



USAID: Mixed Progress in Increasing Diversity, and Actions Needed to Consistently Meet EEO Requirements

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Based on [GAO-20-477](#)

Background

- Concerns about the demographic composition of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) workforce are longstanding.
- USAID has a stated commitment to fostering an inclusive workforce that reflects that diversity of the United States.
- In fiscal year (FY) 2018, USAID's workforce included 2,964 full-time, permanent, career employees, including
 - 1,666 Foreign Service
 - 1,298 Civil Service

Research Objectives

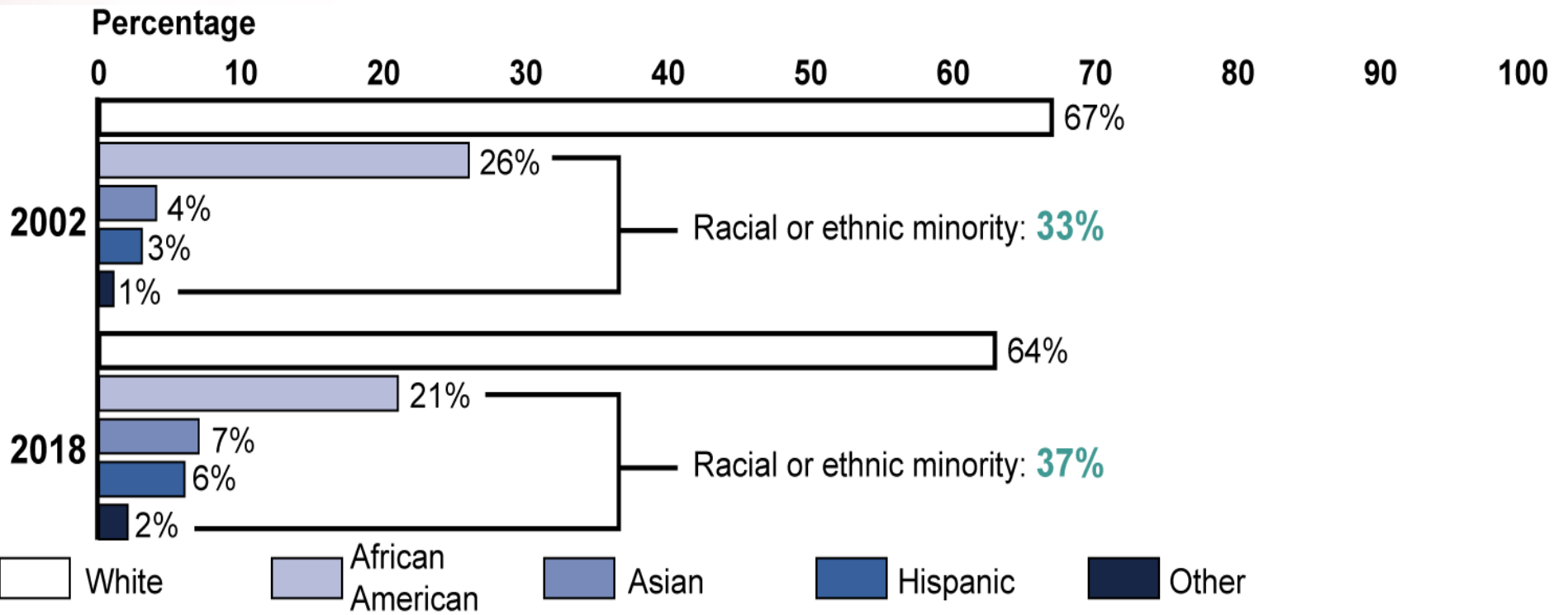
Our report examined

- (1) the demographic composition of USAID's workforce in FYs 2002 through 2018,
- (2) any differences in promotion outcomes for racial or ethnic minorities in USAID's workforce,
- (3) any differences in promotion outcomes for men and women in USAID's workforce, and
- (4) the extent to which USAID has identified workforce diversity issues and worked to address them.

Methodology

- Analyzed demographic characteristics of more than 5,750 USAID personnel employed during FYs 2002-2018.
- Conducted descriptive analyses of USAID promotion data.
- Conducted adjusted statistical analyses of promotion data, accounting for factors other than racial or ethnic minority status and gender that could influence promotion.
 - Our analyses do not completely explain the reasons for differences in promotion outcomes, which may result from various unobservable factors. Thus, our analyses do not establish a causal relationship between demographic characteristics and promotion outcomes.
- Reviewed USAID workforce diversity reports and interviewed USAID officials and employee group representatives.

