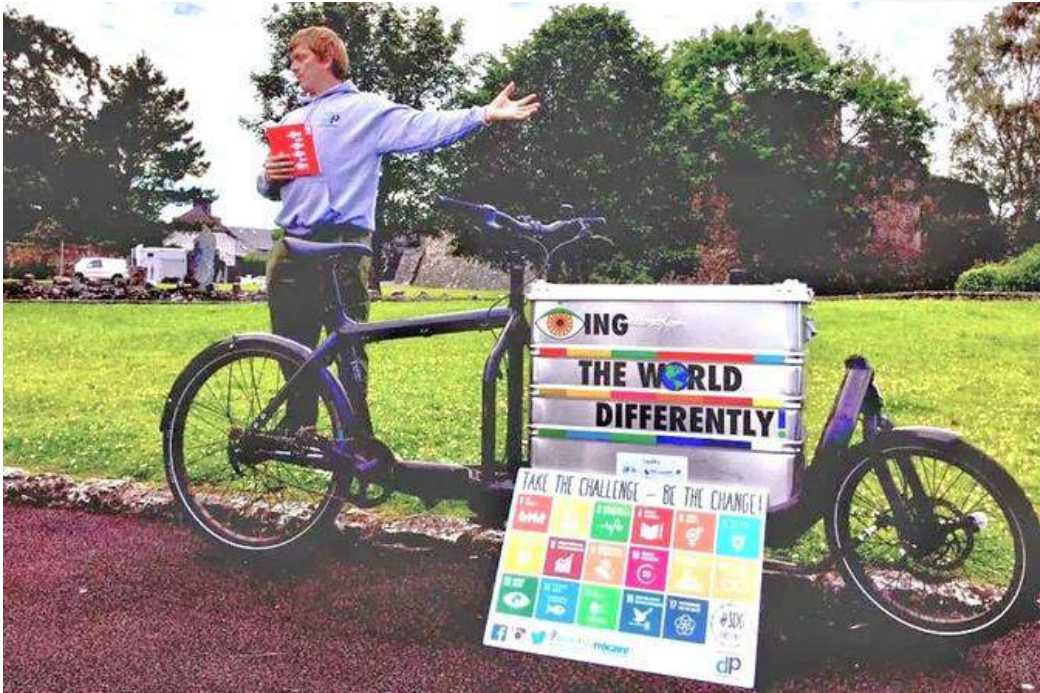
Question: Imagine you saw the image above in an appeal from an international development charity/NGO. Based on this image, would you want to find out more about the appeal (e.g., by clicking a link to a website where you can find out more information about the appeal, or signing up to the organization's mailing list)? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,504 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A xx July - xx August, 2024 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab

# TOP PERFORMING IMAGE (LEFT #66) VS. BOTTOM PERFORMING IMAGE (RIGHT #23)

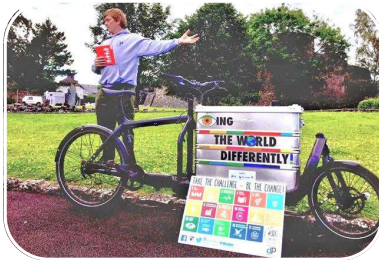# TOP 10 IMAGES – MOST SELECTED FOR FINDING OUT MORE INFORMATION



Most selected images nearly always involved children; half are images of crisis/extreme need; half are hopeful

# BOTTOM 10 IMAGES – LEAST SELECTED FOR FINDING OUT MORE INFORMATION
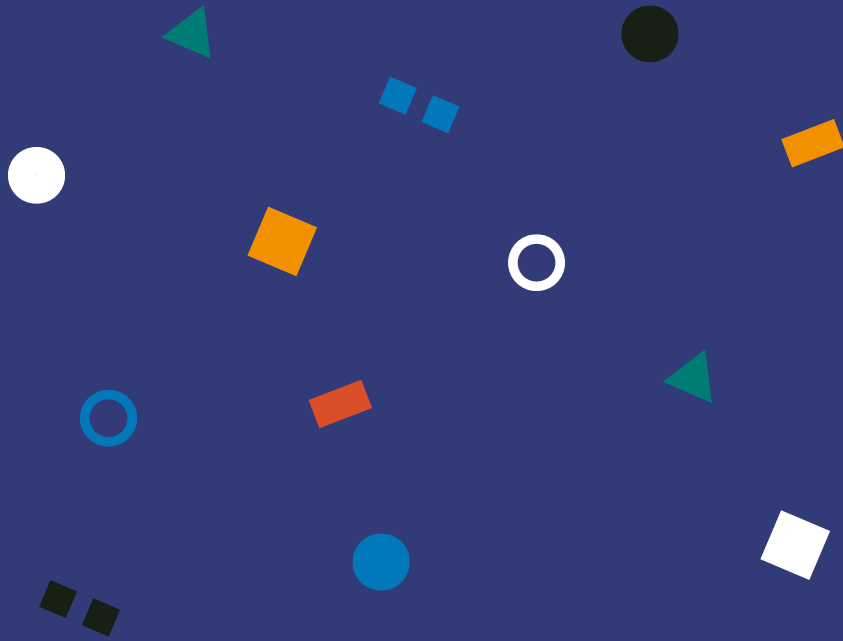


Least selected images rarely include distressed children; empowered women/girls images are less successful as are images featuring organisations' members

# TOP THREE IMAGES FOR EACH SEGMENT

| Disengaged | Empathisers | Pragmatists | Multilateralists | Community Champions | Global Citizens |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

# EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

Which images trigger which emotions?

