

# WomenLift Health SIGNATURE LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

Launched in February 2020, **WomenLift Health's signature Leadership Journey** is a highly-targeted training program for diverse mid-career women leaders in health, working across countries, cultures, lived experiences, sectors, and disciplines.



**W**omenLift Health is focused on expanding the power and influence of talented women in global health and catalyzing systemic change to achieve gender equality in leadership. We work at three levels – for the individual, we invest in the leadership development of mid-career women in global public health, at the institutional level we build awareness, share learnings, and influence commitment for change by institutional leaders, and at the societal level we encourage ownership and action for gender-equal and diverse leadership by champions, and partners.



Our signature Leadership Journey is a 12-month learning and development experience focused on providing mid to senior career women working in health the safe space to explore their authentic leadership through vulnerability and reflection, an inclusive and diverse network which fosters a strong sense of belonging, tools and strategies for enhancing their voice, presence, and influence – all the while being supported by a powerful group of peers, mentors, and coaches. Initially launched in the **U.S., India, and East Africa (Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda)**, WomenLift Health's geographic footprint will rapidly expand over the next decade.

# THE LEADERSHIP JOURNEY IS NOT ABOUT “FIXING” WOMEN

We believe in the innate talent and capacity of women leaders. Our program is **focused on vertical development** which is designed to create the mindset shift needed to solve complex and unpredictable challenges. These may include cultivating the influence and presence to lead through significant strategic shifts in one's department or institution, or how to build relationships, and lead with agility in evolving work environments (e.g. going remote) or how to enhance the confidence, courage and resilience for leading change while experiencing global systemic shocks like a pandemic. Vertical development is particularly beneficial for **leaders rising** in seniority and leadership responsibilities. This approach builds clarity, enhances wisdom and insight, and helps women leaders gain new perspectives.

Our journey begins with women leaders exploring their identity and their purpose, moves them into building trusting, sustainable connections with diverse colleagues and community, and grounds them in an understanding of their influence and how to leverage it to capture collective energy to **inspire action** towards a more gender-equal and healthier world.



Our **human centered design** approach prioritizes the stories, reflections, and feedback of women leaders around the world and leads to locally driven contextualization with each iteration. Our Journey is delivered using evidence and research-based tools and frameworks, small group dialogue, and experiential learning including developing a self-directing leadership project to take a leader to the next level of thinking. Each journey is facilitated by content experts who are **steeped in the local context**. The comprehensive regional support network of peers, mentors, and coaches, and inclusion in a **global alumnae community** after the completion of the Leadership Journey is what makes our offering truly unique.

THE RELATIONSHIPS  
WOMEN BUILD WITH THEIR  
COHORT PEERS IS THE  
MOST PRECIOUS GIFT OF  
OUR JOURNEY.

## AS A RESULT OF THIS LEADERSHIP JOURNEY, PARTICIPANTS WILL BE EFFECTIVELY POSITIONED AND EQUIPPED TO:



Confidently rise as a strong purposeful leader, enhance their influence, and increase impact



Cultivate the next generation of authentic, inclusive, strategic, and impactful leaders



Leverage the collective power of champions and institutional partners to advance gender equality and better health



Build trusting relationships and collaborate with a diverse network of allies to dismantle barriers for women leaders within organizations.



Internalize that change will only come when those in positions of power expand & diversify the circle of leadership, and learn from those whom they wish to serve

# WOMENLIFT LEADERS VALUE THESE FOUR LEADERSHIP STYLES:



## AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

is discovered through a lifelong exploration of one's self and purpose while building on awareness of and trust in one's abilities. This exploration enhances the insight, energy, and resilience that is key to leading as the most true and impactful version of oneself.



## INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

encourages an intentional exploration of power and privilege to reveal unconscious biases or systemic prejudices. It involves providing a framework for effective decision making that amplifies the value of diverse lived experiences. It fosters trusting connections, an equitable organizational culture, collaborative visioning and leads to action with and for the community.



## IMPACTFUL LEADERSHIP

inspires gender equality and leads to better health through a crystalized understanding of the power of one's leadership and the critical importance of developing others for greater impact.



## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

is rooted in an understanding of one's influence and how to leverage it to capture collective energy and facilitate change within institutions and the global health community. Crucial to this is building an inclusive cultural dynamic that is based on trust and inspires action toward a better future.

“ This is a unique journey where the focus is on inner transformation as a leader, so that we can understand ourselves better and, in the process, drive systemic change. It has not only helped me assess strengths and areas for improvement in my work, but also to introspect on how to be an empathetic and effective leader, focusing on the ‘self’ as well as ‘others’. The program has enabled me to interact with women leaders from all across the health sector in India. Sharing this experience together has helped us understand our common struggles, celebrate our achievements, and build a sense of community and a stronger commitment to working for equitable health systems and better health outcomes. ”

— SAPNA KEDIA

Technical Specialist, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)  
2022 India Cohort Member

# OUR JOURNEY DESIGN FOCUSES ON EIGHT ESSENTIAL LEADER COMPETENCIES:

## 1. LEADER IDENTITY

Projects a clear sense of self, including awareness and monitoring of the components that drive a leader's intent, behaviors, and impact on others. These components include, but are not limited to values, beliefs, and traits; a sense of purpose, emotions, strengths, and gaps; and awareness of context, personal power, and privilege.