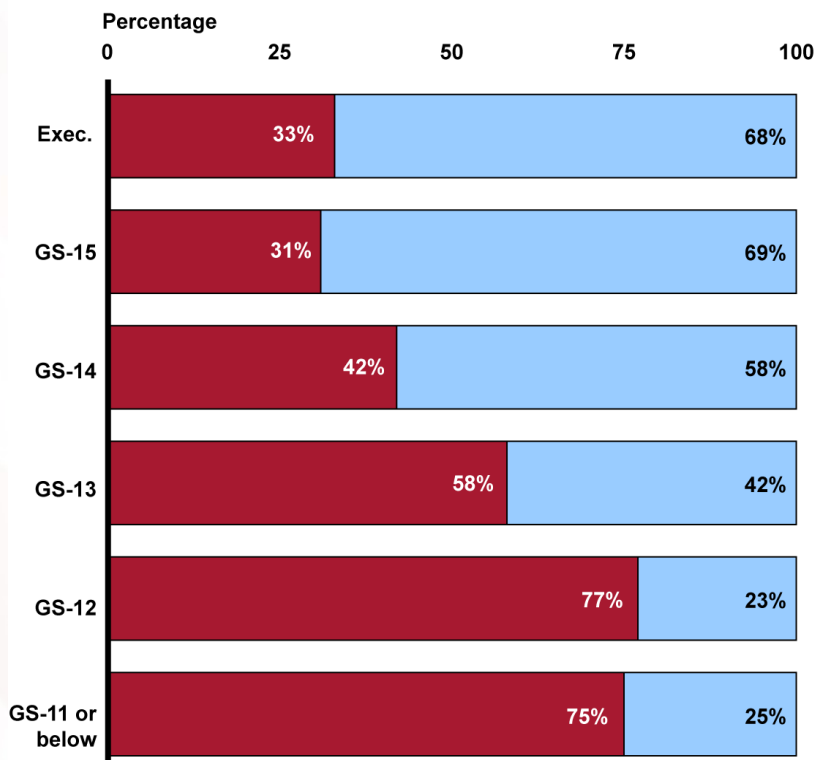
Overall Proportion of Racial or Ethnic Minorities Grew, although Proportion of African Americans Declined



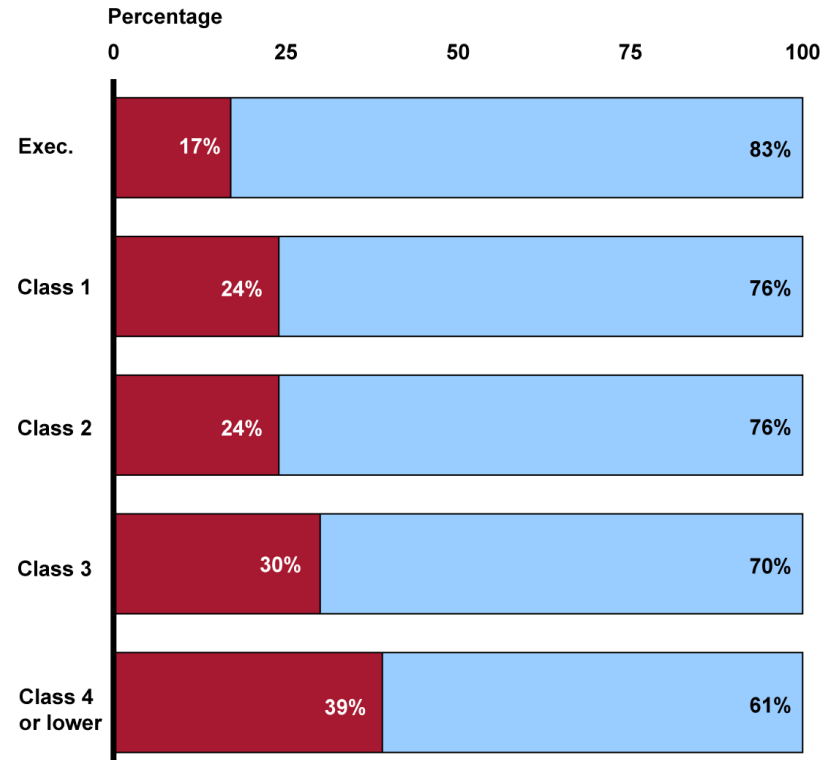
Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data. | GAO-20-477

Proportions of Racial or Ethnic Minorities Were Smaller in Higher Ranks in FY 2018

