

CONTRIBUTION OF LEADERS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT TO ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH OF FAMILY HEALTH INTERNATIONAL (FHI 360)

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Abstract

This article examines the contribution of leaders' personal development to the organizational growth of Family Health International (FHI 360). The study focuses on better understanding how preparing effective leaders influences organizational growth of NGOs. Analysis reveals that existing programs have observable effects on executive skills, team engagement, and organizational alignment within FHI 360. Overall, the leadership development system at FHI 360 highlights a relevant system that is appreciated by leaders but is still fragmented, insufficiently structured or institutionalized, and unevenly deployed. Respondents unanimously agree that organizational growth is driven by employee motivation, engagement, and satisfaction. The results of this study show the importance of implementing a leadership development system and plan within FHI 360 to enable leaders to influence employee engagement and satisfaction, which in turn will positively affect FHI 360's organizational growth. The article is intended as an invitation to senior executives at FHI 360 and other international, national, and local NGOs to move from a set of scattered initiatives to an integrated, equitable, funded, and measurable system of intentional leadership development, a true pillar of governance and organizational performance.

Keywords: *Organizational growth, personal development, employee engagement and satisfaction, leaders*

INTRODUCTION

Effective leadership is essential for aligning individual and organizational goals, fostering innovation, and building resilience in the face of challenges. Inspiring and motivating leadership enables teams to reach their full potential, which is crucial for the long-term success of organizations (Fatima & Mohammed, 2015).

Employee personal and professional development policies and practices are closely linked to effective leadership and organizational growth. Well-designed leadership development programs improve leaders' skills, confidence, and ability to lead effectively (De Oliveira, 2025). These practices foster a culture of accountability and continuous learning, which directly contributes to employee performance and organizational growth (Boguslavsky et al, 2019).

In the context of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the study of personal development and organizational growth is particularly relevant. Family Health International (FHI 360), as an international NGO, relies heavily on leaders who can manage complex programs and mobilize resources to achieve their development goals (Ebogo, 2024). Leadership development initiatives within FHI 360 have shown positive trends in terms

of program quality and management, underscoring the importance of strong and effective leadership.

This article answers the question, "How does the personal development of leaders contribute to the organizational growth of FHI 360?" Thematic analysis is used to present and discuss primary data from semi-structured individual interviews with senior FHI 360 executives and HR managers, and document analysis facilitates the examination of current personal development policies and practices at FHI 360.

The article is structured around five points, as are the introduction and conclusion. The first point presents the problems of organizational growth in NGOs, the second addresses the context of the study and the literature review in the field, the third explains the methodological approach followed, the fourth presents and analyzes the data collected, and the fifth outlines the discussion and perspectives. Thematic analysis, content analysis, and documentary techniques were used in data collection and writing the article.

I.1. PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH IN NGOs

International NGOs, such as Family Health International (FHI 360), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Medecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and Greenpeace,

often have a global reach and considerable resources. They must master strategic management, including planning, coordination, and communication, in order to adapt to the different economic, political, and cultural contexts of the countries where they operate (Couprie, 2012). Their legitimacy is based on the quality of the projects they carry out, the expertise they have acquired in the field, and their ability to mobilize donors and communities around their actions. It is therefore imperative that NGOs develop specific skills and adopt strategic positions adapted to local and international contexts (Britton, 2005; Fouilhoux, 2004).

National NGOs, for their part, play a complementary role by being closer to local realities. They need to develop skills in project management, capacity building, and organizational learning to maximize their impact (Sparwald, 2018; Consolo, 2021). Their success often depends on their ability to establish strong partnerships with local actors and to integrate local knowledge and practices into their interventions.

To achieve sustainable development, NGOs must also adopt strategic positions such as transparency, accountability, and adaptability. Transparency in their operations and accountability to their stakeholders are essential to maintaining trust and legitimacy (Perroulaz, 2004). Adaptability enables NGOs to respond effectively to changing challenges and emerging community needs (Vincent, 2023).

In reality, NGOs, whether international or national, must possess specific skills and adopt effective strategies to ensure that they fulfill their crucial role of supporting and accompanying social and economic development for the benefit of communities. Their specific capacities in resource mobilization, awareness-raising, and advocacy for political and social change remain indispensable for achieving sustainable development goals (Nakou et al, 2025). The personal development of leaders is a major strategic asset in addressing the challenges that block or delay the work of these organizations in their missions to contribute to the sustainable development of Humanity.

The organizational growth of international, national, and local NGOs raises complex challenges in terms of employee engagement and satisfaction. As these organizations grow, they must manage an increased diversity of missions, cultures, and structures, which can dilute employee engagement if organizational values are not clearly communicated or shared. According to Clack (2021), employee engagement is a key factor in organizational success, directly influencing productivity, retention, and morale. In NGOs, where resources are often limited, an engaged workforce is essential to maintaining service effectiveness and continuity. However, rapid growth can lead to work overload, lack of recognition, and loss of meaning, thereby reducing job satisfaction.

