

ABCs

for Managers who Lead



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT
& GOVERNANCE PROJECT** 

Inspired Leadership. Sound Management. Transparent Governance.

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a simple and user-friendly lexicon for busy managers who lead. It draws from the combined experience and knowledge of staff from Management Sciences for Health (MSH) who work in various public health programs and projects around the world. The staff who contributed to this booklet share an understanding that leadership and management are critical functions to assure that quality health service delivery produces intended outcomes.

Each letter of the alphabet featured in this publication includes a definition, a quote, questions for reflection, and an example of the verb in context.

This publication was produced through crowdsourcing, a process of getting inputs (ideas or funding), usually online, from a crowd of people, in this case our colleagues from far and wide. On the next page, we acknowledge those who contributed to producing this publication. We are grateful for their energy, creativity, and dedication to the mission of MSH, which is to save lives and improve health of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people by closing the gap between knowledge and action in public health.

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MSH, a nonprofit global health organization, has been working to save lives and improve health by strengthening health systems in more than 150 countries over the past 40 years. We work shoulder to shoulder with people in countries at every level of the health system. www.msh.org

ALIGN

“If the lion wants to eat mango, he must make friends with the birds.”

– African proverb



DEFINITION

To bring people together around a common goal or shared vision to ultimately improve health outcomes.



LEADING BY ALIGNING

The Healthy Communities and Municipalities II Project in Peru focused on the development of local leaders, men and women who aligned families and district/municipal officials around healthy lifestyles, using management tools to track progress and hold all actors accountable. As a result, the participating communities are now more optimistic about their futures: having healthy communities and families, and living a just and healthy life.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Who else wants to accomplish the same health goals or objectives?

How can I interest others in working with our team to achieve health outcomes?

How are my words aligned with my actions as a leader in public health?



BUDGET

*“The budget is not just a collection of numbers,
but an expression of our values and aspirations.”*

– Jacob Lew, US Secretary of the Treasury

DEFINITION

To plan how to prioritize and use resources based on an estimate of money and other inputs over a given period of time.



LEADING BY BUDGETING

If you don't know how much your service costs, how can you ask for money? Current and future managers of rehabilitation services in Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), identified all the elements that go into the delivery of their services, and then looked for savings by identifying costs that could be shared with others.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What human and financial resources do I need to consider?

Am I under/overspending our budget?

Have we budgeted for unanticipated costs?

Are there restrictions on how funds can be spent?

COMMUNICATE

*“Have you ever thought you failed to communicate what you intended?
Putting yourself on the receiver’s end is one way of putting things right.”*

– Lydia Mungherera, National Forum of People Living with HIV/AIDS, Uganda

DEFINITION

To share or exchange information,
knowledge, news, or ideas.



LEADING BY COMMUNICATING

Community health volunteer Solange Helene Rasoanirina has been spreading the word in her community in a remote part of Madagascar. She is one of many who have contributed to caregivers bringing their children for weigh-ins and seeking treatment for children who are sick with fever, acute respiratory infections, and diarrhea. She has taken the role of leader as communicator to heart—encouraging both men and women to take actions to improve the health of their children.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Am I clear and transparent in my communication?

Are my words consistent with my body language?

Am I listening as well as talking?



DECIDE

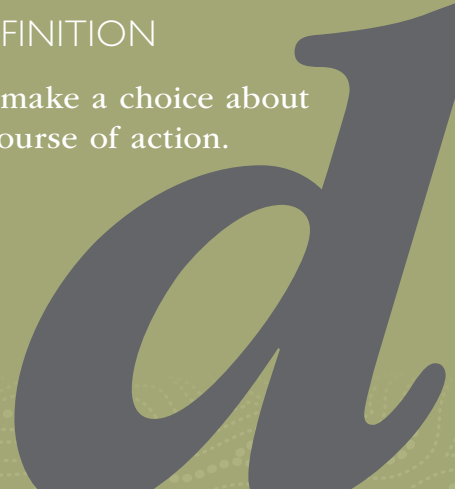
“You can’t make decisions based on fear and the possibility of what might happen.”