Civil Service



Foreign Service



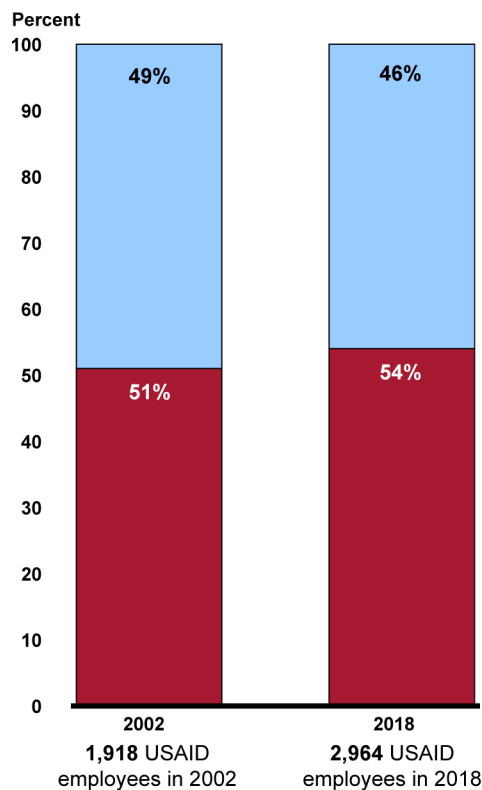
■ White
■ Racial or ethnic minority

Legend: Exec. = Executive.

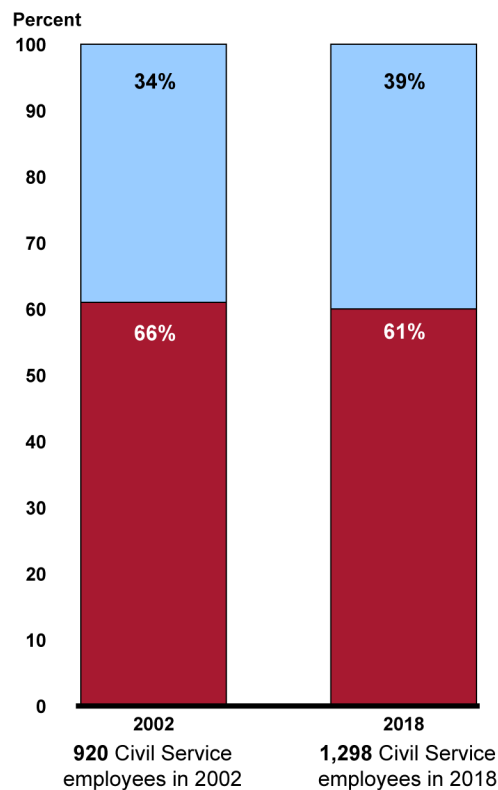
Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data. | GAO-20-477

Proportion of Women Increased Overall, Rising in Foreign Service While Declining in Civil Service

