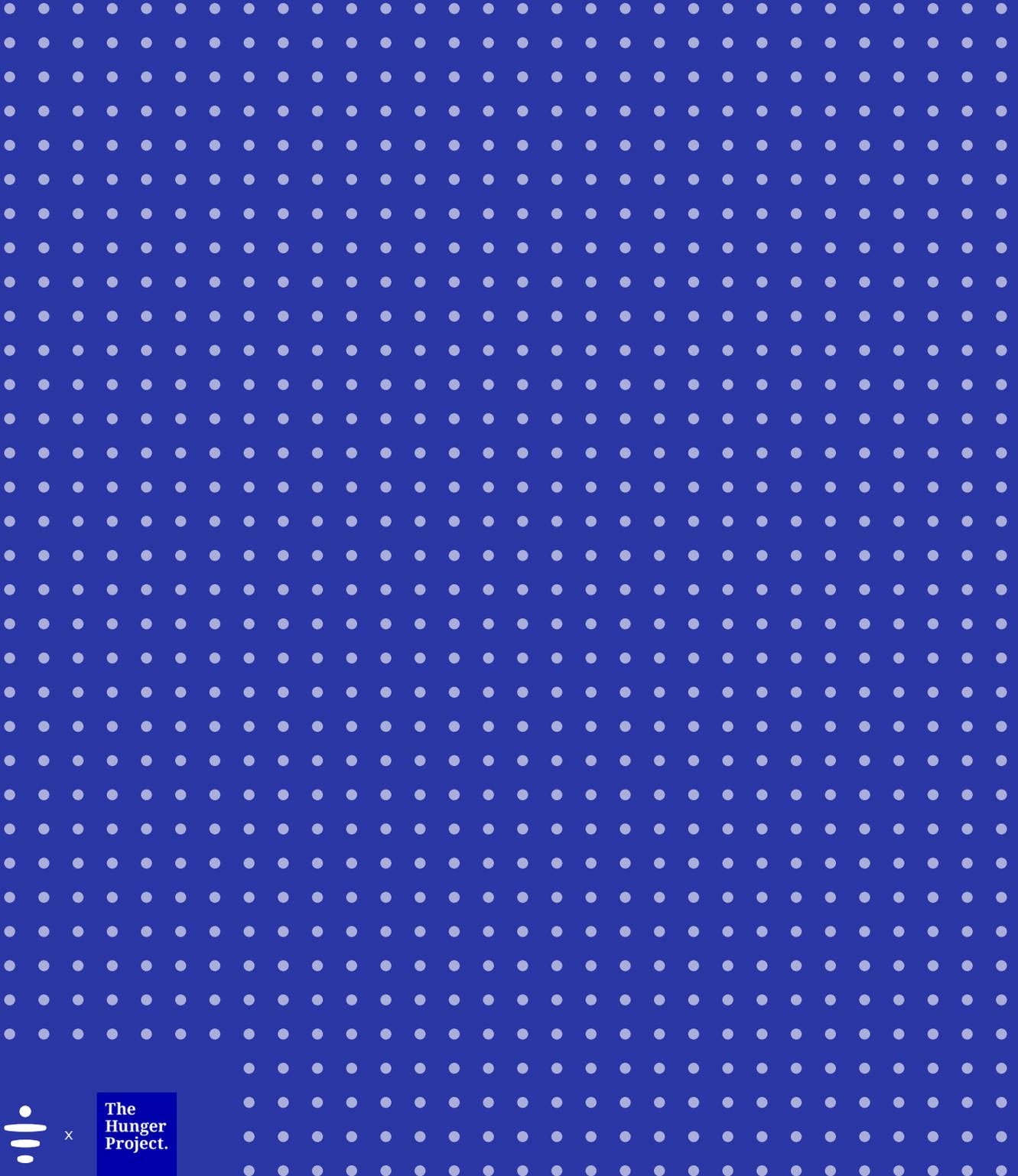# EthicalCoach x The Hunger Project

2021 Impact Report

How investing in coaching enables sustainable, community-led development.

Introduction

Over the past year, EthicalCoach and The Hunger Project teamed up to give leaders in the community-led development sector the tools and resources they need to thrive.