# EMOTIONAL FINGERPRINT OF EACH PHOTO

The chart shows the emotional response profile for each image used (each number matches the number of the photos on slides 11-14)

There are three broad 'types' of images:

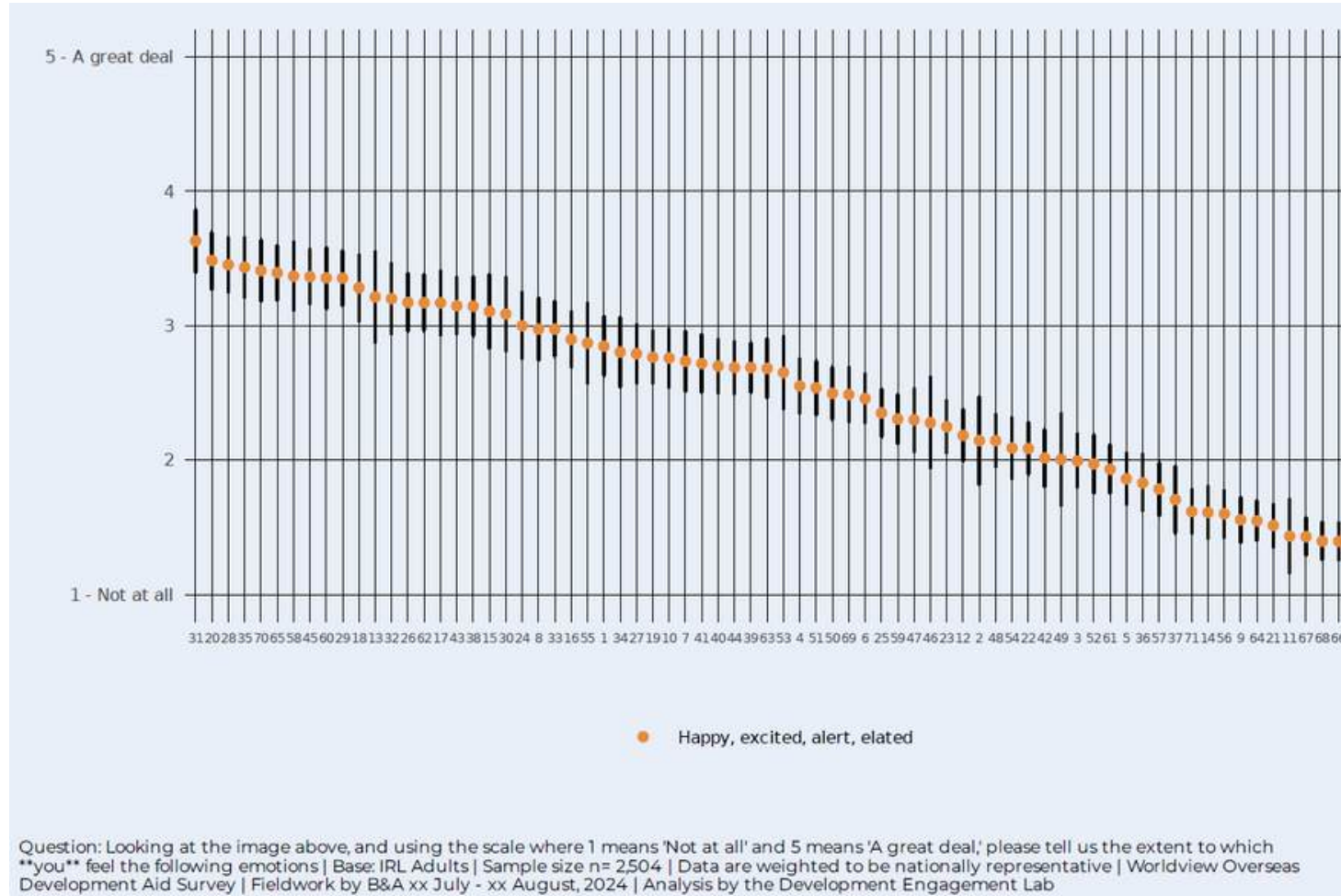1) **Lower and/or undifferentiated emotional responses**, e.g. images #22, 42, 54 have quite a 'flat' profile

2) **High negative/low positive**: e.g. images #11, 66 and 68 have very low positive emotional responses and significantly higher negative emotional responses

3) **High positive/low negative**: e.g. images # 13, 45, 60 have very lowpositive emotional responses and significantly higher negative emotional responses