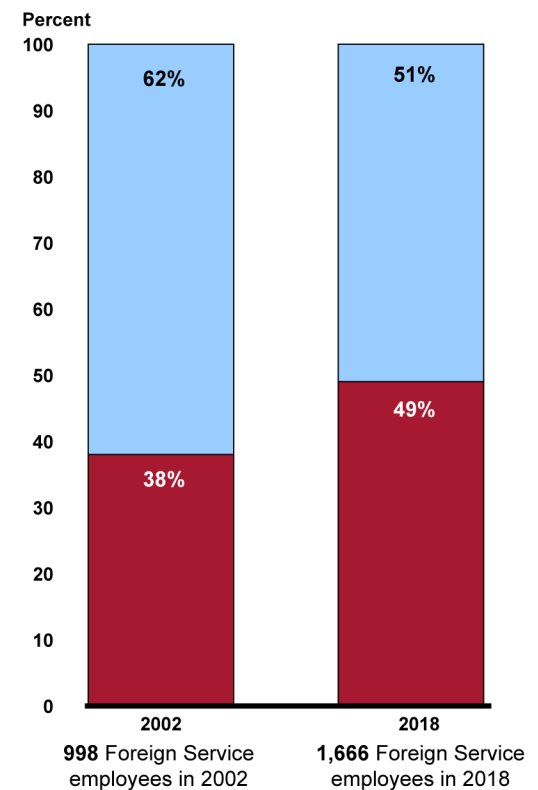
USAID Overall



Civil Service



Foreign Service

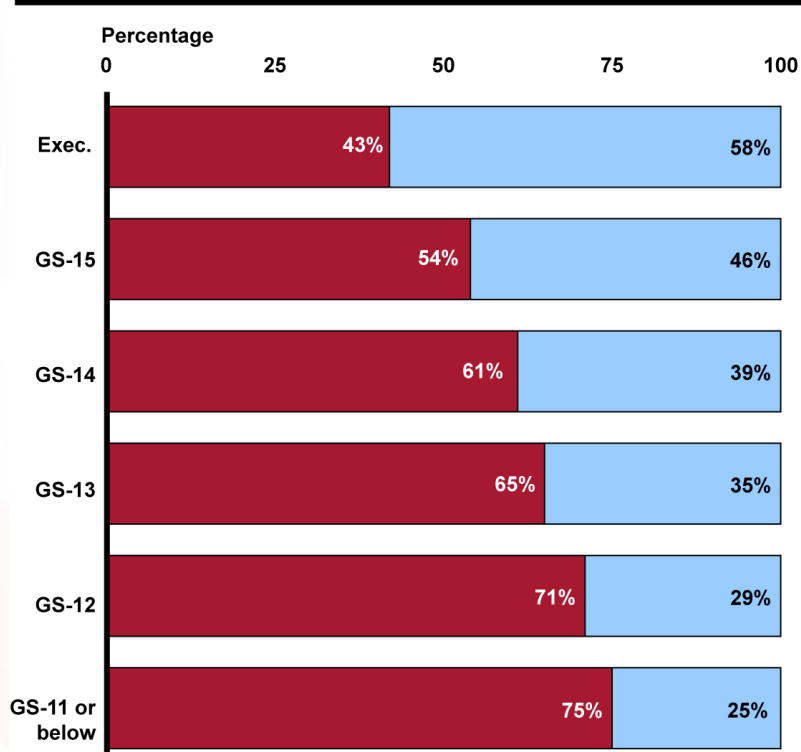


Men
Women

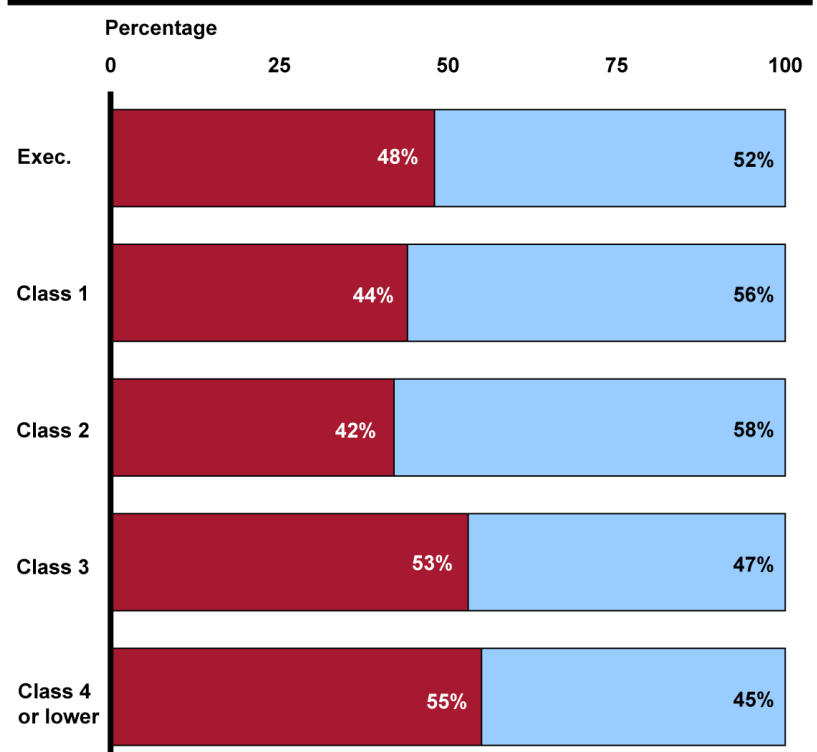
Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data. | GAO-20-477

