



Draft Concept Document

Leadership Development Process – Abbreviated Version

Written to be discussed with the Liberian Ministry of Health

Jørn Lemvik, September 2021

Leadership and Leadership Training

It is a fact, well known to everyone, that good leadership makes a difference in any workplace. Still few academic institutions training professionals have provided leadership training in their curriculum even though they know that many of their students will take on leadership positions when they move into their professional careers.

This short concept document presents a model for leadership development for health personnel in Liberia. In a workshop organized between the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Mercy Ships (MS) in May 2021, lack of good leadership competence was lifted as one of the most important needs for the health system in Liberia.

Leadership is a profession of its own, and it goes without saying that putting good professionals in leadership positions without giving them leadership training presents a challenge to the leaders, to the institution in question, to the results, and to the system.

What you will find in this document

This concept document presents a 3-day leadership course, a course to be seen as an “appetizer” in the sense that it presents some important aspects of leadership, as well as methods for how to work on leadership development. The document also provide a presentation of a 2-year leadership development process.

- Two years because the change in leadership behavior does not develop after a short training session. Leadership change happens at work, in between the training sessions. It is therefore needed to organize the training as a process over time, - and it is needed that the participants will be followed up – in their institution – between the training sessions.
- Leader teams, because if the goal is to have better leadership in these institutions, training only one leader will make it almost impossible to implement new knowledge and skills. This development process aims at giving the individual leader and the leadership team new knowledge and new tools – and it aims for the leadership group to develop and implement a leadership culture where the leaders support each other to achieve the common goal: serving the people with excellent quality of health services

Leadership implies challenges. Every person holding power may use it or misuse it. These challenges of leadership will also be covered in this training.

Target group

As has already been mentioned above, this leadership development is for leadership groups/teams. In addition to working on leadership development, the facilitator(s) will also visit the institutions represented in the training and explain the process to all the staff, so that they will understand why the leaders participate in the training, and what results to expect from this development process.

Three-day course

The three-day leadership course is aiming at giving the participants a general introduction to leadership – including management and organizational functioning. The leadership platform of the Liberian MoH will be presented and at the same time, the 2-year leadership training process will be laid out. The leadership process is presented in order that the participants will know what entering a 2-year process will entail.

Some of the methods and tools coming up in the leadership development training will be presented/used in the 3-day training course so that the participants may get the feel of how it will be to work with these leadership tools and methods. The knowledge and experience of the participants will also be tapped into as far as time allows in such a short training course. Important aspects of leadership and leadership behavior will be presented – some of which are listed in the Attachment to this document.

Two-year process

The 2-year leadership development process is aiming at change in leadership behavior with the goal to bring about “Healthy leadership in Healthy hospitals”, and thereby better the results for the institutions where the leaders are working. Therefore, the leadership group of the institution will all participate.

Main components

This process will have four main components:

1. Assessment

Each institution entering this leadership development process will undergo an assessment. This is done for the facilitator(s) to get an understating of the actual situation in the institution, and for the leaders to get a feel of the challenges they are facing.

2. Training weeks (3 – 4 per year)

Here all the participants will meet with the facilitator(s) for

- a. Theoretical input on leadership, management, organizational functioning etc.
- b. Case studies and discussions on how to develop a good leadership culture within their institutions.

- c. Planning for what to implement in the upcoming working period, goals, and activities. Here there will be two plans, - one for the leadership group and one for the individual leader.
- 3. Working periods in own institution – normally of 8-12 weeks duration – where the participants will be challenged to
 - a. Implementing the planned activities.
 - b. Discuss within the leadership group how the plans are functioning and if there is a need to adjust the plans (the plan is never the goal, it is but a tool to improve the quality of the work)
 - c. Develop a report to be presented in the next training week – as a leadership group and as individual leaders.
- 4. Mentoring – follow-up of the participants.
 - a. In every working period, the leadership group and the individual will be followed up by one of the facilitators. Here challenges may be discussed, the participants (leadership group and individual) will have a possibility to discuss matters arising and receive advice and support for the work they are doing.
- 5. Optional (may be part of the leadership development process)
 - a. The leadership development will be linked up to a University where it is possible to do relevant leadership courses and get academic credit for the theoretical work done. This part is not developed in the present concept note, it will have to be discussed and agreed with an recognized institution offering leadership courses.