# POSITIVE-ACTIVATED LEAGUE TABLE



Question: Looking at the image above, and using the scale where 1 means 'Not at all' and 5 means 'A great deal,' please tell us the extent to which **you** feel the following emotions | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,504 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A xx July - xx August, 2024 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab
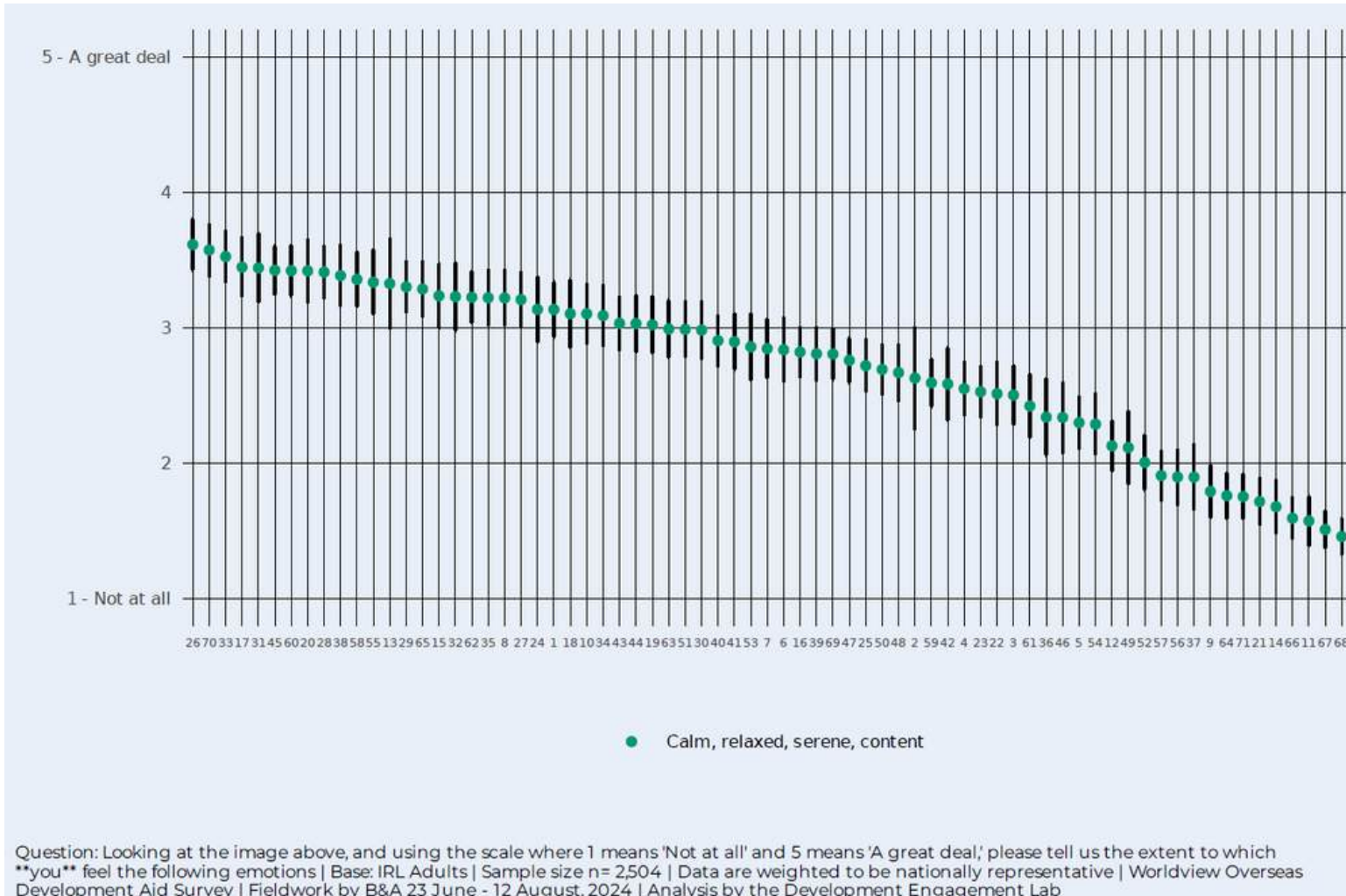
This chart shows another 'league table', but this time for images that elicited a positive-activated response: that is to say, it shows the extent to which respondents said that they felt 'Happy, excited, alert, elated', from a great deal-not at all on a 5-point scale.

The image that had the most positive-activated response was image #31. Having been shown image 31, respondents said they would like to find out more information about the appeal 58% of the time.

At the bottom end of the scale, image #66 generated the least positive- activated responses. Recall that image 66 is the 'best performing image' overall for wanting to find out more information about the appeal.

A simple bivariate statistical test shows that a more positive-activated response to an image is correlated with an increase in the likelihood of wanting to find out more.

# POSITIVE-DEACTIVATED LEAGUE TABLE

This chart shows a 'league table' for images that elicited a positive-deactivated response: that is to say, it shows the extent to which respondents said that they felt 'Calm, relaxed, serene, content', from a great deal-not at all on a 5-point scale.
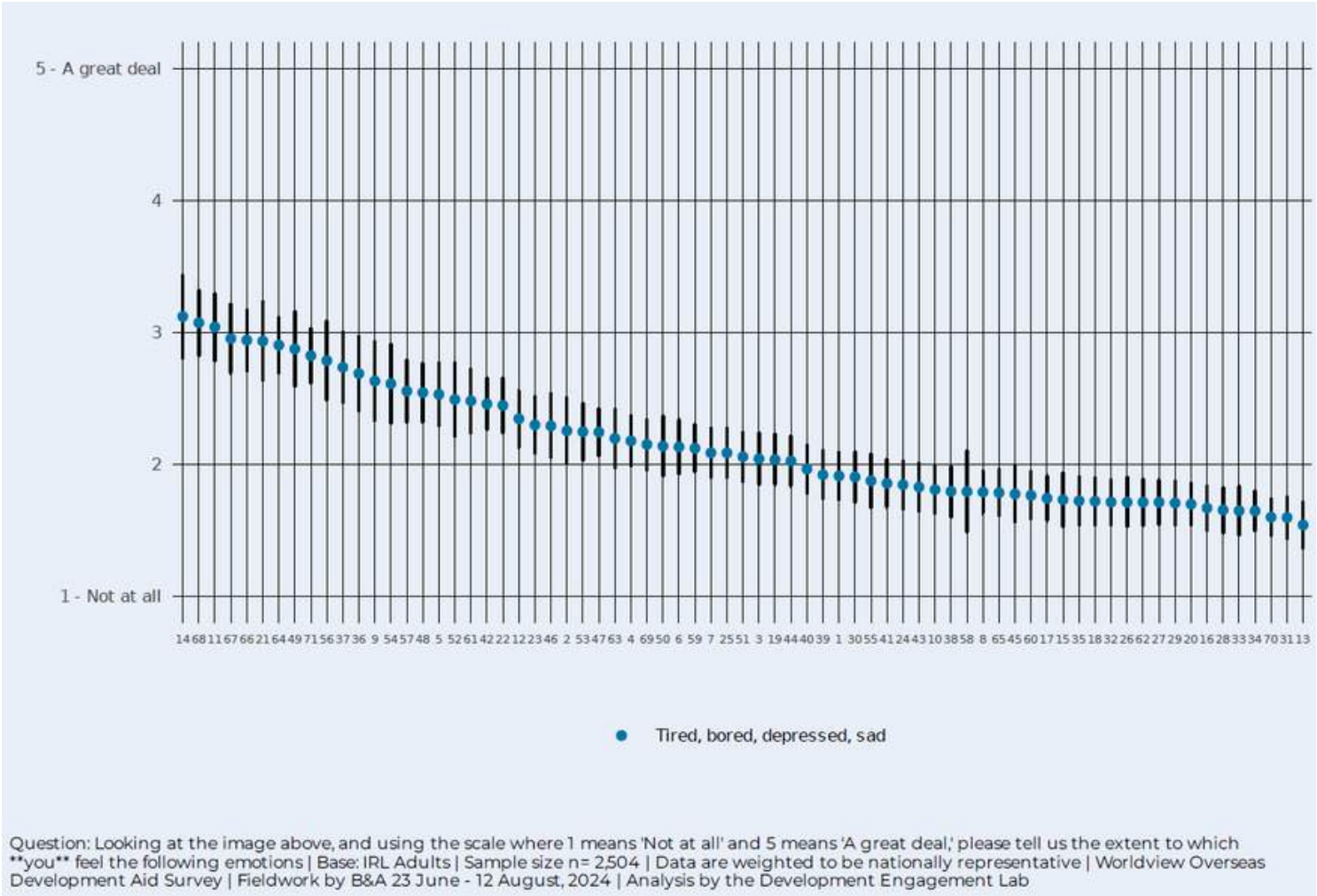
The image that had the most positive-deactivated response was image #26. Having been shown image 26, respondents said they would like to find out more information about the appeal 58% of the time.