– Michelle Obama, US First Lady



DEFINITION

To make a choice about a course of action.



LEADING BY DECIDING

TB community mobilizers organized information sessions in Yei, Lainya and Morobo Counties in South Sudan. The sessions were organized in schools, prisons, churches, markets and community group meetings and provided education on the symptoms and spread of TB as well as its diagnosis and treatment. As a result, previously undiagnosed TB patients are now under treatment. There is a multiplier effect as people like seventeen-year-old Moses Aketch is now encouraging others 'who are coughing like me' to go for TB screening.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Which decisions can I make on my own and which need input from others?

Do I base my decisions on evidence? If so, how solid is the evidence? Can I distinguish data from opinions?

Do I avoid making a decision until it is too late, avoiding potentially uncomfortable conversations by making unilateral decisions that I should have discussed with others?



ENVISION

“Eagles we are not, but we can still fly. Our imagination becomes our wings. The magnificent eagle is still just an eagle but we can soar as high and as far as our aspirations take us.”

– Anonymous

DEFINITION

To imagine what will happen or what a situation can be like in the future.

e



LEADING BY ENVISIONING

Some 40 communities in the Huanuco and Ucayalli regions in Peru have taken on challenges that stemmed from being prime regions for coca cultivation and trafficking. These activities had eroded community cohesion and created fear and depression and a host of health problems. The communities enrolled in the Program for Moral Leadership and Community Management anchored in a vision for a better future, which is expressed as a “tree of dreams.” Through combining participating in community activism, assuming collective responsibility, and making transparent use of data, these communities found a way out of their predicament, with key health indicators in a steady upward trend.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What does a better future look like?

How will my vision address the problems that my people face?

What do we want to have (achieved) in the future that we don't have now?

FOCUS

“For want of a nail, the shoe was lost. For want of a shoe, the horse was lost. For want of a horse the rider was lost. For want of a rider the message was lost. For want of a message the battle was lost. For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.”

– Benjamin Franklin, author and politician



DEFINITION

To direct attention to what is most important.



LEADING BY FOCUSING

In the past, Dr. Djoro Joel Doffou, a pharmacist in Agnibilekrou in Cote d'Ivoire, and his colleagues always tried to address their challenges at once. Now they have focused their leadership efforts on increasing the retention rate of people on antiretroviral therapy (ART) as more than half of the patients had defaulted. Driven by a shared vision, using tools such as cohort analysis, they worked as a team on that one challenge. "Three months later the retention rate of people living with HIV receiving ART has reached 74%," said Dr. Doffou with pride.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What is most important to obtain the results I want?

What is distracting me now from what I most care about?

What do I need to let go of to stay focused?



GUIDE

“A manager is a guide. He takes a group of people and says, ‘With you I can make us a success; I can show you the way.’”

– Arsene Wenger, Manager of Arsenal Football Club



DEFINITION

To show or indicate the way.



LEADING BY GUIDING

Hailleslassie Kahilayu, a religious leader in Ethiopia, became a guiding light to other religious leaders who practiced in ways that jeopardized people's health. They had been forbidding people living with HIV from combining ART with use of holy water. "We argued a lot," Kahilayu said, but now the other religious leaders counsel members of their flock to continue their ART while using holy water.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What guidance would have been most useful to me as a new manager who leads?

What guidance do I give new or young staff?

What guidance might more senior staff require and how could it best be given?



HOLD ACCOUNTABLE

“To me, a leader is someone who holds her- or himself accountable for finding potential in people and processes.”

– Brene Brown, Professor of Social Work, University of Houston

DEFINITION

To ensure individuals and institutions are fulfilling their commitments to the people they are meant to serve and protect.