They built a program that connected 10 members of The Hunger Project's global team of community-based leaders in Africa and Mexico to leadership coaches around the world. Alongside 6 months of coaching, the program supported leaders through development efforts within their organization, and group leadership circles.

At the end of the program leaders had strengthened their team, boosted their confidence as leaders, and driven organizational effectiveness.

Leadership coaching leads to stronger leaders. Stronger leaders build and support strong teams. strong teams drive organizational effectiveness. Ultimately, this means they're better able to achieve their mission. For The Hunger Project, coaching helped strengthen their community-led approach to fighting hunger.

The EthicalCoach X The Hunger Project partnership has achieved meaningful results and an impressive Return on Investment—further proving the vitality and value of leadership coaching within a global non-profit organization.

Who is EthicalCoach?

EthicalCoach is the philanthropic arm of WBECS, it connects world-class coaches to leaders in the nonprofit sector. Our goal is to help them multiply their impact over the long term. To us, good coaching means stronger communities, healthier families, and better access to justice.

We're strengthening leaders to be more effective in their work, overcome barriers, lead their teams and build a better world.

What is leadership coaching?

Leadership coaching is a collaborative, confidential partnership created between a coach and leader focused on unlocking the leader's potential and maximizing their performance.

The purpose of coaching is to achieve the leader's self-identified goals and desired outcomes through clarifying beliefs and values, enhancing the ability to learn, and identifying new ways to leverage skills and strengths.

Who is The Hunger Project?

The Hunger Project is a global nonprofit organization that is working to end hunger for good. They pioneer sustainable, grassroots, female-centered strategies to fight starvation and poverty around the world. They mobilize communities to develop solutions and advocate for the adoption of similar approaches at every level of government. They know from experience that sustainable development requires individual empowerment and growth. That is why they champion a form of "transformational leadership" that inspires long term positive change in community members. This is a core part of their commitment to community-led development.

Coaching is a uniquely powerful tool for strengthening community-led development.

What is community-led development?

Community-led development puts locally-defined principles at the centre of development strategies. Mobilization in this framework puts local voices in the lead and builds on local strengths to achieve a local vision. This approach works to help communities develop capacity to address issues for the long term, so that the solutions implemented during these projects are sustainable and flexible.

Like community-led development, coaching is adaptable.

Unlike many other forms of leadership development, a coaching plan is built responsively around the stated needs and goals of a client. Because of this, coaching programs are uniquely able to work across a diverse range of local leaders. Each coach can incorporate the wisdom, vision, and challenges of an individual leader into their approach.

Communities don't have to fit into an established framework. The adaptability of the leadership coaching means that every locality can benefit equally from it.

100%

of leaders would recommend this coaching program to their colleagues at The Hunger Project.

Like community-led development, coaching is sustainable.

Coaching is a long term investment in a person's development. The goal of coaching is to make teams stronger and organizations more equipped to deal with challenges—through strong leadership. Investing in coaching means that this leader will be more capable of affecting change at the local level for a long time to come.

With leadership coaching, communities benefit from the meaningful investment in human capital. This will pay dividends over the long term. That's sustainable development.

100%

leaders say that the positive shift they've experienced with coaching is a permanent one.

Like community-led development, coaching is transformative.

Coaching focuses on transforming a leader's mindset. Empowering them with the confidence, capability, emotional intelligence, and self-awareness that they need to inspire their team and impact their community in meaningful ways.

Coaching, like community-led development, invests in the transformative capacity of its leaders. Their vision will lead to unimaginable impact.

100%

of leaders said the program met their expectations, while 55% of leaders said that the program exceeded their expectations.