At the bottom end of the scale, image #68 generated the least positive-deactivated responses. Having been shown image 68, respondents said they would like to find out more information about the appeal 66% of the time. Image 68 was the second best performing image.

A simple bivariate statistical test shows that a more positive-deactivated response to an image is correlated with an increase in the likelihood of wanting to find out more (but less than a positive-activated response).
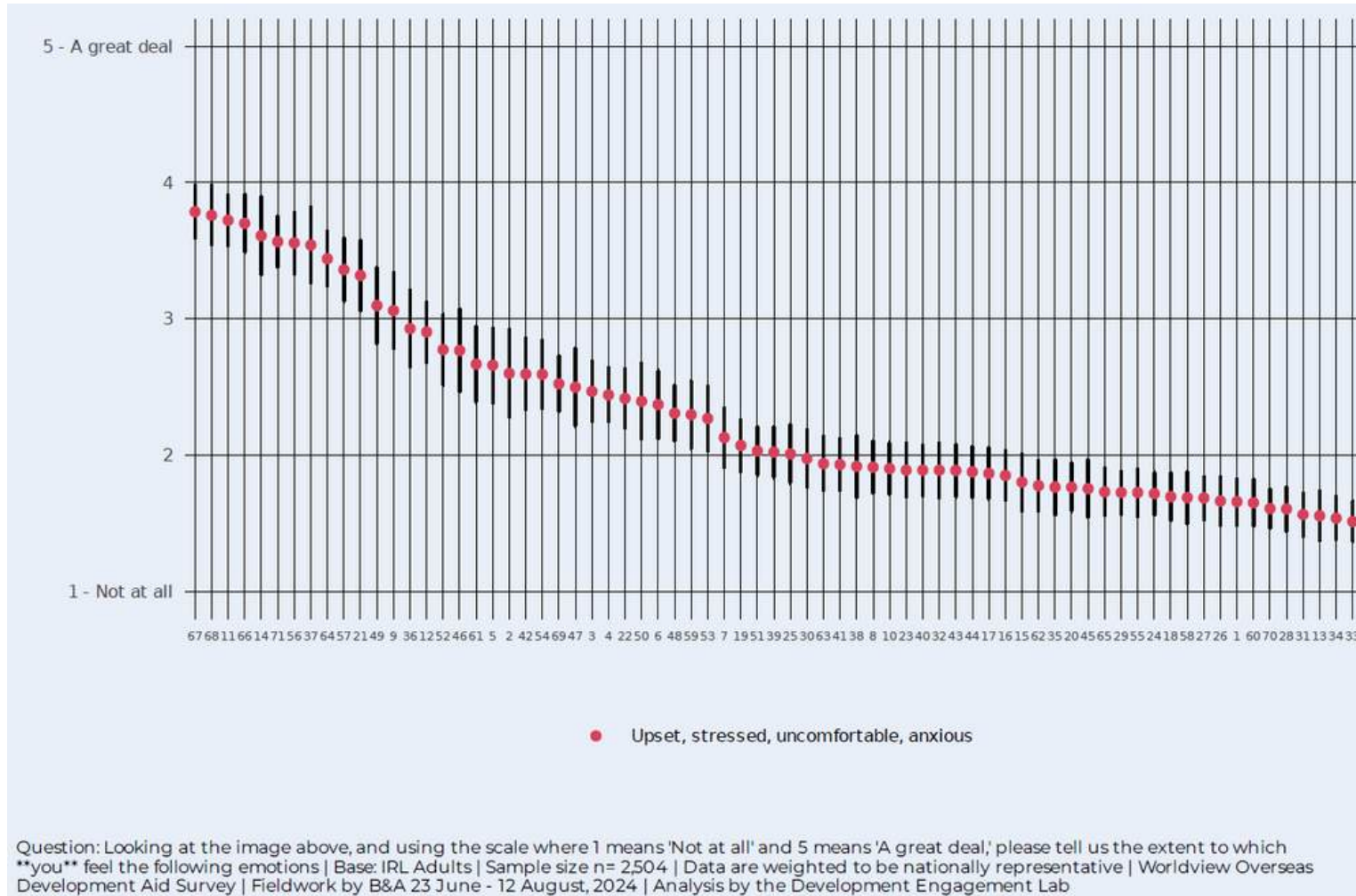
# NEGATIVE-DEACTIVATED LEAGUE TABLE



5 - A great deal

4

3

2

1 - Not at all

14 68 11 67 66 21 64 49 71 56 37 36 9 54 57 48 5 52 61 42 22 12 23 46 2 53 47 63 4 69 50 6 59 7 25 51 3 19 44 40 39 1 30 55 41 24 43 10 38 58 8 65 45 60 17 15 35 18 32 26 62 27 29 20 16 28 33 34 70 31 13

● Tired, bored, depressed, sad

This chart shows a 'league table' for images that elicited a negatived-deactivated response : that is to say, it shows the extent to which respondents said that they felt 'Tired, bored, depressed, sad', from a great deal-not at all on a 5-point scale.