LEADING BY HOLDING ACCOUNTABLE ONESELF AND OTHERS

African women leaders are holding those in decision-making positions accountable for the poor state of health among women. “Some districts didn’t have specific budgets for reproductive health. In Parliament and in the ‘Mama Alive Initiative,’ this is one of our main goals,” said Ruth Nvumetta Kavuma, former Ugandan parliamentarian and Mama Alive Initiative Chairperson.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

To whom am I accountable?

What do I have to do to be fully accountable?

How can I hold my peers, supervisors, and supervisees accountable?

What are the consequences of delivering or not delivering on promises made?

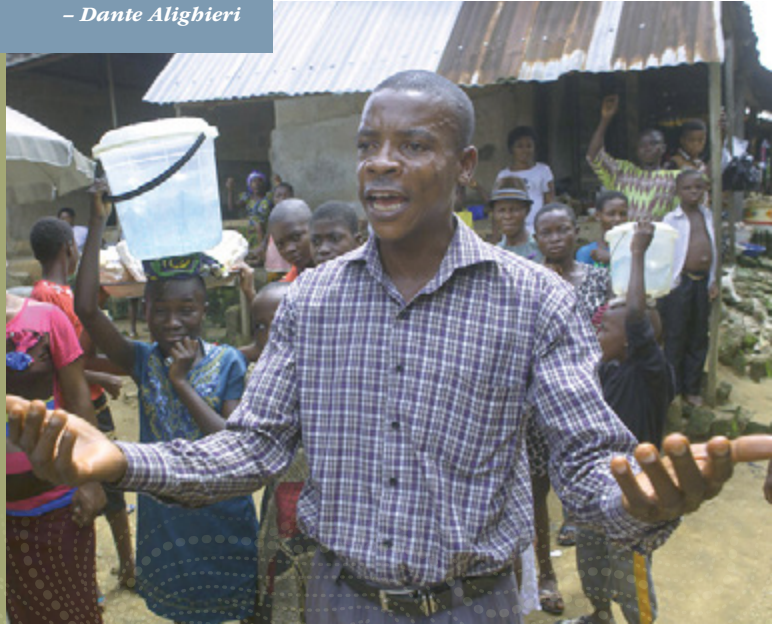
INSPIRE

"From the little spark may burst a mighty flame."

– Dante Alighieri

DEFINITION

To awaken feelings, to bring about hope, positive change, and impact.



LEADING BY INSPIRING

It was Dr. Noburu Iwamura who inspired a young aspiring public health physician, Ron O'Connor, more than 40 years ago to create an organization called Management Sciences for Health. "Dr. Iwamura was respectful of people," said Dr. O'Connor, "not like other doctors who tell you what to do. He engaged people. I could see that people were listening to him; he was more successful than the more traditional guys. I thought to myself, 'How can I do that? How can I be like him?'"



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How well am I inspiring others to give their very best?

What do I need to do to inspire my team when times are difficult?

Am I leading by example?

How do I stimulate passion in my people to achieve the results we want?

JUGGLE

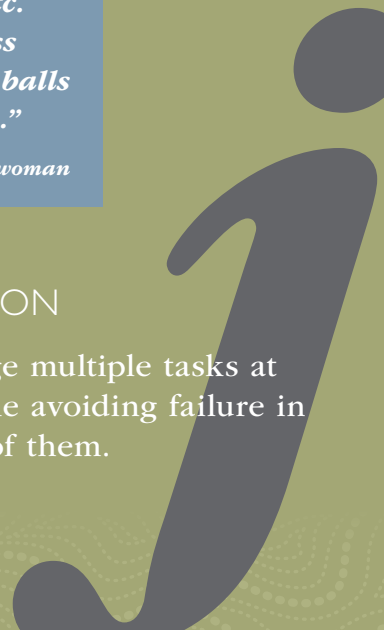
“As Indian women, we are always balancing work, life, home, etc. It’s important to know that while juggling rubber balls and glass balls, the former may bounce back when you miss, but the glass balls will crack if you let them fall. So prioritize, prioritize, prioritize.”

– Nita Ambani, Indian businesswoman



DEFINITION

To manage multiple tasks at once while avoiding failure in any one of them.