Proportion of Women Was Generally Smaller in Higher Ranks in FY 2018

Civil Service



Foreign Service



Men
Women

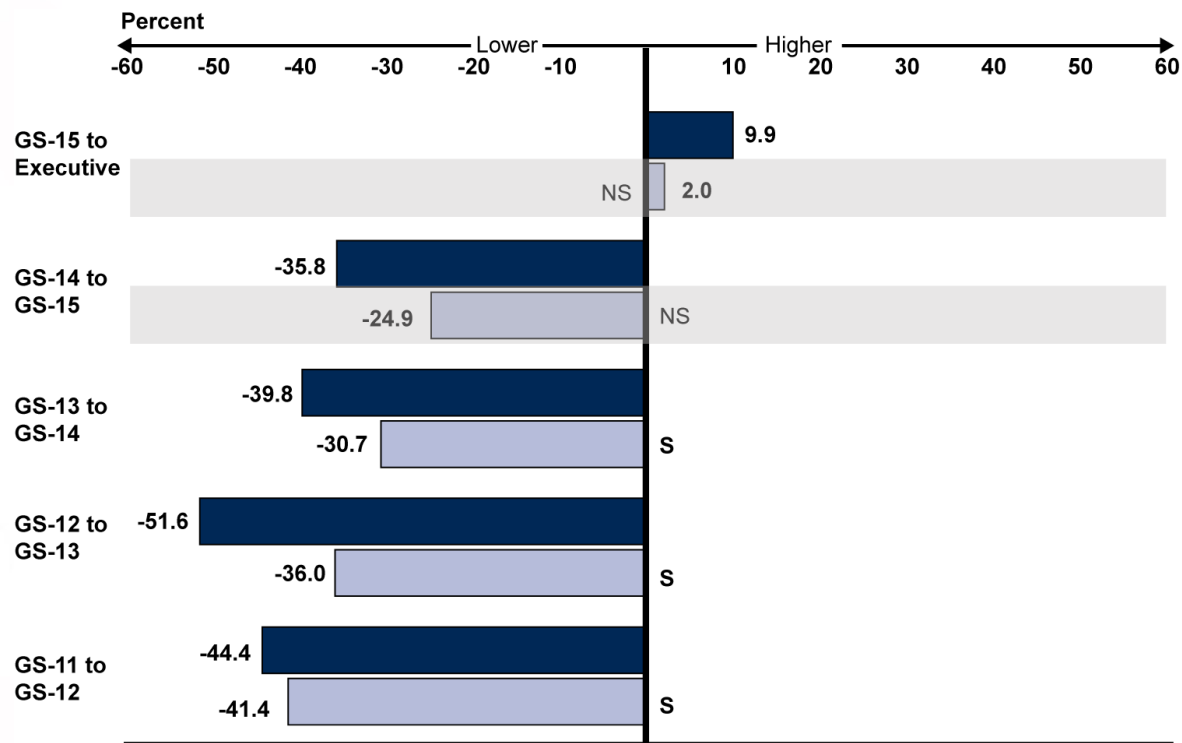
Legend: Exec. = Executive.

Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data. | GAO-20-477

Promotion Outcomes Were Generally Lower for Racial or Ethnic Minorities and Mixed for Women

- We conducted descriptive analyses of average promotion rates.
- We also conducted adjusted analyses, accounting for various individual factors that could influence promotion—for example, occupation, education, language skills, hardship assignments, and years of federal service. However, our analyses do not account for various other factors, such as employee skills, that may have caused differences in promotion outcomes.
- We analyzed the Civil and Foreign Services separately because of differences in the two services' structures and promotion processes.

Civil Service Promotion Outcomes Were Lower for Racial or Ethnic Minorities Than for Whites in Early to Mid Career in FYs 2002-2017