Furthermore, employee satisfaction in NGOs is strongly influenced by factors such as task variety, role clarity, and leadership quality. A study conducted by Glisson and Durick (1988) showed that skill variety and reduced role ambiguity are major predictors of satisfaction, while organizational commitment is more related to structural factors such as the age of the organization and leadership style. In local NGOs, which are often closer to communities, employees may feel a greater sense of direct impact, which strengthens their commitment. In contrast, in large international NGOs, bureaucracy and hierarchical distance can create a sense of disconnection. To support sustainable growth, it is therefore crucial that NGOs invest in participatory management practices, recognition, and professional and personal development.

Leadership is crucial in today's world because it directly influences the ability of organizations and societies to adapt and thrive in the face of complex challenges. For this reason, researchers are studying leadership to understand the dynamics underlying the behaviors and performance of leaders acquired through personal development.

By studying different leadership approaches and styles, among other things, they can identify the most effective practices and adapt them to specific contexts. This helps develop leaders who can meet current and future needs while

ensuring the sustainable and equitable development of organizations and communities that put people back at the center of thinking and action (Delstanche, 2015).

I.2 CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

I.2.1 Context of the study

The context in which NGOs working in humanitarian aid and international development operate is becoming increasingly complex, exacerbated by global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, protracted conflicts, and the effects of climate change. These organizations must now operate in an environment where humanitarian needs are skyrocketing, with more than 243 million people requiring urgent assistance since 2021, compared to 225 million in 2019 (Audet, 2022). Furthermore, contemporary debates on power dynamics, particularly those raised by the MeToo and Black Lives Matter movements, have highlighted the colonial and asymmetrical structures of aid, forcing NGOs to rethink their practices and governance (Paige, 2021).

At the same time, the trend toward “localization” of aid, which aims to strengthen the role of local actors in humanitarian response, is emerging as a strategic priority. This approach seeks to correct historical imbalances between international NGOs and local partners, while improving the

effectiveness and legitimacy of interventions (Paige, 2021; Audet, 2022).

However, this transition remains hampered by structural challenges, including control of funding and recognition of local knowledge. In this context, NGOs must navigate between ethical imperatives, operational constraints, and political pressures, while maintaining their commitment to fundamental humanitarian principles.

Zhang (2013) examines the impact of strategic choices on the level of vertical integration and the performance implications of changes within organizations. He finds that companies that increase their level of vertical integration can benefit from certain performance advantages.

Performance management systems are key tools for transforming employee talent and motivation into a strategic advantage for the organization (Aguinis, 2009). Key performance indicators (KPIs) include the number and/or percentage of suspected, confirmed, tested, treated, and cured cases related to all public health issues, learner success rates, quality of education, stakeholder satisfaction, and project sustainability, etc. These KPIs are observed through performance evaluations conducted by donors and their partners.

In-depth analysis of the internal and external environment is crucial to identifying specific activities that can provide a competitive

advantage to the organization. Thus, operational efficiency, while essential, is not sufficient to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. It is therefore necessary to choose a unique and valuable position, anchored in systems of activities that are difficult to imitate (Porter, 1996; Dobbs, 2012; Gamble et al, 2015).

The characteristics and quality of the internal environment also determine the organization's ability to exploit opportunities offered by the external environment. For this reason, it is useful to analyze internal resources, organizational culture, and capabilities to ensure that the organization can adapt and integrate components of the external environment (Halmaghi et al., 2017).

1.2.2 Brief presentation of FHI 360

Family Health International, known as FHI360, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to human development. Founded in 1971, FHI 360 was created through the merger of Family Health International and the Academy for Educational Development, which allowed it to expand its scope beyond public health to include integrated approaches to human development. FHI 360 focuses on public health, international development, education, nutrition, the environment, economic development, civil society, gender equality, youth, research, and technology. FHI360 operates in more than 60 countries and all U.S. states and territories, with

field offices in 32 nations (FHI360, 2022; FHI360, 2025). FHI360's headquarters are located in Durham, North Carolina, USA.

The organization mobilizes research, resources, and relationships to enable individuals to access the opportunities they need to lead full and healthy lives. It is particularly recognized for its programs to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other infectious and chronic diseases. FHI360 collaborates with international agencies, governments, foundations, research institutions, and individual donors to overcome health and development challenges (FHI360, 2023). FHI360 is committed to creating a world where everyone can achieve something greater, working with communities and partners to address urgent needs and build a more resilient future. Its integrated, multidisciplinary approach allows complex problems to be addressed holistically, with a focus on sustainability and long-term impact (FHI360, 2025, FHI360, 2025a). Its mission, vision, strategic objectives, and core values form the backbone of the organization. These elements are at the heart of FHI360's commitment to a better and more equitable future for all.