## 2. CONFIDENCE AND COURAGE

Demonstrates inner strength and reliance on one's personal capabilities. Puts forth willingness and ability to navigate tensions, promote constructive responses, and take meaningful and appropriate action in the midst of challenges, fear, and uncertainty.

## 3. RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Applies an inclusive and discerning approach to developing new and existing relationships. This includes establishing comfort with initiating new connections; securing a diverse network of allies and supporters to co-create ideas and vision; navigating opposition; and combining personal and social power to get things done.

## 4. DEVELOPING OTHERS

Actively works to build the capacity of others by providing guidance and support, and fostering a healthy team dynamic in a concerted effort to grow the pipeline of diverse leaders in health.

## 5. ECOSYSTEM MINDSET

Cultivates a broad vision, embraces transformational thinking and applies cultural intelligence in decision making. This includes using an expansive worldview, acknowledging structures of privilege and power that contribute to global colonization, and generating political will for systemic change. It also includes centering local partners in generating ideas, and amplifying their visibility, power, and ownership.

## 6. LEADER AGILITY

Envisions the big picture and leads change processes with discernment and versatility. This includes building agile systems and processes to respond quickly and effectively to unforeseen disruption; creating synchrony between individual and environmental change; and increasing learning and innovation through every challenge.



## 7. RESILIENCE

Maintains the energy and mindset to lead as the best version of one's self. This involves the ability to adapt and effectively respond to interpersonal challenges, systemic barriers, competing priorities, project setbacks, and unpredictable circumstances associated with leading in organizations.

## 8. LEADERSHIP PRESENCE

Recognized as a respected and trusted leader in the organization. Stays informed of one's own reputation by soliciting feedback from a variety of stakeholders. Engages with others in a sincere and authentic way, and in alignment with one's expressed vision and intent.



## LEADERSHIP JOURNEY ELEMENTS



### IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL LEARNING

Learning Touchpoints are facilitated in-person or virtual group sessions. Cohort members explore leadership frameworks, research & tools in highly interactive learning touchpoints and workshop-style sessions focused on dynamic practice. The touchpoints focus on personal & professional growth, current events in the global health sector, as well as their Leadership Projects. These sessions allow the cohort to share with and learn from each other.

A sample of topics include: Lead with Purpose; Ally & Amplify; Inspire Action; Leverage Your Power; and Lead Change.



### MENTORSHIP

Effective women leaders are championed by a network of strong supports. This aspect of the Leadership Journey allows participants to recognize and avail of the power of the mentor and mentee relationship.

WomenLift Health identifies senior-level leaders from different backgrounds, health sectors, and disciplines to serve as mentors to the cohort. Mentoring groups, comprised of several cohort members and one mentor, are organized based on complementary backgrounds and professional trajectory. Cohort members will be able to rely on their mentor to serve as a technical and career resource during the Journey.



### LIFT-OFF

The 2-day 'Leadership Lift- Off' event at the end of the Journey, either in-person or virtual, celebrates the cohort's growth as they 'lift off' to a new phase of their leadership. Cohort members will reflect on their leadership evolution through the course of the year and present their leadership projects to their peers as well as other global health audiences.



### VIRTUAL COACHING

Having a personal leadership coach is critical in helping to navigate change and adapting to new challenges on the path towards leadership roles. Cohort members are paired with an executive coach who works one-on-one with them to build on their strengths and address areas for growth. Leadership style assessments, including a "360-degree evaluation," will inform these conversations and enhance each participant's understanding of their own leadership skills. With this gift of feedback and support from their coach, participants can decide which leadership competencies to focus on, paving the road for them to be a more powerful and effective leader. The combination of mentors and coaches is powerful as women prepare for the next level of their careers, providing both professional connections and transformational leadership guidance.

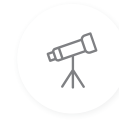


### LEADERSHIP PROJECT

The Leadership Project is an opportunity for each member to design and lead an effort that taps into their expertise, network, passion, and creativity.

Participants enter the Journey with a project idea and develop a Theory of Change, stakeholder analysis, and implementation plan with the guidance of their mentor, coach, and health experts. The implementation phase of the project begins in the latter half of the Journey. Finally, at the Leadership Lift-Off event, each cohort member presents a summary of their project's development and early outcomes.

Implementation of the project does not have to be fully complete by the end of the Journey and will likely continue beyond it.



### JOURNEY PLUS

Optional sessions that offer informal, but focused spaces for deeper exploration into special topics. The sessions often feature guest speakers such as senior global experts and Leadership Journey alumnae.





“We do not take a one-size-fits-all approach to our curriculum. We believe the unique stories of women leaders around the world breathe life into contextualized leadership frameworks. As such, we continue to iterate on the right fit design for each cultural context and reimagine leadership for a more equitable future.”

— **SHEREEN BHAN**

North America Region and Global Leadership Development Director

“The Leadership Journey has just been so transformative for me - I learned more about myself, my environment, and the influence and power that I could unlock. I was equipped with a support group of other women leaders who helped push me forward. I’m still on a journey, but I feel I have the tools, the skills, the attitude, and the authenticity to bring out my best self... I’m deploying those skills every day.”

— **FOLAKE OLAYINKA**

Immunization Team Lead at USAID  
2020 U.S. Cohort Alum

For more information on the **North America**, **India** or **East Africa Leadership Journeys**, go to:

- [North America](#)
- [India](#)
- [East Africa](#)

[womenlifthealth.org](https://womenlifthealth.org)



**WomenLift Health**