



# Strengthening nutrition leadership and workforce capacity for improved health and development in Nigeria

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# Acknowledgements

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- World Bank for sponsorship via ANRiN project
  
- ANLP team 2002-2023
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# Conflict of interest

- Work for North-West University (workforce)
- Director African Nutrition Leadership Programme (leadership development)



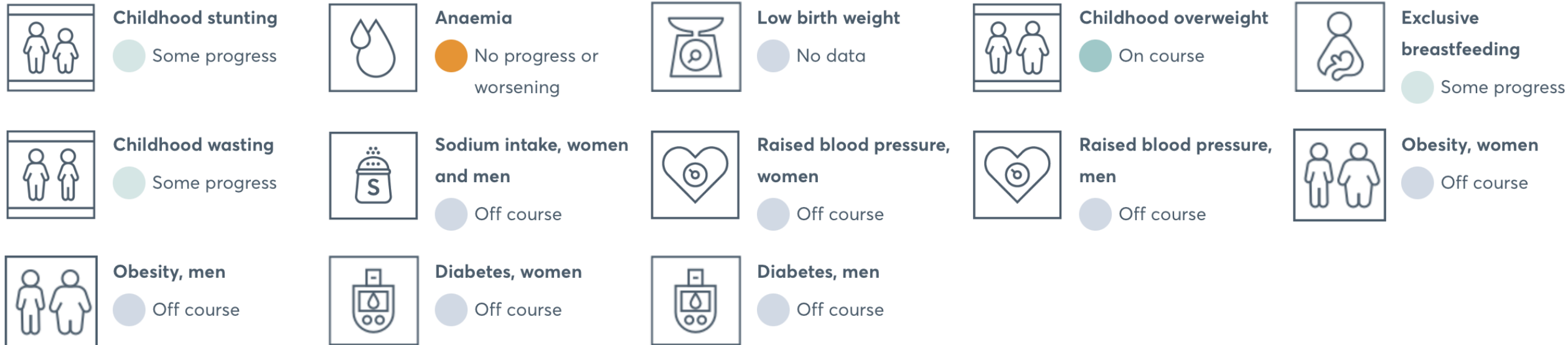
## The conversation...

*“They do not have the same work ethic than I do, they find it difficult to solve problems and do not think ahead. I am sometimes so frustrated when they do not show initiative – what do you teach them at university?”*



# Nigeria – progress on nutrition targets

## Progress towards the global nutrition targets



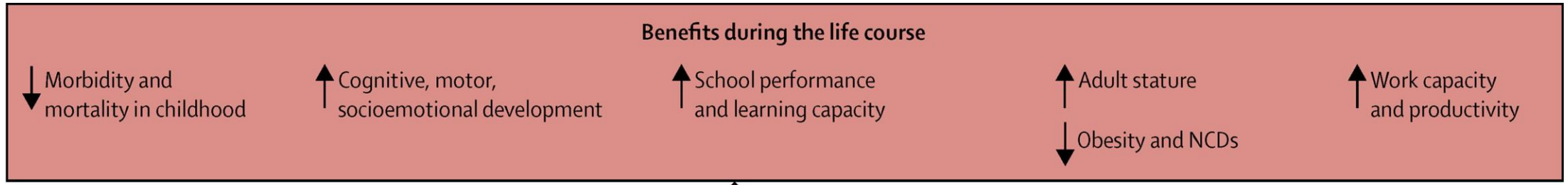
*On course - 1*

*No progress or worsening - 1*

*Some progress - 3*

*No data - 1*

*Off course - 7*



- Nutrition specific interventions and programmes**
- Adolescent health and preconception nutrition
  - Maternal dietary supplementation
  - Micronutrient supplementation or fortification
  - Breastfeeding and complementary feeding
  - Dietary supplementation for children
  - Dietary diversification
  - Feeding behaviours and stimulation
  - Treatment of severe acute malnutrition
  - Disease prevention and management
  - Nutrition interventions in emergencies

**Optimum fetal and child nutrition and development**

- Breastfeeding, nutrient-rich foods, and eating routine
- Feeding and caregiving practices, parenting, stimulation
- Low burden of infectious diseases

- Food security, including availability, economic access, and use of food
- Feeding and caregiving resources (maternal, household, and community levels)
- Access to and use of health services, a safe and hygienic environment

- Knowledge and evidence
- Politics and governance
- Leadership, capacity, and financial resources
- Social, economic, political, and environmental context (national and global)

- Nutrition sensitive programmes and approaches**
- Agriculture and food security
  - Social safety nets
  - Early child development
  - Maternal mental health
  - Women's empowerment
  - Child protection
  - Classroom education
  - Water and sanitation
  - Health and family planning services

- Building an enabling environment**
- Rigorous evaluations
  - Advocacy strategies
  - Horizontal and vertical coordination
  - Accountability, incentives regulation, legislation
  - Leadership programmes
  - Capacity investments
  - Domestic resource mobilisation

Source: Black et al., 2013



# Common elements in leadership definitions

1. an interactive process,
2. involves influence,
3. occurs in groups and
4. is centred around common goals.