1.2.3 Literature review

Several authors have examined the contribution or impact of leaders' personal development on the organizational growth of public and private companies, as well as NGOs. The nine recent

articles (2023-2024) address the impact of leaders' personal development on organizational growth in various sectors. They demonstrate that leaders' personal development is a key driver of organizational growth, strengthening team resilience, innovation, and engagement. The unique aspects of each study are summarized below:

1. Ajuwon, O. A., & Dagunduro, A. O. (2024). Strategic leadership and management within non-profit organizations: An in-depth review of practices contributing to sustainable impact. *International Journal of Frontline Research in Science and Technology*, 4(1), 1–17. The originality of this article lies in linking the personal development of leaders to organizational sustainability. It shows that NGOs that invest in the continuing education and psychological well-being of their leaders achieve greater resilience in the face of crises and more sustained growth.
2. Andrews, S. M. (2023). Strategic leadership, change and growth in not-for-profit, membership-based, value-driven organisations. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 36(4), 517–540. This work is original in its multi-case approach within non-profit organizations. It demonstrates that the personal development of leaders, particularly their ability to manage change and inspire a shared vision, is a key factor

in organizational growth and adaptation to social changes.

3. Barends, E., Rousseau, D., Janssen, B., Capezio, A., & Velghe, C. (2023). Leadership development: An evidence review. CIPD/CEBMA. The originality of this article lies in its systematic review of the scientific evidence on leadership development. It demonstrates that investing in the personal development of leaders improves organizational performance by strengthening decision-making, communication, and innovation capacity, in both the public and private sectors.

4. Harvard Business Publishing Corporate Learning. (2024). 2024 Global Leadership Development Study: Time to Transform. Harvard Business Publishing. This report highlights the transformation of leadership into a specialized profession. Its originality lies in the idea that leaders must go beyond simple management skills to develop advanced personal attributes (resilience, emotional intelligence), essential for supporting organizational growth in a rapidly changing environment.

5. Karauri, L. G., & Kyongo, J. (2024). Impact of effective leadership on organisational performance: An empirical investigation. *Open Journal of Leadership*, 13(1), 30–38. The originality of this empirical study lies in providing quantitative evidence on the link between leadership and organizational performance. Although focused on various types of

organizations, it highlights that in NGOs, the personal development of leaders is a key lever for improving productivity and employee satisfaction.

6. Mawele, G. (2023). A qualitative study of effective leadership in the non-governmental organization (NGO) health sector. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 11(3), 1271–1303. The originality of this study lies in its qualitative analysis of the role of leadership in health NGOs in Africa. It shows that the personal development of leaders, particularly in communication and change management, is directly linked to the performance of field teams and the sustainability of community health projects.

7. McKinsey & Company. (2024). Year in Review 2024: Navigate change with leadership. McKinsey Insights. This report stands out for its practical, sector-specific approach. It highlights that leaders who develop their personal skills in innovation and change management are better positioned to transform their organizations and support sustainable growth, particularly in the private sector facing the digital revolution.

8. Naoum, R. F. (2024). Leadership styles within the context of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). *International Journal of Non-Governmental Organizations and Essays*, 8(1), 65–75. This research is distinguished by its comparative analysis of leadership styles (transactional, transformational, laissez-faire) in

NGOs. It highlights that the personal development of leaders facilitates the shift from transactional to transformational leadership, which is better suited to the constraints of limited resources and the diverse needs of stakeholders.

9. Zhang, Y., & Chen, L. (2023). Digital transformation of human resource management and organizational agility: Evidence from emerging markets. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. The originality of this article lies in linking the personal development of leaders to the digital transformation of HR. It shows that leaders who invest in their digital and adaptive skills foster organizational agility, which is crucial for business growth in emerging markets.

This article proposes to apply the concept of personal development of leaders to a specific international NGO, Family Health International (FHI 360), whose interventions cover sensitive areas such as health, education and community development.

II. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This research is a case study focusing on the contribution of effective leadership to the organizational growth of the international NGO Family Health International (FHI 360). The study examines the personal development practices of leaders within the organization and seeks to highlight leadership practices that promote its growth and sustainability. It covers aspects such

as leadership development by analyzing training and capacity-building programs, organizational performance through an assessment of the effectiveness of leadership practices and policies in terms of organizational outcomes, and employee satisfaction by focusing on analyzing the influence of leadership practices on employee engagement and motivation, in short, their overall well-being.

This qualitative research uses thematic analysis of interviews and content analysis of training and capacity-building initiatives at FHI 360 to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of leadership practices and their contribution. It draws on existing work on leadership and organizational growth in NGOs. This includes consulting books, journal articles, and research reports.

Primary data collection involves gathering the opinions of a few senior human resources and management executives (key leaders or senior managers or executives) on the process and effects of personal development for leaders within the organization through semi-directive or semi-structured interviews.