The image that had the most negatived-deactivated response was image #14. Having been shown image 14, respondents said they would like to find out more information about the appeal 58% of the time.

At the bottom end of the scale, image #13 generated the least negatived- deactivated responses. Having been shown image 13, respondents said they would like to find out more information about the appeal 59% of the time. Image 13 was the 10th best performing image.

A simple bivariate statistical test shows that there is no relationship between a more negative-deactivated response and wanting to find out more.

# NEGATIVE-ACTIVATED LEAGUE TABLE



Question: Looking at the image above, and using the scale where 1 means 'Not at all' and 5 means 'A great deal,' please tell us the extent to which **you** feel the following emotions | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,504 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 23 June - 12 August, 2024 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab

This chart shows a 'league table' for images that elicited a negative-activated response: that is to say, it shows the extent to which respondents said that they felt 'Upset, stressed, uncomfortable, anxious', from a great deal-not at all on a 5-point scale.

The image that had the most negative-deactivated response was image #67. Having been shown image 67, respondents said they would like to find out more information about the appeal 58% of the time. Image 67 was the 15th best performing image.

At the bottom end of the scale, image #33 generated the least negatived- deactivated responses. Having been shown image 33, respondents said they would like to find out more information about the appeal also 58% of the time. Image 33 was the 19th best performing image.

A simple bivariate statistical test shows that on average a more negative-activated response to an image is correlated with an increase in the likelihood of wanting to find out more (similar in magnitude to positive-deactivated and less than positive-activated).

# EMOTIONAL DUMBBELLS

This chart shows the distribution of the images by 'emotional dumbbells'. The gold dots show the extent to which respondents expressed a positive-activated response. And the red dot shows the extent to which respondents expressed a negative-activated response.
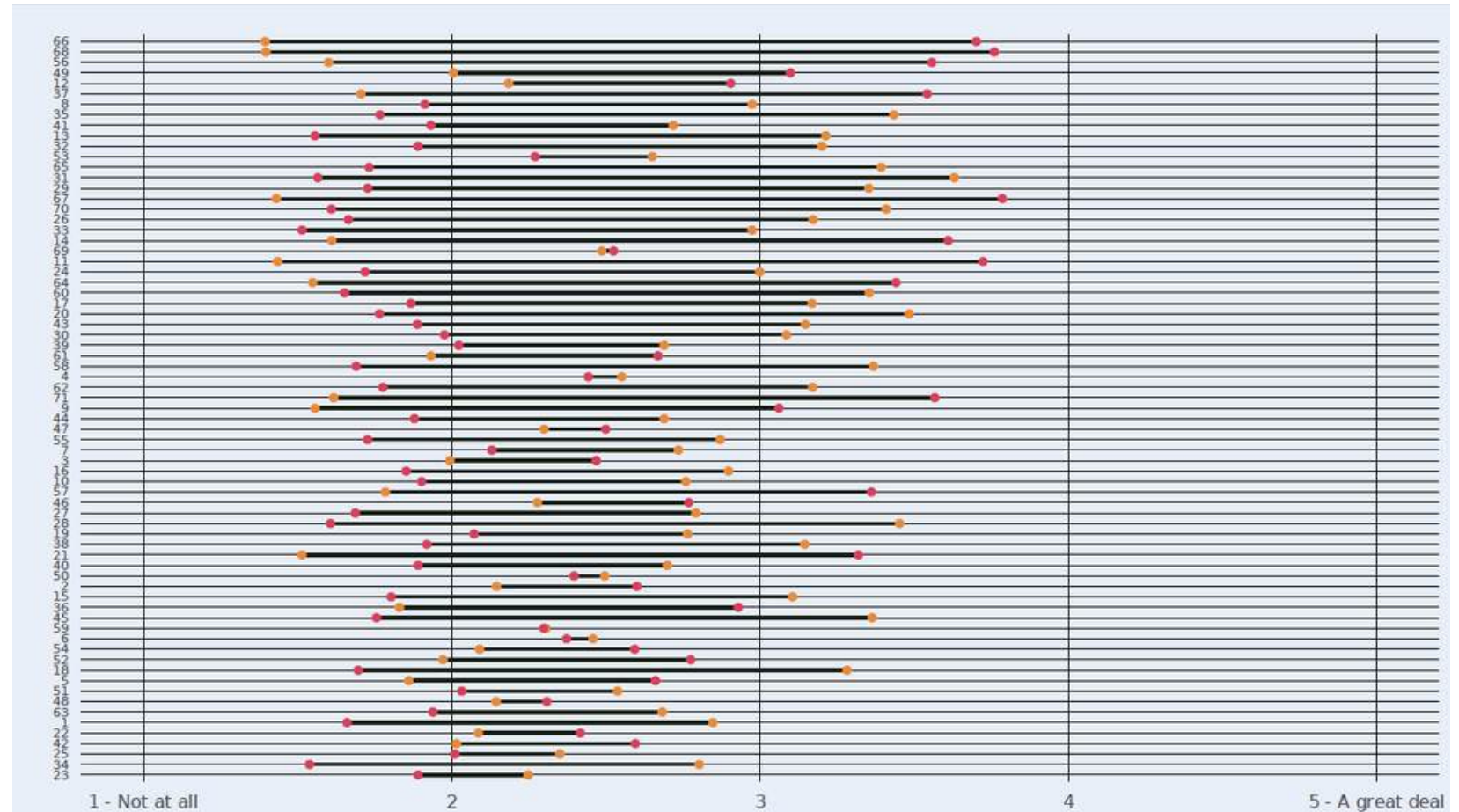
The bigger the gap the more extreme an image is, emotionally, one way or the other. If the red dot is to the right, then it's a more negative image; if the gold dot is on the right then it is a more positive image.