- **Task oriented behaviour** - achieving shared objectives
- **Relations-oriented leadership behaviour** – effectively influencing others individuals to invest their efforts in the process of accomplishing objectives



Well-known processes - Planning, budgeting, structuring jobs, staffing jobs, measuring performance, problem-solving

Leadership is associated with taking an organization into the **future**, finding **opportunities** and successfully exploiting them.

It helps an organization to predictably do what it knows how to do well.

Leadership is about vision, creating aligned commitment, embedding values, communication, creating a motivating climate, empowering others and, most of all, **producing useful change**.

Management helps us to produce products and deliver services **as promised, of consistent quality, on budget, day after day, week after week**.

In a changing world, leadership is increasingly **needed from more and more** people, **no matter where they are in a hierarchy**.





# Leadership capabilities can be developed...

## Self management capabilities

Self-awareness  
Ability to balance conflicting demands  
Ability to learn  
Leadership values

## Social capabilities

Ability to build and maintain relationships  
Ability to build effective work groups  
Communication skills  
Ability to develop others

## Work facilitation capabilities

Management skills  
Ability to think and act strategically  
Ability to think creatively  
Ability to initiate and implement change



# Universities & workforce development

- Great expectations of universities
- Purpose of universities
  - Teaching-learning
  - Research
  - Community engagement / economic development (social impact)
- Universities choose their focus
- Often strong focus on knowledge
- Overfocusing on technical capacity building has not yielded the desired results



# Graduate attributes

- Critical thinking
- Communication skills
- Global awareness
- Ethical or moral reasoning
- Leadership and team work
- Problem solving
- Life-long learning
- Entrepreneurial skills
- Social responsibility

Skills, knowledge, qualities, and characteristics that students are expected to develop and possess by the time they complete their education, to prepare them for future careers and personal growth



# The “hidden curriculum”

- Intentional in design?
  - Effective development?
  - Effective assessment?
  - Do students know?
  - **At least as important as the technical matter!**
- Critical thinking
  - Communication skills
  - Global awareness
  - Ethical or moral reasoning
  - Leadership and team work
  - Problem solving
  - Life-long learning
  - Entrepreneurial skills
  - Social responsibility



# The research director....

Not knowing is perfectly acceptable...

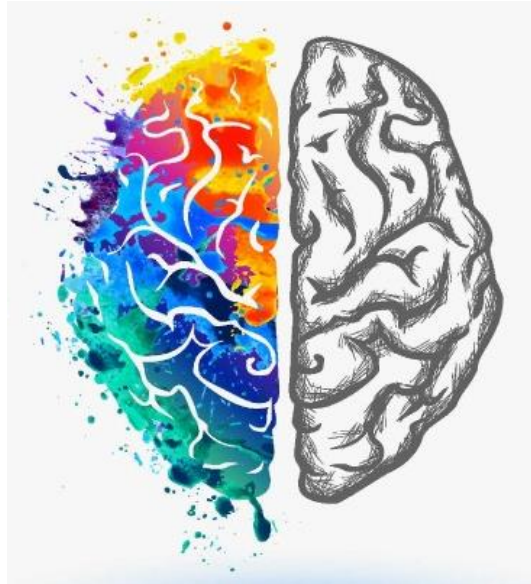
but the inability to educate themselves constitutes a crisis

Developing a growth mindset is critical



## GROWTH MINDSET

Embraces challenges  
Learns from feedback and criticism  
Talent can be developed  
Keeps trying and never gives up  
I have failed  
Inspired by others success  
I will learn from failure  
This will take time and hard work  
I want to keep learning



## FIXED MINDSET

Avoids challenges  
Ignores criticism  
Talent is fixed  
Gives up easily  
I am a failure  
Threatened by the success of others  
I always fail  
I will never improve  
Why should I bother?



# Reflection

- What should I start doing to strengthen nutrition leadership and workforce capacity in Nigeria?



# This conference....

- Most likely strong technical focus
- Ask yourself
  - what did I learn about leading?
  - how did I contribute to the growth of others?

Self-awareness  
Ability to balance conflicting demands  
Ability to learn  
Leadership values

Ability to build and maintain relationships  
Ability to build effective work groups  
Communication skills  
Ability to develop others

Management skills  
Ability to think and act strategically  
Ability to think creatively  
Ability to initiate and implement change