To achieve this, Dedoose was used for qualitative data analysis. Dedoose is a cloud-based application that allows qualitative and mixed data to be analyzed and visualized. The guide or

protocol designed was then standardized using responses on the server and thus facilitate the ODK software to facilitate the automation of analysis of the data collected.

III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data from interviews with five very experienced HR managers and senior executives at FHI 360 are presented below. These are individual interviews with senior management and HR officials. The table below shows the levels of importance of the subcodes considered in the analyses:

Table III.1. Levels of importance of subcodes

Total occurrences	Level of importance	Interpretation
0–2	Low	Dimension rarely mentioned or marginal.
3–5	Medium	Point present but not central.
6–9	High	Important and recurring subcode.
10–14	Very high	Major dimension for respondents.
15 et plus	Critical / Structuring	Central element, strongly dominant in the discourse.

Source: Primary data - 2025 interviews

This table shows that the higher the recurrence of a subcode, the more significant the reality described in the study. High, very high, and critical levels require strong messages from management on the subject addressed. This section presents the analysis of data from interviews with senior HR and executives. It aims to highlight the main lessons learned from the comments collected by grouping the information according to the themes identified during coding. Each theme is examined through a summary of recurring ideas. These ideas are supported by a few representative quotes and an interpretation that clarifies the meaning and scope of the results.

The analysis is structured around six main themes representing the key ideas expressed by participants. These themes are: personal development practices (1), effectiveness assessment (2), strategic alignment (3), implementation challenges (4), recommendations and perspectives (5), and final assessment (6).

1. Personal development practices at FHI 360

The theme of personal development practices covers the training, coaching, guidance, and learning initiatives and mechanisms put in place by FHI 360 to develop leadership skills. This theme includes training programs, mentoring, succession plans, performance evaluations, and experience sharing. The sub-themes that make up the respondents' discourse are presented in the table below:

Table III.2 Main observations from the dominant sub-codes

Subcode	Total occur.	Level of importance	Main observation
Participant selection criteria	14	Very high	Access to programs depends largely on hierarchy and budget availability.
Initial orientation (onboarding)	9	High	Key development stage perceived as essential for integrating leaders.
Leadership and management training	8	High	Most visible mechanism; perceived as a driver of capacity building.
Personalized mentoring and coaching	8	High	Recognized practice but still limited in scope and regularity.
Peer exchanges and learning	7	High	Informal, rarely institutionalized.
Career and succession plans	4	Medium	Rarely discussed, reflecting the absence of a structured succession mechanism.

Source: Primary data - 2025 interviews

It should be noted here that personal development practices at FHI 360 are dominated by few formal mechanisms (guidance, training) that are highly dependent on hierarchy.

2. Evaluation of effectiveness

This theme focuses on the methods used by FHI 360 to assess the impact of leadership development programs. The assessment is based primarily on annual performance goals, feedback from supervisors,

contributions to program activities, and staff engagement or satisfaction levels. It aims to determine the extent to which leaders improve their skills, enhance their operational effectiveness, and positively influence team dynamics. The table below presents data on the methods used by FHI 360 to assess the impact of leadership development programs (LDP) :

Table III.3 Methods for assessing the impact of LD programs at FHI 360

Subcode	Total occur.	Level of importance	Main observation
Impact on skills	11	Very high	Leaders significantly improve their skills after training; visible progress in management, communication, and team coordination
Staff engagement and satisfaction	9	High	Teams become more motivated when their leaders have been well supported; better atmosphere and productivity.
Internal evaluation methods	9	High	Evaluations are based on annual reviews, feedback, participation in activities, and overall performance
Post-training follow-up	6	High	Follow-up after programs exists but remains uneven; sometimes insufficient to measure lasting impact.
Limitations & negative signals (dissatisfaction /turnover)	2	Low	Leadership shortcomings cause tension, complaints, and sometimes departures.
Tangible institutional results	2	Low	Some visible effects: better relations with donors, better program execution.

Source: Primary data - 2025 interviews

This table shows that, in general, when leaders are trained in leadership and management, their skills are sufficiently enhanced, which has a direct impact on employee engagement and satisfaction.

3. Strategic alignment

This theme focuses on how leadership development programs (LDPs) align with FHI360's strategic objectives. It examines the extent to which these initiatives support the mission, strengthen organizational growth, promote leadership stability, and contribute to institutional influence. The focus is on consistency between leadership development actions and strategic priorities, including project funding, organizational visibility, and key leader retention. The elements of strategic alignment of LD programs at FHI 360 are summarized in the table below:

Table III.4 Key elements of strategic alignment of LD programs at FHI 360

Subcode	Total occur.	Level of importance	Main observation
Contribution to organizational growth	22	Critical/ Structural	Most dominant subcode: Well-trained leaders are seen as direct drivers of program expansion, portfolio growth, and institutional funding.
Consistency with mission and vision	14	Very high	LDPs are widely considered to be aligned with FHI360's mission: strengthening program quality, meeting standards, and improving governance.
Strengthening partnerships and visibility	5	Medium	Indicates that good leaders improve relationships with donors and partners, but this is not a major theme.