LEADING BY JUGGLING

Women leaders often express frustration in balancing their personal and professional lives, making sacrifices all the time. “With work, family, and children, we are really busy,” says Rwandan Parliamentarian Therese Bishagaraw. “It is a challenge, but it is a challenge worth all the work [of leading to improve the lives of women].”



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Is it time for me to ask for help?

What could I delegate to reduce how much I have to juggle?

Is my juggling of tasks the result of not setting priorities?

Am I adding to my juggling load by responding to other people's priorities? Are these priorities negotiable?

KINDLE

“The true aim of everyone who aspires to be a teacher should be not to impart his own opinions, but to kindle minds.”

– Frederick William Robertson, Anglican clergyman

DEFINITION

To energize, inspire, and excite.

K



LEADING BY KINDLING

By creating the new professional track that led to a Certificate in Pharmacy, the Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU) kindled the ambitions of people like Victoria Mwanza from Swaziland, who, at the age of 42, received her certificate from SANU's Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr. Kent Bower. "The program has enabled me to better understand my scope of work and the consequences of my actions and inactions with a patient, so now I am a much better pharmacy assistant," Mwanza said. "I am very proud of completing my training and gaining my certificate. I will continue to study because there is no stopping me now!"



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I kindle passion and excitement among my followers for the tasks at hand?

How do I awaken a sense of possibility in others?

LISTEN

“Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you’d have preferred to talk.”

– Doug Larson, American columnist and editor



DEFINITION

To give attention with one's whole self.

LEADING BY LISTENING

It was thanks to patient listening that Nkathalo Wellness team leader Oriah was able to address the deep fears of stigma that kept one local leader from seeking treatment for tuberculosis (TB). Nkathalo Wellness is a South African non-governmental organization that provides communities with information on TB and HIV prevention and treatment. Influencing a local leader always has a ripple effect, and Oriah's listening paid off: this one local leader has not only accepted treatment for himself but also has invited Nkathalo Wellness staff to conduct information sessions during community gatherings at his home, encouraging others to follow in his footsteps.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What distracts me from listening?

Am I really listening with my body and my mind?

MONITOR

“One of the great mistakes is to judge policies and programs by their intentions rather than their results.”

– Milton Friedman, Nobel Prize-winning economist

DEFINITION

To provide implementers and stakeholders with indications of progress toward the achievement of health results.



LEADING BY MONITORING

Recognizing that without adequate stocks of antimalarial medicine, the disease could never be conquered, the National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) in Angola instituted a number of measures, such as supportive supervision of warehouse staff and strategic monitoring tools such as End Use Verification and the Procurement Plan and Monitoring Report to inform decision-making. As a result of this monitoring, the NMCP was able to coordinate stock exchanges between provinces, reducing the number of patients seeking treatment and finding no medicine.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What are the indicators which tell us that we are progressing toward our intended results and how do we measure these indicators?

Where are the barriers to progress?

What are the latest and available technologies available to document and share results?

NURTURE

“I believe that if you’ve been successful in what you wanted to do in your life, then it’s your obligation to spend a good portion of your time sending the elevator back down.”

– Jack Lemmon, US actor and musician



DEFINITION

To create conditions for growth and development.



LEADING BY NURTURING

The Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE) helps to nurture the younger generation of women leaders. FAWE founding member Theresa Bishagara recounts how there is a women's caucus in Rwanda, where girls in higher education meet with accomplished women who help them improve their leadership capacity. The girls may be learning academics in school, but they also need to acquire leadership skills. Women leaders are among the best teachers for girls.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I support and encourage emerging leaders?

How do I nurture myself so I can lead?



ORGANIZE

“Organization isn’t about perfection; it’s about efficiency, reducing stress and clutter, saving time and money, and improving your overall quality of life.”

– Christina Scalise, US author and professional organizer



DEFINITION

To arrange, prioritize, and allocate resources of the right quality, at the right time, in the right quantities, and at the right place to accomplish work most effectively and efficiently.

