

Conversation with Dr. Norah Obudho

In this People First Talk, we learned about how WomenLift Health is expanding the power and influence of talented women in global health. Watch the talk [here](#).

Key ideas

- **Women are missing at the table in decisions about healthcare.** Data shows that 70% of the health workforce are women, but only 25% are getting into senior leadership positions. WomenLift Health tackles this challenge at the individual, institutional & societal levels.
- At the individual level, **WomenLift Health enables mid-career female healthcare leaders** through a year-long leadership journey that focuses on the pillars of authentic, inclusive, strategic and impactful leadership, with access to formal learning programs, peer networks, coaching & mentorship, and leadership projects.
 - One of the most powerful aspects of the journey is that it provides these leaders with **access to a safe space** to convene with others who face similar challenges.
 - The **opportunity for 360 feedback** is another key component in that it provides women, often for the first time, with an honest assessment of how others see them.
 - There is also a focus on inclusive leadership which starts with an understanding of systemic biases as well as a **call to bring a diversity of voices to the table**. The program also creates small group spaces with a coach where these women leaders **practice how to have hard conversations about inclusion** in their organizations.
 - Women are also supported to step up from their daily tasks and grow their capacity to **be more strategic in influencing stakeholders and building allies**.
- There is also a focus on interventions at the institutional level.
 - As part of the year-long journey, **women take on leadership projects** that often contribute to institutional-level change which helps pay the investment forward.
 - There is also a focus on **engaging male senior leaders in organizations to better understand why it's important to invest in women's leadership**. Oftentimes, male leaders are simply unaware of the value and what the needs truly are.
 - **There is also a focus policy change that lifts both women & men**, for example, inviting men as allies to build balanced teams or instituting paternity leave. To influence the wider system, lessons are further shared via articles, conferences etc.



Dr. Norah Obudho

East Africa Director, WomenLift Health

“Women have for a long time not been brought to the space where we can impact decision-making. If we have our women as leaders, as providers of care, as consumers of care - and take care of that whole chain - then better health will follow.”

— Dr. Norah Obudho