Leadership retention and stability	5	Medium	Leadership stability is linked to LDP, but this idea is not widely expressed.
Institutional reach and influence	4	Medium	Leadership development increases participation in strategic spaces, but this remains secondary.
Project development and financing	1	Low	Rarely cited: respondents make little mention of the direct link between LDP and the ability to secure funding.

Source: Primary data - 2025 interviews

What this table shows is that, overall, well-trained leaders are seen as direct drivers of program expansion, portfolio growth, and institutional funding at FHI 360. LDPs are widely considered to be aligned with FHI 360's mission. This is particularly true when it comes to strengthening program quality, ensuring compliance with standards, and promoting better governance.

4. Challenges in implementation

This theme focuses on the obstacles encountered in the practical implementation of leadership development programs (LDPs). It covers difficulties related to organization, resources, processes, and internal conditions that influence the deployment of LDPs. The excerpts classified under this theme describe budget constraints, recruitment limitations, hierarchical dependence, lack of a formal framework, workload, and unequal access to development opportunities. Thus, this theme brings together everything that hinders or complicates the operational implementation of the program. The table below presents the major obstacles encountered in the implementation of LDPs:

Table III.5 Major obstacles to the implementation of LDPs at FHI 360

Subcode	Total occur.	Level of importance	Main observation
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Budgetary constraints	13	Very high	The main obstacle to implementation: lack of budget for training, assignments, or guidance.
Hierarchical dependence	7	High	Access to LDP depends heavily on supervisor approval, limiting fairness and consistency.
Unequal access	6	High	Some leaders have access to opportunities, others do not; lack of a fair framework.
Lack of a clear framework and policy	5	Medium	The organization does not have a structured system for leadership development.
Low institutional prioritization	5	Medium	LDP is poorly planned; considered a low priority in many contexts.
Recruitment constraints and turnover	4	Medium	Rapid recruitment, high turnover, limitations in the selection of leadership profiles.
Limited monitoring and evaluation	2	Low	Insufficient monitoring to assess impact or adapt programs.
Availability and workload	1	Low	Leaders are often too busy to follow programs.
Consequences of lack of leadership	1	Low	Poor performance or internal tensions when leaders are not well guided.

[Source: Primary data - 2025 interviews](#)

The data in this table show the main obstacle to implementation: lack of budget for training, assignments, or face-to-face guidance at headquarters. It also shows that access to LDP depends heavily on supervisor approval, limiting fairness and consistency.

5. Recommendations and perspectives

This theme brings together respondents' suggestions for improving leadership development within FHI360. The associated excerpts highlight areas for action aimed at strengthening the program: allocation of dedicated budgets, diversification of content, decentralization of training, improvement of assessment tools, strengthening of mentoring, and revision of selection criteria. This is therefore a forward-looking theme, bringing together concrete suggestions for making LDP more effective, equitable, and aligned with organizational needs. The following table highlights the proposals made by respondents to improve the implementation of LDP:

Table III.6 Proposals for improving the implementation of LDP at FHI 360

Subcode	Total occur.	Level of importance	Main observation
Decentralize training	12	Very high	Strong recommendation: bring training opportunities closer to countries/regions to reduce costs and allow wider access.
Rethink HR policies and strategies	7	High	Call to review HR systems: recruitment tools, orientation, monitoring mechanisms, and leadership criteria
Institutionalize the LD program	6	High	Importance of a structured, formal, harmonized, and sustainable program for leadership development
Allocate a dedicated budget	4	Medium	Need for regular funding to enable training, travel, and development programs
Diversify content and topics	4	Medium	Need to expand modules: modern leadership, finance, soft skills, crisis management, etc.
Strengthen internal	1	Low	Mentoring is considered useful but poorly

mentoring				structured; request for a clear framework to make it operational.
Create a standardized evaluation framework		1	Low	Suggestion to develop common tools to measure the impact of leadership development program.
Rethink leadership selection criteria for LDP		1	Low	Need for more transparent criteria that are less based solely on seniority or hierarchy.

Source: Primary data - 2025 interviews

The strong recommendation that emerges from this table is that respondents want the organization to bring training opportunities closer to countries/regions in order to reduce costs and allow wider access. They make an impassioned plea to review HR systems: recruitment tools, orientation, monitoring mechanisms, and leadership criteria.