LEADING BY ORGANIZING

TB community mobilizers organized information sessions in Yei, Lainya, and Morobo Counties in South Sudan. The sessions were organized in schools, prisons, churches, markets, and community group meetings and provided education on the symptoms and spread of TB as well as its diagnosis and treatment. As a result, previously undiagnosed TB patients are now under treatment. There is a multiplier effect as people like 17-year-old Moses Aketch encourage others “who are coughing like me” to go for TB screening.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do I organize myself to achieve our goals?

How do I organize myself to balance competing priorities?

How can we better organize our tasks and assignments to get the results we want?

Which areas of our work and work space ought to be better organized in order to avoid distractions or disruptions?

PLAN

“Look for a dark goat first in the daytime because you may not find it at night.”

– African Proverb

DEFINITION

To set direction, strategies, tasks, and schedules to accomplish specific goals.



LEADING BY PLANNING

In Afghanistan, infection control committees planned and implemented a TB infection control strategy to fight the spread of TB in health facilities. The team's planning led to increases in TB infection control measures, including separating patients, prioritizing those who were symptomatic (coughing), collecting sputum outdoors, and ensuring good ventilation at health facilities across the country.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How is what we do linked to achieving higher-level goals and objectives?

How am I considering stakeholder interest and needs in the planning process?

What evidence do I have that the activities we planned will actually produce the results that we want?

QUESTION

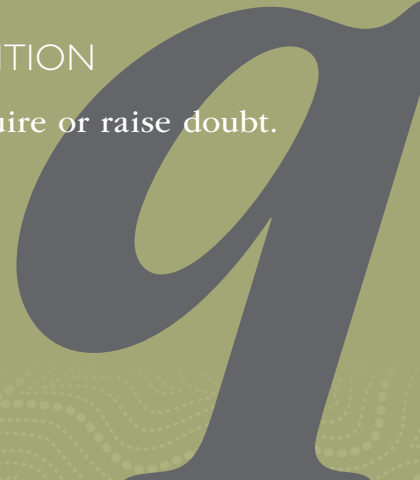
“The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”

– Albert Einstein, Nobel Prize-winning theoretical physicist



DEFINITION

To inquire or raise doubt.



LEADING BY QUESTIONING

Hafizullah Msanim, director of the Hazar Sumuch Basic Health Center in Takhar Province in northern Afghanistan, wondered why no women had come to the clinic for delivery over the last five years, even though there was a trained midwife on his staff. With his health center team, Hafizullah started asking about it. They found the answer in the community; after inviting members of the community to see the clinic and appeasing their fears about what happened at the facility, the number of clinic deliveries increased to five a month within six months.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

How do I know this to be true?

What assumptions should we question?

What is the evidence for statements we make about our results? Are they opinions or facts?

*Why did something not work? Why did that happen?
And why was that the case?*

Why haven't we made more progress? What's blocking us?



RESPECT

*“He who wants a rose
must respect the thorn.”*

– Persian proverb

DEFINITION

To show consideration and
treat courteously.



LEADING BY RESPECTING

It was the respect of a peer educator that saved the lives of Jemila Hussein and her children. Thanks to the good work of one affiliate of the National Organization of Peer Educators (NOPE) in Kenya, Hussein was able to recover from many blows in her life: living with HIV and losing her husband, and with that her income. The Kibera Community Self-Help Program had been able to develop its staff capacity to help women like Hussein, supporting her in setting up a vegetable business that provided healthy food and earned income. Hussein now helps HIV-infected mothers to prevent transmission of the virus to their children and educate others to respect themselves and those living with HIV.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How can I be inclusive and show respect for all?

How do I react when I see disrespectful behavior in my organization?

What are ways in which I gain (or lose) respect from others?

SCAN

“A man’s feet must be planted in his country, but his eyes should survey the world.”

– George Santayana, Spanish philosopher



DEFINITION

To look for a wide variety of relevant information in multiple places and from multiple sources to better understand the current situation, what created it, or what keeps it unchanged.