Precondition

This leadership development process starts out with a question of clarification:

- Who is there for who?

The idea is that the participants will discuss and agree on this question. Is the local population there for the hospital, or is the hospital there for the people living in the area? Is the staff there for the leader, or is the leader there for the staff (and the people)?

Unless it is agreed that every leader at every level is there to serve the people and make sure their staff is motivated, equipped and able to do the actual work needed, there is no need for running this leadership development process.

The leadership platform underlines the importance of servant leadership in the Liberian Health System.

Value base

The participants will, as part of the process, develop and agree on a value base for their work within their own institution. The value base presented here is set by the main facilitator to secure the best possible outcome. All, participants and facilitators, are expected to:

- Be honest – what is being said should be truthful.
- Be respectful – all people are having the same inherited value and should be treated with respect.
- Talk to other participants and facilitators instead of talking about them. Agree to solve potential conflicts that may arise during the development process.

Content – see Attachment

The following list will indicate areas to cover in leadership development. The list may be expanded based upon the input from the Ministry of Health or from the participants. The attached list is presented alphabetically. Here are some main areas:

- Present the 5 Abilities tool
- Present my understanding of organizations and how they function
- Present various tools (Ground rules, zone of comfort, “I make up this story”, important and urgent challenge, ...)
- Budget and accounting
- Time and time management
- Communication
- Strategic planning
- Team work
- The challenges of holding power
- Conflict and conflict resolution
- ...

Working methods

The following methods will be used in the development process:

- Case studies
- Feed-back, individually and to groups
- Group work
- Lecturing
- Mentoring
- Presentations
- Role play

Competent people will be presenting issues linked to their areas of competence (I will not be the only presenter)

Leadership system and culture

This leadership development process is planned to be participatory. Within the framework given in the “pre-conditions” part of this document, and the Health Work Leadership Platform the leadership group

from an institution will have the opportunity to develop their way of doing leadership, - and agree on what kind of leadership culture they want to implement in the institution where they work. The facilitator will of course walk alongside the leaders, comment, ask questions etc. But the leadership system developed will not be the facilitator's leadership system – the ownership to how leadership should be done locally will be owned by the leaders themselves.

Co-workers who are not directly part of the leadership development process

To a large degree, this process is focusing the leadership group participating in the leadership training. There are of course other co-workers in the institution who are not participating in the training process. It is of utmost importance that the rest of the hospital staff are informed on the process, how it works, and how the leadership system/culture is being developed. This system and culture will affect their everyday work, and therefore the facilitator will make sure that relevant information is shared with the staff – and that there is a channel for them to comment upon what is going on,

Certificate

All participants will receive a certificate after the process is ended. Here the topics covered will be listed, and the certificate will be signed by the main facilitator and a high-ranking person in the Ministry of Health.

Optionally there may also be an agreement established between the MoH and a University (local or external) in order that lectures and tests may be included in the process, - and this may give the university recognized academic credit.

Facilitators

This Concept note is presented by Mr. Jørn Lemvik, working as a strategic advisor and leadership development facilitator with Mercy Ships.

He organizes and runs the 3-day course.

To run the leadership development process, however, there is a need for a small team of facilitators (3-4 people). These people will be found locally and internationally. Such a group will make mentoring and follow up visits easier, and will not be dependant upon a foreigners travel schedules. The facilitator group should, as much as possible, represented different age groups, different sexes, and somewhat different academical backgrounds.

Training of trainers

It is advisable to select 3-5 persons who take part in the 3-day course and 2-year process with the aim of becoming competent in running training and development processes on their own. These people should be very interested in leadership work, and they will receive extra training. The group will be challenged to take part in the teaching weeks, and they will be mentored separately as the work is progressing. They may also be challenged to follow up on the work done in-between training weeks, and they will be given a certificate showing the training they have undergone signed by the main facilitator and a person from the MoH.

If an agreement is signed with a university the participants in the Training of trainers group will also be given the possibility to take academic leadership courses and earn academic credit from these courses.