The images are ordered according to their success in eliciting information seeking. Image 66, at the top is the most effective at eliciting information seeking and image 23 is at the bottom.

Visually, the figure suggests that more extreme images get more info seeking (the gap appears to shrink as you go down the plot), and negative ones (more reed to the right) seem to prevail at the top of the plot. The larger the gap between the dumbbells, the more people want to find out more.

This is confirmed by a statistical test that the greater the difference between the positive-activated and negative-activated reaction the more likely people want to find out more.

But note that while the top 7 are red to the right (negative), those in positions 7-14 are gold to the right (positive).



Questions: Looking at the image above, and using the scale where 1 means 'Not at all' and 5 means 'A great deal,' please tell us the extent to which **you** feel the following emotions & Imagine you saw the image above in an appeal from an international development charity/NGO. Based on this image, would you want to find out more about the appeal (e.g., by clicking a link to a website where you can find out more information about the appeal, or signing up to the organization's mailing list)? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,504 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 23 June - 12 August, 2024 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab
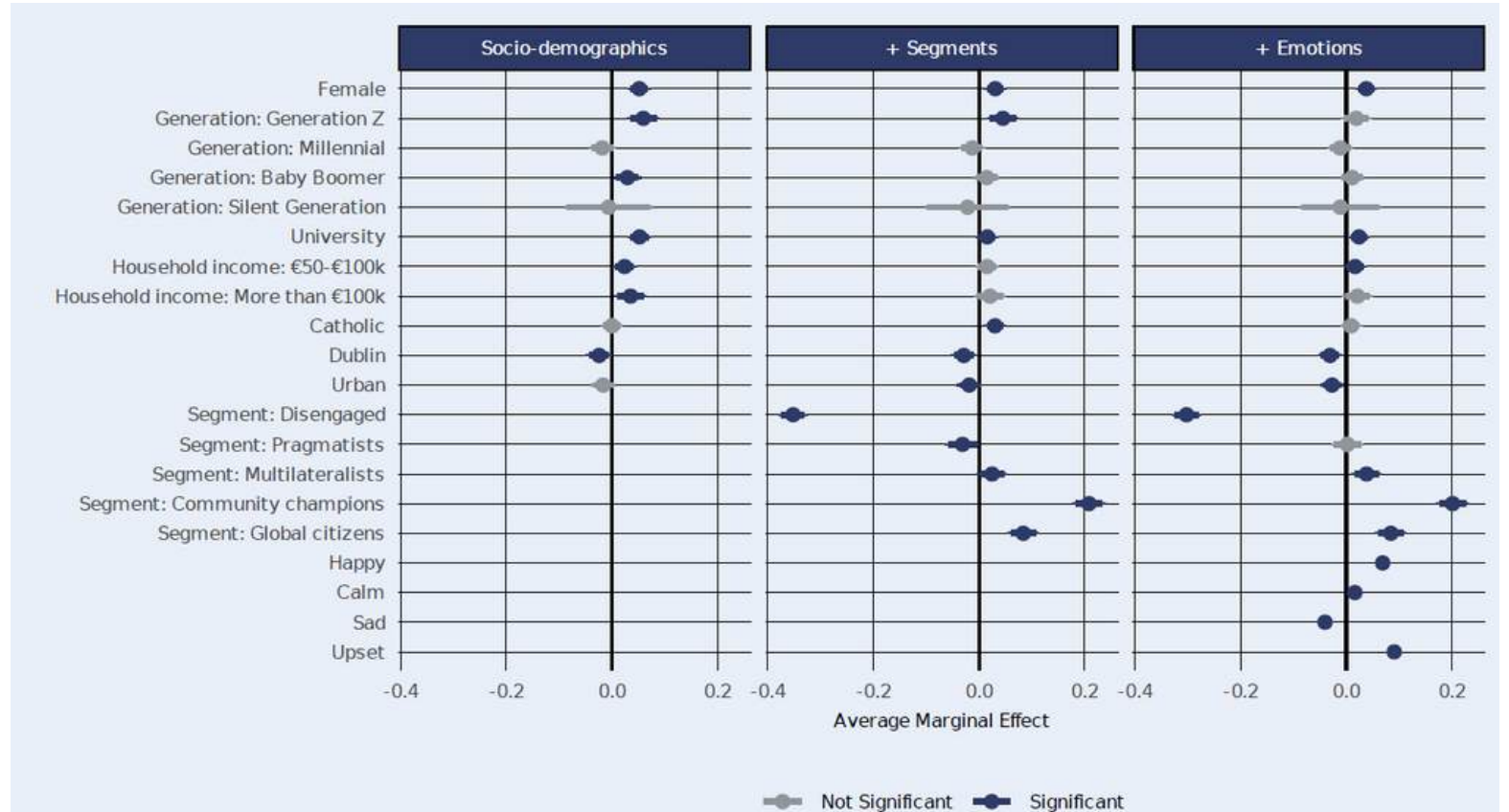
# MODELLING INFORMATION SEEKING
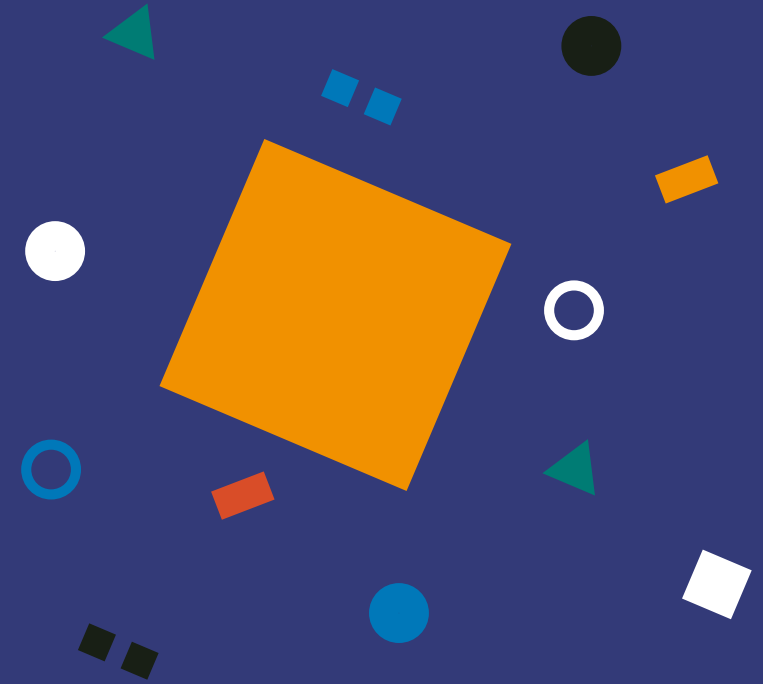
# WHAT EXPLAINS INFORMATION SEEKING?