LEADING BY SCANNING

While scanning her defaulted patients file on her computer, Ethiopian pharmacist Bethlehem Nega discovered that Solomon D. had not come to the Bole Health Center to refill his ART prescription. Solomon was one of some 40 patients identified by the Electronic Dispensing Tool. These patients now receive a phone call to remind them to refill their prescriptions. Before the use of this tool, used in some 900 sites, there was no information for evidence-based decision-making. As Health Center Chief Pharmacist Workye Molla notes, “We could not follow the patients, their appointments, and regimens. We did not know the amount of drugs that were in our inventory at dispensing units. We didn’t even know how many patients we served each day.”

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What are clients’ and stakeholders’ interests, needs, and priorities?

What are the trends, opportunities, and risks that affect our organization?

What are the staff’s capacities, values, and constraints?

What challenges do patients and staff face?



TEAM-UP

“A thumb working on its own is useless. It has to work collectively with the other fingers to get strength and be able to achieve anything.”

– African proverb

DEFINITION

To engage in group activities to resolve a situation.



LEADING BY TEAMING-UP

Hospitals in Western Uganda did not have a good track record for safe deliveries, reflecting Uganda's high maternal mortality rate of 438 deaths per 100,000 live births. That was bad news for Rachael Kabugho when her delivery wasn't progressing. She was lucky that the staff recognized the problem and referred her to Kagando Hospital where a well-trained team brought the delivery to a happy ending for Kabugho and her new daughter, Bira. Thanks to the leadership and good teamwork of nurses to address challenges, Kagando Hospital has been steadily improving its maternity services and patient satisfaction.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Are we working as a team? If not, why not?

What holds us together as a team?

How can we better share our mission, vision, values, and goals?

How do our skills complement each other to support our goals?

UTILIZE

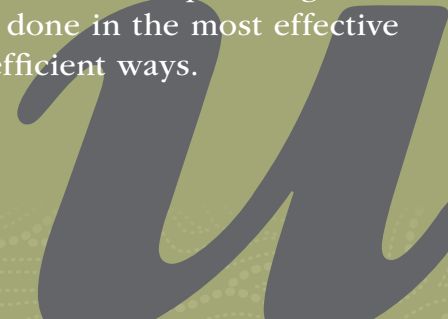
“Success is the maximum utilization of the ability that you have.”

– Zig Zigler, motivational speaker and author



DEFINITION

To maximize resources, apply skills learned, or make best use of one or more inputs to get work done in the most effective and efficient ways.



LEADING BY UTILIZING RESOURCES WELL

It was because of the knowledge of skilled birth attendant Judith Kambuya in the Luiza Tutante Health Center in Kasai Oriental province in the DRC that one of Marie Miambokila Mumba's twins survived birth. Kambuya was able to apply the Helping Babies Breathe technique by quickly assessing and resuscitating the second baby in the first "golden minute" after birth. Prior to Kambuya's training, the Luiza Health Center had struggled with a high infant mortality rate. In the first nine months of 2014, 22 babies were saved using this technique.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do we know whether we are effectively utilizing our human and financial resources?

What resources am I not utilizing or maximizing?



VISUALIZE

“The beginning is a bud, the end a coconut.”

– Swahili proverb from Zanzibar

DEFINITION

To make visible, concrete;
to form a mental image of a
desired end state.



LEADING BY VISUALIZING

The Ugandan Ministry of Health has adopted the Supervision, Performance, Assessment, and Recognition Strategy (SPARS) nationwide. SPARS enables staff at the district level to produce reports that allow medicines management supervisors and district health officers to more easily visualize areas of poor performance, and facility staff to show progress over time and compare themselves to other facilities in the district.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What do abstract ideas such as quality, ownership, team spirit, and sustainability look like?

Would we recognize such ideas if right in front of us?

Would others see the same thing as we do?

WALK AROUND

“Let us see then tell; hearing is not seeing.”

– Swahili proverb from Zanzibar



DEFINITION

To observe, listen, and learn in the work environment.