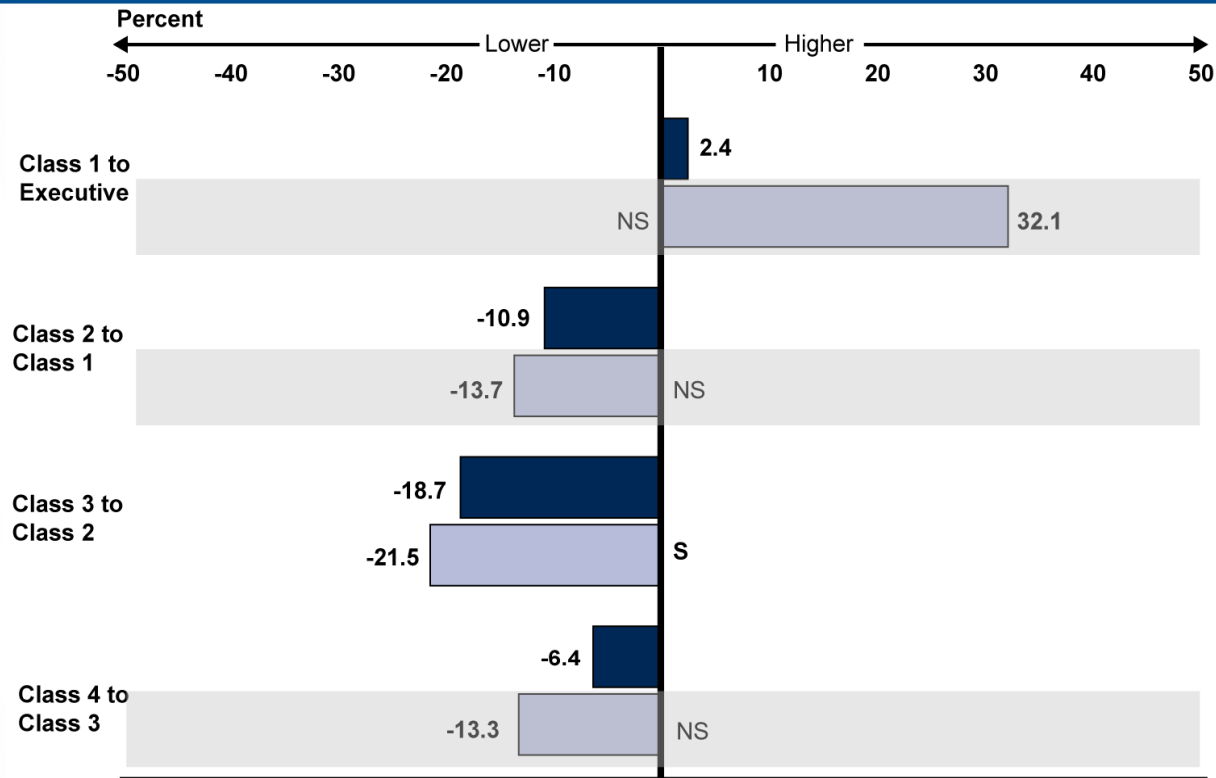


Results not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level
 Relative difference in promotion rate among racial or ethnic minorities (descriptive)
 Relative difference in odds of promotion among racial or ethnic minorities (adjusted)

Legend: GS = General Schedule, NS = not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, S = Statistically significant result.

Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data. | GAO-20-477

Foreign Service Promotion Outcomes Were Lower for Racial or Ethnic Minorities in Early to Mid Career in FYs 2002-2017, but Differences Were Generally Not Statistically Significant

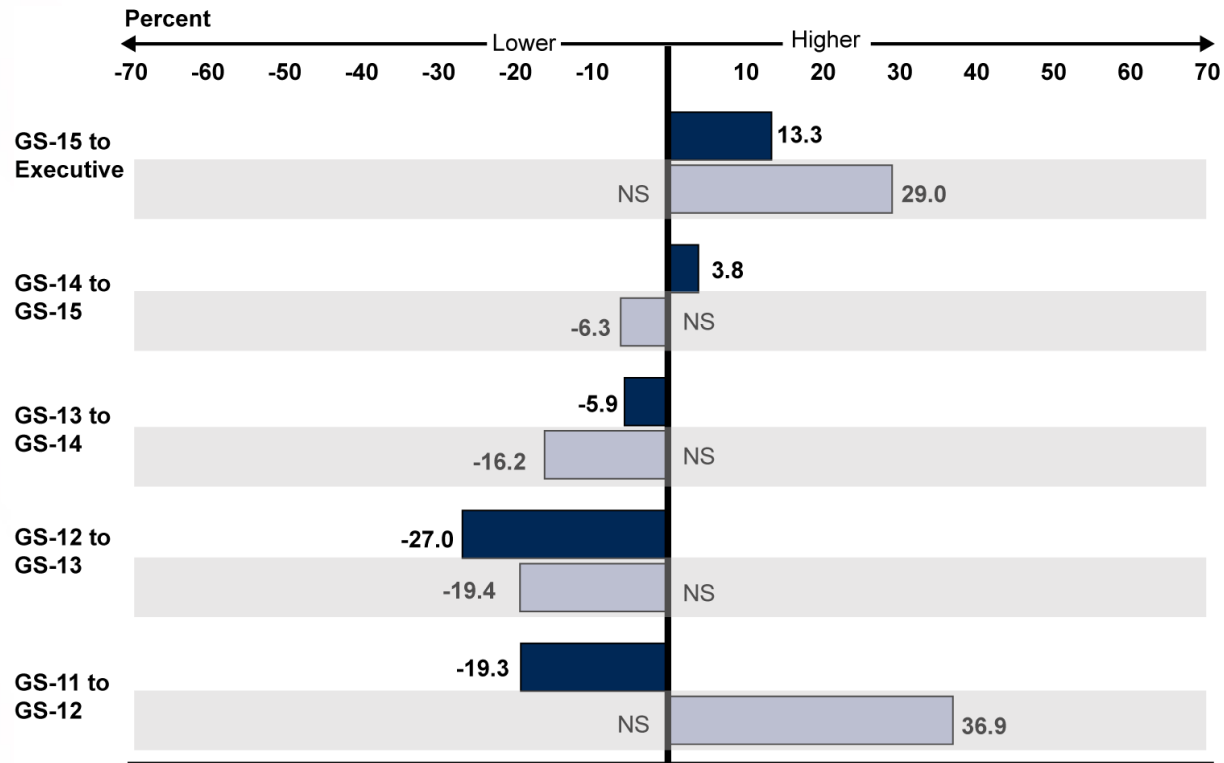


- Results not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level
- Relative difference in promotion rate among racial or ethnic minorities (descriptive)
- Relative difference in odds of promotion among racial or ethnic minorities (adjusted)

Legend: NS = Not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, S = Statistically significant result.

Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data | GAO-20-477

Civil Service Average Promotion Rates Varied for Women Compared with Men in FYs 2002-2017, but Differences in Outcomes Were Not Statistically Significant

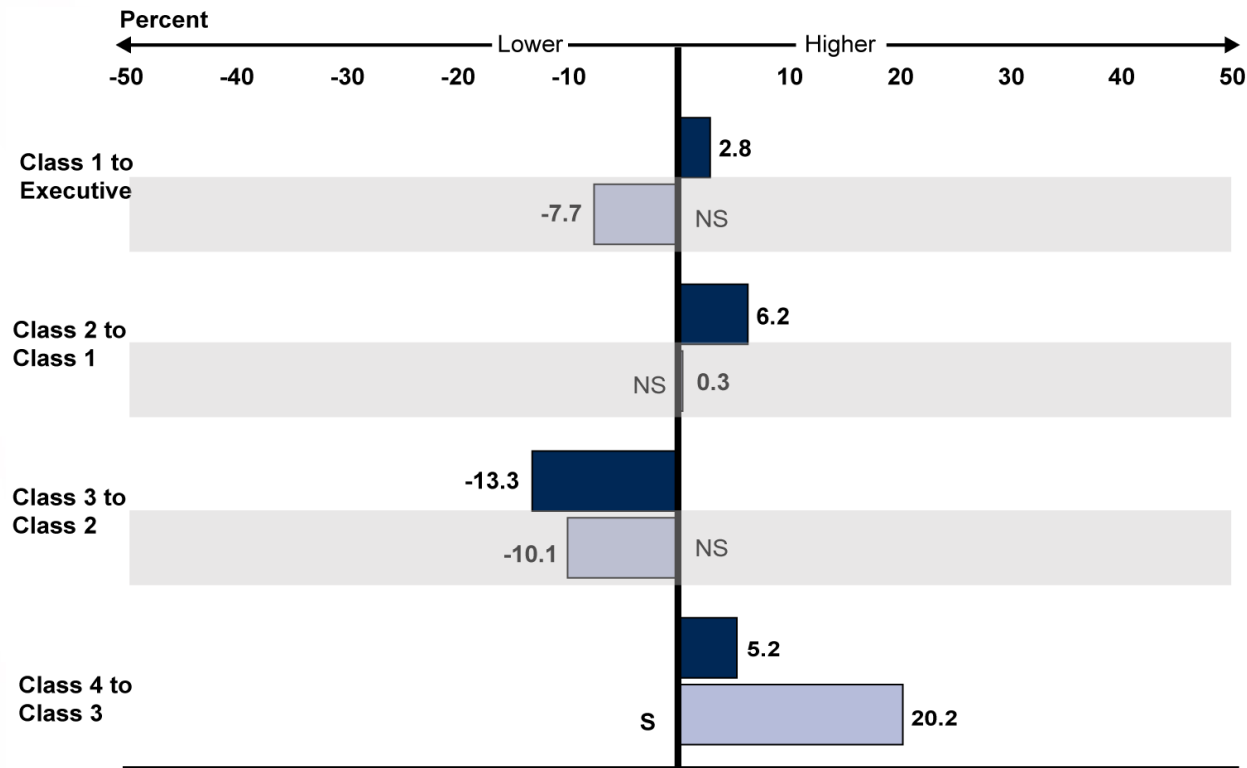


- Results not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level
- Relative difference in promotion rate among Women (descriptive)
- Relative difference in odds of promotion among Women (adjusted)

Legend: GS = General Schedule, NS = not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, S = Statistically significant result.

Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data. | GAO-20-477

Foreign Service Average Promotion Rates Were Generally Higher for Women Than Men in FYs 2002-2017, but Differences in Outcomes Were Generally Not Statistically Significant