6. Final assessment

This theme brings together respondents' overall perceptions, personal opinions, and feelings about leadership development at FHI360. It reflects how leaders assess the relevance, adequacy, and effectiveness of current practices, as well as their vision of what works well, what is lacking, and what should change. Comments focus on the perceived value of existing initiatives, unmet needs, and how leadership contributes (or does not contribute) to performance or, better yet, organizational growth. The table below presents the main perceptions regarding the implementation of LDP:

Table III.7 Main perceptions related to LDP at FHI 360

Subcode	Total occur.	Level of importance	Main observation
Perceived effectiveness	9	High	Leaders consider the programs to be generally useful and effective for their professional

			development.
Overall satisfaction	7	High	The majority express positive satisfaction with the impact of the programs and their contribution to their daily work.
Forward-looking vision	4	Medium	Respondents express expectations for continuous improvement and better future structuring of the LDP.
Perceived alignment with needs	3	Medium	The training courses appear to be partially adapted: useful, but not always tailored to the real needs of leaders
Critical analysis of organizational culture	2	Low	A few critical observations emerge but remain in the minority; they mainly concern the limitations of the current system.

Source: Primary data - 2025 interviews

The table shows that respondents consider the programs to be generally useful and effective for the personal development of leaders within the organization. The majority express positive satisfaction with the impact of the programs and their contribution to daily work in general, but they express expectations for continuous improvement and better future structuring of the LD.

IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In terms of leadership development, individual capabilities exist but lack a solid institutional framework to strengthen and harmonize them. Recurring challenges - budgetary constraints, unequal access, and hierarchical dependence - reflect issues of governance and strategic prioritization. The perceptions gathered largely confirm the initial assumptions: yes, leadership development is critical to performance; yes, it suffers from a lack of structure; and yes, an institutionalized model would improve consistency, fairness, and overall impact. Although the study is primarily based on a qualitative approach, a quantitative trend analysis was performed using the frequency of occurrences of subcodes applied in

Dedoose. Each subcode corresponds to a theme expressed by respondents, and the total number of occurrences makes it possible to identify:

- the themes most frequently mentioned in the speeches,
- the relative distribution of priorities,
- and the comparative weighting of the major analytical themes.

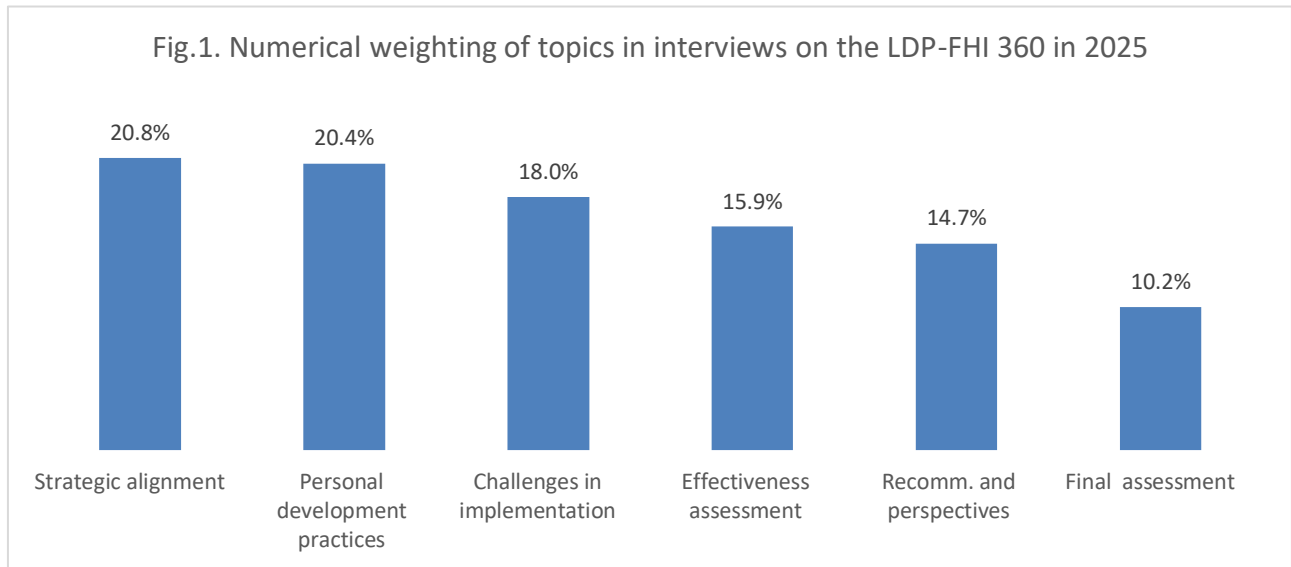
The objective of this specific analysis is not to infer statistical trends (small sample size), but to reinforce the qualitative interpretation by measuring the relative importance of themes across the entire corpus.