LEADING BY WALKING AROUND

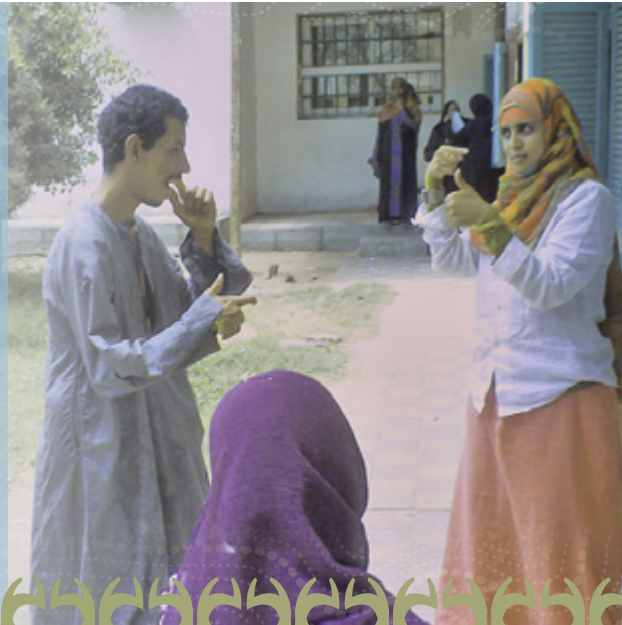
David Kolang is one of many young scouts, as the community mobilizers for TB screening are called in South Sudan. Through the dedication and “walking around” of some 240 scouts in Yei, Lainya, and Morobo counties, 11,000 people learned about TB, 237 were referred for diagnosis, and 19 were confirmed to have TB. This success prevented additional TB infections and encouraged those with persistent coughs to go for TB screening.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Do I know what people are doing?

Do people know that I care?

Do I use walking around as a way to learn what my staff are doing, how they are feeling, and what they need from me?



EXPRESSING

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”

– William Arthur Ward, US writer

DEFINITION

To show, manifest, or reveal emotions or reactions, either to one's self or others.



LEADING BY EXPRESSING

Harriet Kiden from the town of Mundri West in South Sudan has learned to express herself convincingly about family planning. “Before [2011] we didn’t talk much about the spacing of births but now [after receiving training] I talk about it a lot. Harriet has since counseled several hundred women on family planning.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Am I expressing my gratitude when I see something good rather than only focusing on what is wrong?

How do I express myself?

What are the consequences of doing or not doing so for the people I work with or care for?

YIELD RESULTS

“The wasp says that several regular trips to a mud pit enable it to build a house.”

– Ewe proverb



DEFINITION

To produce a favorable or desired outcome.

LEADING BY YIELDING RESULTS

Because of a systematic process of maintaining health records and tracking stocks, medication usage, and inventory controls at the Kiloleli Dispensary in the Mwanza Region of Tanzania, nurse Cecilia Lunda can now be confident that when parents come with a feverish child, she will have the necessary supplies to diagnose and care for them. Word has spread and Lunda has seen a 400-percent increase in people coming to the dispensary.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What are the results we want to see?

How do we know when our actions are yielding results?

How do we find out what is not yielding results so we can improve?

How can we be more productive?

How can we build on lessons learned?



ZOOM (IN OR OUT)

“If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden.”

– Frances Burnett, English-US author

DEFINITION

To examine closely or from a distance while maintaining focus.



LEADING BY ZOOMING IN AND OUT

You need to know about the big picture, get the data about what is in place, and do surveys if you don't have that information. You look at the emerging picture from a distance, examine the trends, what is needed where, what needs attention first, and then you zoom in to ground level to develop the strategies and set priorities. This is how the Afghan Government put together its Basic Package of Health Services in 2003.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

When I listen to opposing views, to what extent am I able to see each perspective rather than judging one as right and the other as wrong?

What would this (solution, decision, action) look like at the community/ground level? What would this look like from the central level?

How can I integrate the perspectives at different levels to find common ground?

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