

# WomenLift Health LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

## WomenLift Health's Leadership Journey

launched in 2020 and is highly-targeted training program for diverse mid-career women leaders in health, working across countries, cultures, lived experiences, sectors, and disciplines. At WomenLift Health we take an expansive definition of the word health to recognize that sustainable improvements in health require coordinated action across interconnected fields that shape and enable health such as climate change, food systems, agriculture, water and sanitation, education, economic policy, gender equity, and technology.



**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 Leadership Journey is a 12-month learning and development experience focused on providing a 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. We now have hubs in: **East Africa, India, Nigeria, North America, Southern Africa.**



# 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 Fellow 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.


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 strong purposeful health leaders, enhance their influence, and increase impact while sustaining well-being and resilience

 Build trusting relationships and mobilize a diverse network of allies to innovate for health, dismantle barriers, and enhance the impact of women’s leadership

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

 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

 Leverage the collective power of champions and institutional partners to advance gender equality in leadership and health impact

# WOMENLIFT LEADERS VALUE THESE FOUR LEADERSHIP STYLES:



## AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

Authentic leadership is a lifelong journey of self and purpose, rooted in self-trust and lived values. It fuels the insight, resilience, and courage to lead with impact, integrity, and connection to others.



## INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Inclusive leadership surfaces bias, shares power, and amplifies diverse experiences. It fosters psychological safety, trust, and equity, creating cultures where all voices are valued. Inclusive leaders reflect often, challenge systemic barriers, and lead with and for the community.



## IMPACTFUL LEADERSHIP

Impactful leadership inspires gender equality and leads to better health through a clear understanding of the power of your leadership and the critical importance of developing others for greater impact.



## STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Strategic leadership is the ability to turn vision into action by drawing on diverse perspectives and leveraging influence to activate collective energy. It requires navigating complexity, making decisions amid fear and uncertainty, leading with humility, and building the trust and alignment needed for lasting change.

“The WomenLift Health Leadership Journey has been a transformative experience both professionally and personally. It gave me practical tools and the confidence to step up and engage impactfully, not just as a woman leader, but as a change agent. My leadership project has helped me become more innovative, authentic and solution oriented. It instilled in me a deep appreciation for collaboration in strengthening maternal and neonatal outcomes – an area I care deeply about.”

– **BETTY WARIARI**

Associate Director, Maternal Newborn and Child Health Clinton Health Access Initiative, East Africa 2024 Global Fellow

# 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 4. DEVELOPING OTHERS

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

## 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 health.

## 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. Inspires 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

Public Lift-Off: Cohort members reflect on their leadership evolution through the course of the year and present their Health Leadership Projects to their peers as well as other health audiences.

Private Lift-Off: The 2-day private event at the end of the Journey celebrates the cohort's growth as they 'lift off' to a new phase of their leadership.



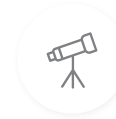
### VIRTUAL COACHING

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.



### HEALTH 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 Global Fellows.



“From a feeling of imposter syndrome despite several professional achievements to now gracefully accepting the efforts and the successes, this Journey has changed and broadened my perspective about leadership, empowering me to pay it forward to several other mid-career professionals especially women who are hesitant to forge ahead.”

– PRAGATI HEBBAR

DBT/Wellcome Trust India Alliance Fellow and Assistant Director Research at the Institute of Public Health Bengaluru, India 2023 Global Fellow

“The secret sauce of the Leadership Journey is that this program has had the audacity to invest time, money, and resources into women who actually can impact the world. It is really rare as a woman to have somebody, any organization or a person, offer this level of support, compassion, and resources without asking for anything in return. And that actually makes me just want to continue giving back to other women and bringing them up with me.”

– STEPHANIE GARBERN

Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine  
Brown University, North America 2024 Global Fellow



For more information on each of our hub's Leadership Journeys, go to:

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

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