To understand what drives respondents to seek more information after seeing an image, we use a step-wise approach, that models information seeking through three cumulative models. Unlike the bivariate tests earlier, this multivariate model adjusts for all variables at the same time.

In a purely socio-demographic model of information seeking we find that women are 5% more likely; Gen Z are 6% more likely (compared with Gen X); those with university education are 5% more likely; and denizens of Dublin are 3% less likely.

Adding segments to the model we find that, compared with Empathisers, the Disengaged are 35% less likely to seek info; Community champions are 21% more likely; Global Citizens X% more likely; Pragmatists x% less likely. And there is no difference between Empathisers and Multilateralists.

Finally, when we look at the effect of the emotional responses on top of socio-demographics and segment, we find that a positive-activated response (Happy) make information seeking 7% more likely, positive-activated (Upset) 9% more likely, positive-deactivated (Calm) +2%, and negative-deactivated (Sad 4%) less likely to seek information.



Questions: Looking at the image above, and using the scale where 1 means 'Not at all' and 5 means 'A great deal,' please tell us the extent to which **you** feel the following emotions & Imagine you saw the image above in an appeal from an international development charity/NGO. Based on this image, would you want to find out more about the appeal (e.g., by clicking a link to a website where you can find out more information about the appeal, or signing up to the organization's mailing list)? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,504 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 23 June - 12 August, 2024 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab | Reference category for the categorical variables. Generation: Generation X, Household income: Less than €50k, Segment: Empathisers

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# DRIVERS ANALYSIS SUMMARY: UNDERSTANDING INFORMATION SEEKING

- **Positive drivers**
- Sociodemographics
  - Women
  - University educated
  - Higher income groups
- **Segments**
  - Multilateralists
  - Community Champions
  - Global Citizens
- **Emotions**
  - Positive-activated (happy)
  - Positive-deactivated (calm)
  - Negative-activated (upset)

- **Negative drivers**
- Sociodemographics
  - Dublin region
  - Urban residents
- **Segments**
  - Disengage
- **Emotions**
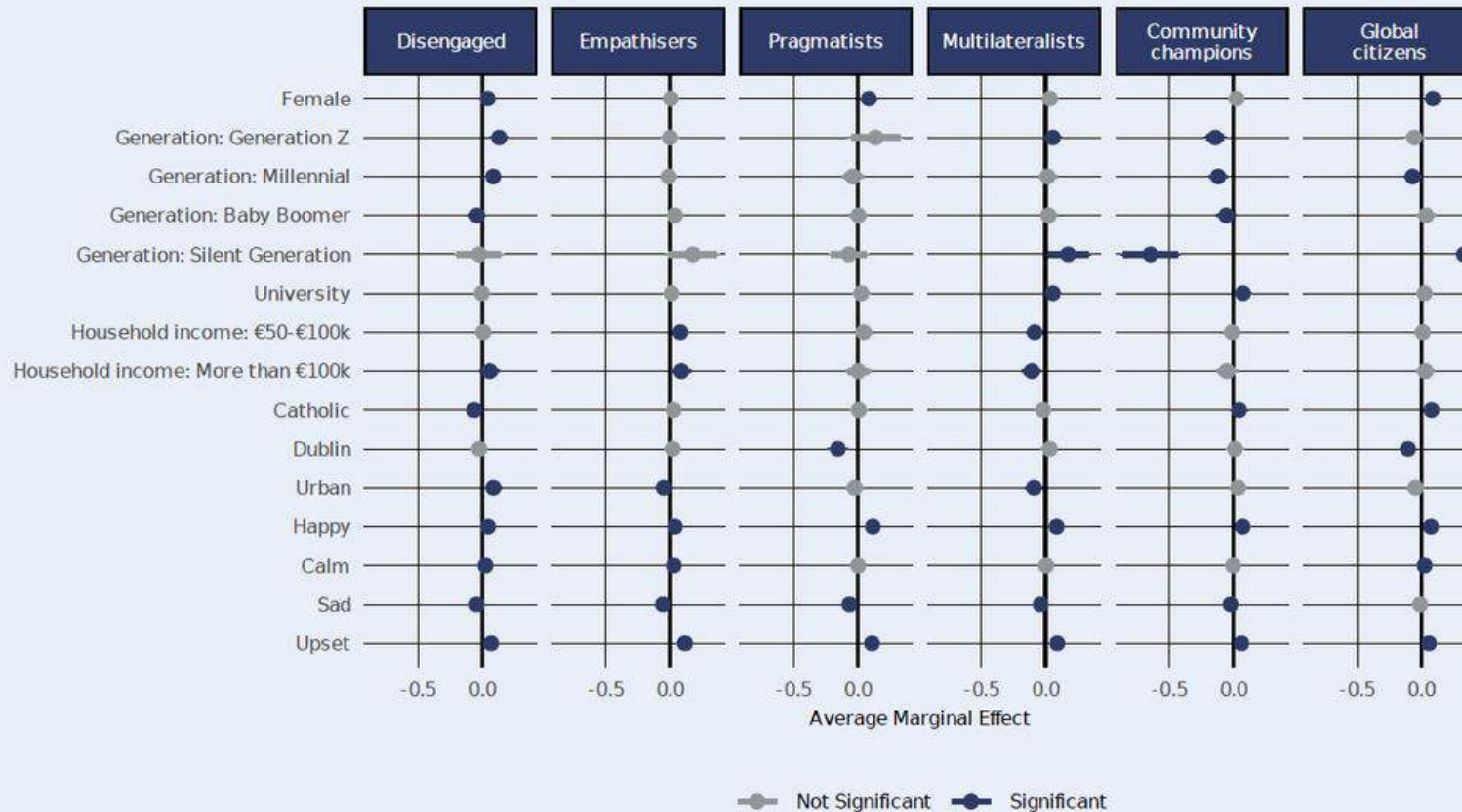  - Negative-deactivated (sad)