Table IV.1 Analysis of quantitative trends in interview themes (245 occurrences)

Theme	Total occurrences	Percentage (%)	Normalized weight	Rank
Strategic alignment	51	20,8 %	1,00	1
Personal development practices	50	20,4 %	0,98	2
Challenges in implementation	44	18,0 %	0,86	3
Effectiveness assessment	39	15,9 %	0,76	4
Recommendations and perspectives	36	14,7 %	0,71	5
Final assessment	25	10,2 %	0,49	6

Source: Own elaboration based on primary data, Interviews (2025)

The following figure clearly shows the numerical weight of the themes present in the discourse during interviews with FHI 360 executives:



Source: Own elaboration based on primary data, Interviews (2025)

This figure highlights two dominant themes: strategic alignment (20.8%) and personal development practices (20.4%). Together, they account for more than 41% of the total discourse, showing that the leaders surveyed mainly emphasize:

- consistency between leadership, institutional vision, and strategic objectives
- the need to strengthen leaders' capacities

Next, a second group of important themes emerges: implementation challenges (18%) and effectiveness assessment (16%). This block reflects the difficulty of consistently applying leadership practices, as well as a lack of clear mechanisms for measuring impact. Finally, recommendations (14.7%) and personal assessment (10.2%) appear as important additions, but less central to the concerns expressed.

Personal development policies at FHI 360 are insufficiently scattered throughout various training and protection documents. Here are a few examples:

- ✓ FHI 360 Framework and Minimum Standards for the Protection of Program Participants.
- ✓ FHI 360 Universal Compliance Plan for Protection and Anti-Trafficking.
- ✓ Facilitator Training Guide for Frontline Staff.

These policies aim to promote a safe and positive organizational culture, which is essential for training effective leaders. They include protection standards, compliance guidelines, and training programs that strengthen leadership and interpersonal communication skills. By contributing to the development of effective leaders, these policies play a crucial role in organizational development. They ensure that leaders are well equipped to manage challenges and promote a healthy and productive work environment.

FHI 360's personal development policies offer several benefits:

- ✓ Skill building: They enable employees to develop essential skills in leadership, project management, and interpersonal communication.
- ✓ Positive organizational culture: By promoting standards of protection and respect, they help create a healthy and productive work environment.
- ✓ Improved performance: Training and development programs help improve individual and collective performance, which benefits the organization as a whole.

To evaluate the effectiveness of leaders, FHI 360 uses rarely several methods:

- ❖ Regular evaluations: Baseline, follow-up, mid-term, and end-of-term evaluations are conducted to measure the progress and impact of training programs.
- ❖ Self-assessment tools: Tools such as ORCAP (Organizational Capacity Assessment Program) enable leaders to reflect on their own practices and identify areas for improvement.
- ❖ Participant feedback: Feedback from program participants is essential for adjusting and improving training strategies.

Selection to participate in a leadership training program at FHI 360 is always subject to the availability of funds. Designing and implementing an effective personal development program within an organization is a strategic process that aims to improve employee skills. It is necessary to analyze organizational needs: strategic alignment, performance gaps, future trends, employee engagement, and retention. Individual needs must also be assessed using performance evaluations and employee surveys/interviews.

Assessing the impact of the Learning Development program, particularly on leadership skills, requires a multidimensional approach that goes beyond simple participation. Human resources managers and leadership and development professionals see a significant improvement in employee engagement and satisfaction when personal development programs are available and well structured.

For personal development programs, particularly those focused on leadership skills, to be truly effective and generate a significant return on investment, this type of study is extremely important for all leadership positions. The training and development program is fundamental and contributes significantly to the growth of the organization.

In terms of challenges, employees often have demanding workloads, which makes training difficult and leads to low participation. Development initiatives can be costly, particularly due to the expense of trainers, platforms, materials, and the time employees spend away from their work, especially for the organization.

To strengthen the impact of personal and leadership development programs, it is essential to address the common challenges mentioned above. Of course, this study is extremely important and, in fact, crucial for organizations that want to emerge and grow. Due to the emergence and growth of organizations, it is essential to invest in intentional and structured leadership programs.

At FHI 360, leadership and personal development programs are designed and implemented using a strategic approach and a streamlined structure. To improve the impact and personal development program at FHI 360, several targeted improvements can be recommended: informed decision-making to foster creativity and innovation, risk mitigation, and support for the implementation of client-centered approaches.

Training and development programs are largely focused on program implementation. FHI 360 has missed the mark when it comes to team building. Training and development are implemented as part of a performance-based assessment program designed by the organization and based on merit.

FHI 360 should train its leaders in localization and artificial and emotional intelligence. The overall performance management system is highly effective if used and promoted appropriately by leaders. The lack of Leadership Development organizational vision is mainly related to the fact that FHI 360 has remained a centralized organization.

A successful leadership program must have a leadership development plan. The leadership development plan is a structured program that defines the actions necessary to develop one or more individuals (current or future leaders) within an organization. Unlike a series of one-off training sessions, the development plan is a personalized and evolving process based on specific and measurable objectives.

Such a plan is based on three essential pillars:

- Needs assessment: Identify the key skills to be strengthened within the company.
- Implementation of targeted actions: Deploy development strategies tailored to leadership objectives.
- Continuous monitoring and adjustment: Measure progress and refine the trajectory on an ongoing basis.