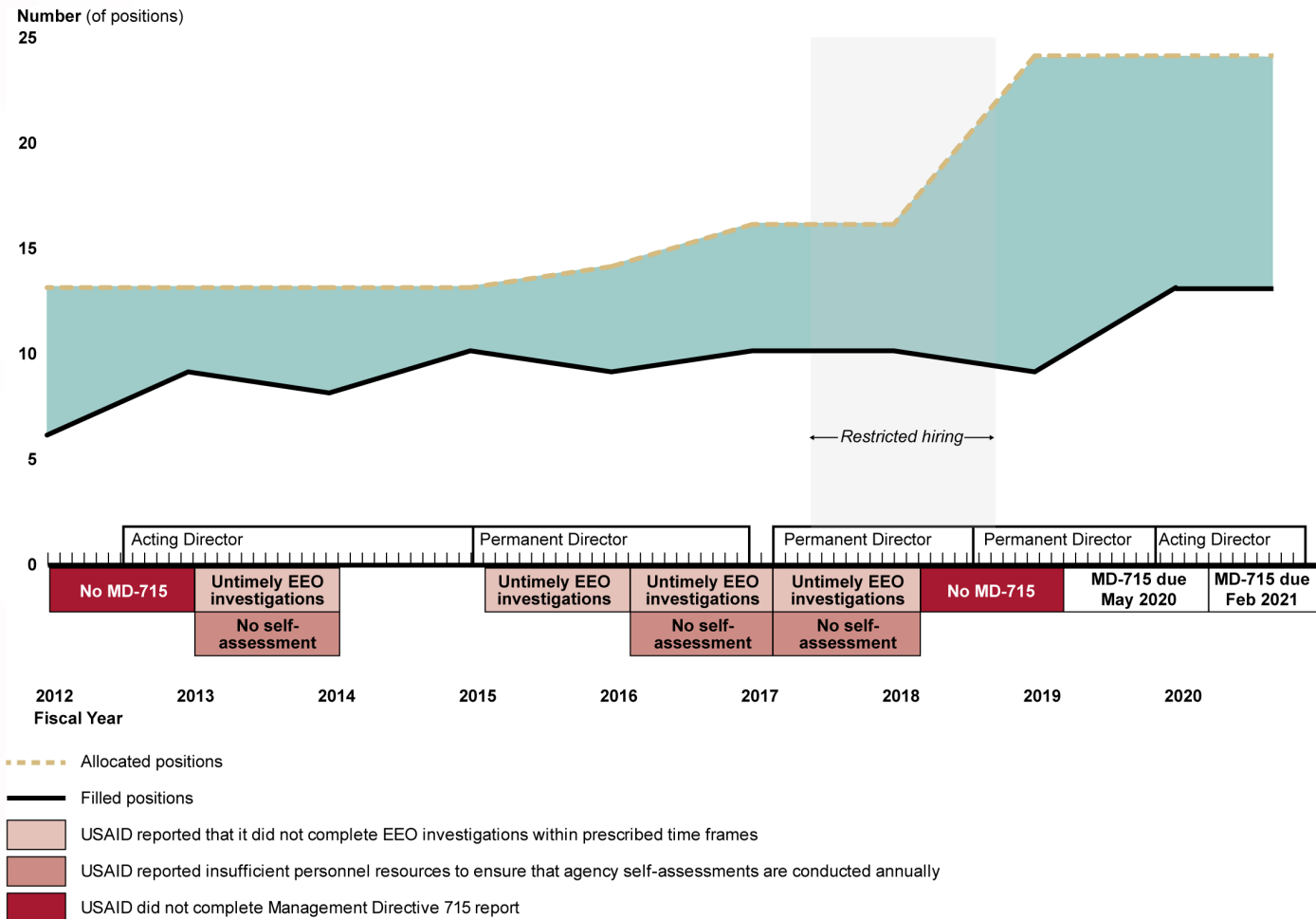


Results not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level
 Relative difference in promotion rate among Women (descriptive)
 Relative difference in odds of promotion among Women (adjusted)

Legend: NS = Not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, S = Statistically significant result.

Source: U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) data. | GAO-20-477

Staffing Gaps Have Prevented USAID from Responding Timely to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Complaints, Analyzing Its Workforce, and Reporting on Diversity Efforts



Source: GAO analysis of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) documents. | GAO-20-477

GAO Conclusions

- Although USAID has identified some diversity issues, continued underrepresentation and generally lower promotion outcomes suggest additional efforts are needed. Addressing these efforts requires an effective and efficient EEO program.
- USAID's Office of Civil Rights and Diversity (OCRD) has been unable to perform its key functions because of significant staffing gaps and turnover. Further, sustained attention from USAID's senior leadership would be helpful in providing sufficient staffing resources to ensure OCRD has the capacity to perform its required functions.

GAO Recommendations

1. Ensure that OCRD consistently responds to equal employment opportunity complaints in a timely manner.
2. Ensure that OCRD consistently analyzes USAID workforce demographic data for trends and potential barriers to equal employment opportunity.
3. Ensure that OCRD submits required MD-715 reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in a timely manner.
4. Demonstrate senior leadership attention to diversity by ensuring that OCRD has the capacity to perform required equal employment opportunity functions.

USAID concurred with all four recommendations.

Additional Workforce Analyses Included in Appendices to the GAO Report

Descriptive Analysis

- Executives
- Veterans
- Political appointees
- Applicants to USAID
- Newly hired USAID employees

Adjusted Analysis

- Attrition rates
- Average years in rank