# DO DIFFERENT SEGMENTS WORK DIFFERENTLY?



In a (two) word(s), not really.

The models suggest that the segments respond relatively consistently, more so than there are striking differences.

Some variables move in and out of statistical significance, for example gender. The main variable that does move from being positive to negative depending on the segment is income – greater income is positively correlated with finding out more for Empathisers, but is negative for Multilateralists. The large effects for the Silent Generation are mainly a function of it being a very small sample across the segments and should be ignored.

The emotional responses all point in the same direction as the overall model. Interestingly the positive and negative activated responses are greatest for Pragmatists who are 11% more likely to want more information if they have a positive-activated response (Happy) and 11% more likely if negatively-activated (Upset).

Questions: Looking at the image above, and using the scale where 1 means 'Not at all' and 5 means 'A great deal,' please tell us the extent to which **you** feel the following emotions & Imagine you saw the image above in an appeal from an international development charity/NGO. Based on this image, would you want to find out more about the appeal (e.g., by clicking a link to a website where you can find out more information about the appeal, or signing up to the organization's mailing list)? | Base: IRL Adults | Sample size n= 2,504 | Data are weighted to be nationally representative | Worldview Overseas Development Aid Survey | Fieldwork by B&A 23 June - 12 August, 2024 | Analysis by the Development Engagement Lab | Reference category for the categorical variables. Generation: Generation X, Household income: Less than €50k

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## THE CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Finally, we can use the model results to predict the probability of an image being chosen given all possible combinations of emotional responses (625 combinations of happy, calm, sad, and upset (each ranging from 1 to 5)).

The optimal emotional response is Happy 5, Calm 5, Sad 1, Upset 5.

This combination has a 92.3% probability of making the person want to find out more about an appeal.

# KEY LEARNINGS & INSIGHTS

# WHICH IMAGES ELICIT ENGAGEMENT?

•There are multiple ways to increase engagement – both positive (activated & deactivated) and negative (activated) images work to stimulate respondents to want to find out more about an appeal.

•Images that elicit more extreme emotional responses are more likely  to generate engagement.

•The top images selected images nearly always involved children, however, half of the images feature crisis/extreme need and half are hopeful or show progress.

# WHAT DOESN'T INCREASE ENGAGEMENT?

- In general, the images that were least effective:

  - Feature adults and do not (very rarely) include young and/or distressed children
  - Feature organisations' members
  - Feature 'empowered' women/girls

# TOP IMAGES BY SEGMENT VARY

- Empathisers
  - Motivated by images featuring children in crisis or distress
- Pragmastists
  - Like targeted action, they connect with images of things getting done (school, healthcare)
- Multilateralists
  - Have the widest range of effective images (distress, positive, women, facts)
- Community Champions
  - Respond to images of distress and need
- Global Citizens
  - Respond to positive, everyday images (school, family life, healthcare)

# EMPTIONS THAT WORK: HAPPY, CALM, UPSET

• The research shows that both positive (activated & deactivated) images elicit emotional responses that are associated with respondents wanting to find out more

• Make people feel *happy*, *calm* or *upset*

• Use images that elicit strong emotional responses

# AVOID NEGATIVE, DEACTIVATED EMOTIONS

- Avoid images that elicit negative, deactivated emotions
  - Tired, bored, depressed, sad

- Images that elicit these emotions depress hope; we infer that they make people sad without feeling like there is anything that can be done

- Negative deactivated emotions stimulate the status quo – no change, no hope

# WHERE TO GO TO INCREASE ENGAGEMENT

•Segments – Multilateralists, Community Champions & Global Citizens remain more likely to engage

•Women, university educated and higher income groups

•Using images with these emotions

- Positive-activated (happy)
- Positive-deactivated (calm)
- Negative-activated (upset)

The Development Engagement Lab (DEL) is a research project interested in public attitudes and engagement with global development in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States.

DEL is a partner focussed research programme, convening and co-producing research and insights with over 30 international development NGOs and government agencies to understand the drivers of engagement and inform development communications.

Fieldwork is carried out by YouGov and surveys are weighted to be a nationally representative of the adult population. DEL is a grantee of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and led by Professor Jennifer Hudson (University College London) and Professor David Hudson (University of Birmingham).

The **Development Engagement Lab** (Aid Attitudes Tracker Phase 2) has three goals:
1. Co-production of an evidence base for development campaigning
2. Enabling collaboration across the sector
3. Increasing advocacy capacity through the sharing of research and strategic insights

You can find out more information about DEL research at. https://developmentengagementlab.org/, follow us on X @DevEngageLab or by contacting del@ucl.ac.uk.

Image on title slide:: Amy Sheppey/Christian Aid