Creating a leadership development plan requires six steps, which are outlined below:

Table IV.2 Six steps for creating a leadership development plan

Num	Pillar	Concrete actions
1.	Identify potential talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Observe the field ▪ Gather 360-degree feedback ▪ Conduct psychometric tests ▪ Carry out role-playing exercises
2.	Analyze leadership needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyze leaders' current skills ▪ Gather 360-degree feedback ▪ Conduct interviews and self-assessments
3.	Define clear and measurable objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish SMART objectives
4.	Select the right methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combine several strategies tailored to needs
5.	Integrate leadership into the organization's culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a dynamic of continuous development ▪ Integrate leadership into daily practices

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Make leadership a lever for professional development
6.	Monitor and adjust the plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Measure leaders' progress▪ Measure leaders' commitment▪ Measure employee satisfaction▪ Analyze the impact on team management and performance

Source: Own elaboration based on Proaction International, 2025

A development plan must be directly applicable to leaders' daily lives and aligned with operational constraints. There are strategies that promote leadership development plans, as can be seen in the following section:

- ❖ Leadership Coaching and Executive Coaching
- ❖ Professional Training
- ❖ Online Learning
- ❖ Mentoring
- ❖ 360-Degree Feedback
- ❖ Immersive Development Experience
- ❖ Personal Leadership Development Programs
- ❖ Cross-Functional Project Management
- ❖ Job Rotation
- ❖ Leader Integration
- ❖ Emerging Leader Program
- ❖ Micro-Development Opportunities
- ❖ Collaborative Leadership and Co-development Strategies for creating a leadership development plan serve to structure and guide the progression of leaders' skills in order to strengthen their individual and collective effectiveness. They make it possible to define clear objectives, identify priority skills to be developed (communication, decision-making, emotional intelligence), and integrate appropriate methods such as coaching, continuing education, or mentoring. This type of plan helps align leaders' personal development with the strategic needs of the organization, thereby promoting innovation, team engagement, and sustainable growth. Recent research shows that organizations that adopt systematic leadership development

plans achieve better results in terms of performance and organizational resilience (Barends, Rousseau, Janssen, Capezzio, & Velghe, 2023).

V. CONCLUSION

The study of how leaders' personal development contributes to the organizational growth of Family Health International (FHI 360) is crucial because it reveals how more aware and competent leaders positively transform teams (motivation, engagement, satisfaction), stimulate innovation, improve external performance, create resilient organizational cultures, and foster talent engagement, thereby aligning individual aspirations with strategic objectives to ensure sustainable organizational growth and better adaptation to change.

Through thematic analysis of interviews with FHI 360 Experienced RH managers and senior executives in May 2025, the study demonstrated that a conscious and competent leader influences how employees work, how teams collaborate, how decisions are made, and how the organization develops and grows. They shape culture, empower teams, and inspire innovation. The article aims to better understand how preparing effective leaders influences organizational growth of FHI 360. By analyzing

leaders' personal development practices, this research seeks to identify which leadership practices promote organizational growth and sustainability.

It focuses on demonstrating that effective leadership is an essential catalyst for organizational growth. By examining the content of training programs, capacity-building and leadership development initiatives within FHI 360, as well as the opinions of FHI 360 RH managers and senior executives, we explore how these practices can improve employee engagement, motivation, and satisfaction, as well as organizational growth. The analysis provides a better understanding of the process of preparing effective leaders and its influence on the organizational growth of the international NGO FHI 360.

It was noted that existing programs have observable effects on executive skills, team engagement, and organizational alignment. The overall analysis of the leadership development system within FHI 360 reveals a relevant system that is appreciated by leaders, but still fragmented, insufficiently structured, and unevenly deployed. However, the results show that the potential impact of the system is hampered by several recurring challenges: lack of a formal framework, unequal access, lack of dedicated resources, limited post-training follow-up, and heavy hierarchical dependence for access to opportunities. Senior leaders acknowledge that the issue of professional development and career

advancement has been raised by FHI 360 staff, who have expressed a need for training, mentoring, and career advancement opportunities, as well as strengthening managerial skills.

All in all, at FHI 360, individuals work more effectively when they feel recognized and supported by their managers and colleagues. Through this study, the personal development practices of leaders within FHI 360 have been clearly identified but are not integrated into a controlled system. The influence of leaders on employee engagement and satisfaction at FHI 360 has been noted, and ultimately, the influence of employee engagement and satisfaction on organizational growth has been verified.

However, this growth can be boosted by a robust and well-implemented personal development policy for leaders. The study supports the importance of establishing a leadership development system and plan within FHI 360 to enable leaders to influence employee engagement and satisfaction, which in turn will positively affect the organizational growth of FHI 360.

The article argues that senior executives at FHI 360 and other international, national, and local NGOs should move from a set of scattered initiatives to an integrated, equitable, funded, and measurable system of intentional leadership development, which is a true pillar of governance and organizational performance.

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