The biggest value our participants got from their coaching experience:

"Self-awareness"
"Confidence"
"Honesty"
"Innovation
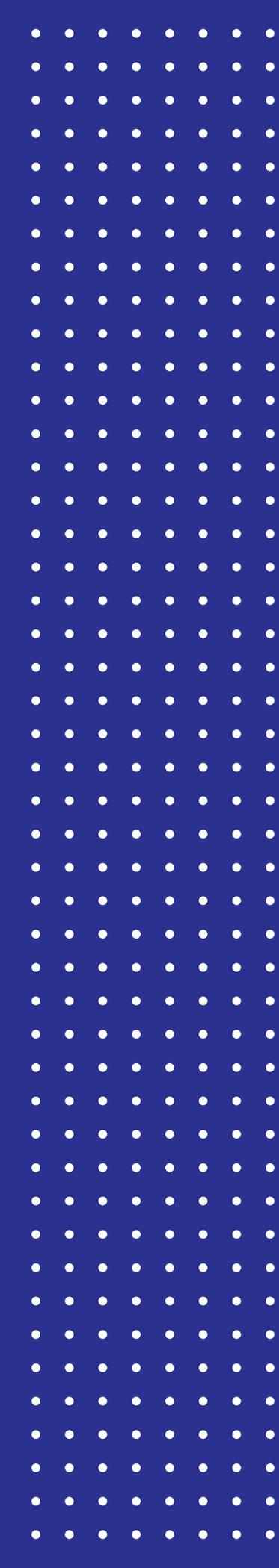
The EthicalCoach X The Hunger Project program fit coaching within a broader framework for leadership development:

1. **We started with the LPI®: Leadership Practices Inventory®** — a 30 question survey which asks members of an organization what great leadership looks like. It is a first step in building a culture of feedback and establishing a clear vocabulary around leadership. It is also a vital opportunity for leaders to hear from others they work with, and build their development goals around that feedback.

2. **We moved into an initial 90-minute connection meeting between the coach and the client** — to help leaders establish key issues, goals, and guidelines for the coaching process.

3. **Next, we held a meeting between the leader, their supervisor, and the coach** — this helps bring the expectations and focus of supervisors into consideration during the coaching process.

4. **Leaders then connected regularly to their coach** — 6 months of coaching sessions approximately 1 hour in length, twice per month (10 sessions).

5. **Leaders presented a go-forward development plan to their supervisors** — so they could stay accountable to the things they learned and the ways they grew.

6. **A final 90-minute wrap up meeting** — to summarize accomplishments and agree on strategies going forward.

Group development circles gave leaders the chance to share and grow, together.

Group leadership circles were vital in sharing feedback, practices, and support.

Throughout the process, leaders attended 5 "leadership circles" that were each 1 hour long. These facilitated sessions focused on leadership topics like dealing with difficult conversations, giving feedback, managing external stakeholders, and leading your team.

Connecting to like-minded leaders in their organization helped many of our leaders in their development journeys. Specifically, **they valued the opportunity to share their experiences.**

100%
of our leaders said that leadership circles were helpful to some degree.

50%
of our leaders said leadership circles were extremely helpful in supporting their leadership development.

Leaders changed meaningfully—individual coaching drove specific, impressive, outcomes.

Through their coaching experience, leaders focused on many different challenges. Despite the uniqueness of their experiences in coaching—three core outcomes recurred across the program.

1. Leaders became more confident, and capable.

Leaders worked on developing skills that are vital to the functioning of their team, and the pursuit of their mission. These were some of our leader's thoughts:

- "It helped a lot, to organize my leadership, and also opened up new visions and made me realize good ways to be a good leader."
- "Working with a coach has given me the confidence and allows me to fulfill my potential as a leader."
- "Working with a coach helped to navigate the tension between management and leadership."

2. Teams got stronger.

There were significant improvements in the leaders' capabilities to motivate and empower their teams. Leaders noticed growth in the following ways:

- Their team became **more motivated**—boosting their performance on active projects.
- Staff members' talents were better recognized, making them **more empowered to get things done.**
- The team became **committed to specific goals** that the program helped leaders illuminate.

3. Programs worked better.

Whether it was enabling innovation, or helping teams to align to the strategic direction of an existing project, leaders saw meaningful change in the capability with their team.

- "[We're] designing for innovation and moving it forward with an increasing number of partners interested…"
- "[Coaching helped] solidify the 2030 strategy, with the current team and talent."
- "[We have a] new project under development."

The Hunger Project.

For coaches, the program was a rewarding way to make a difference with their skills.

The wide network of volunteer coaches working on the project are leaders in their field, bringing innovative perspectives and frameworks to local development. All of our coaches found the work impactful and exciting.

100%
of our coaches liked, or loved, the experience.

83%
felt like they had a high positive impact on their client.
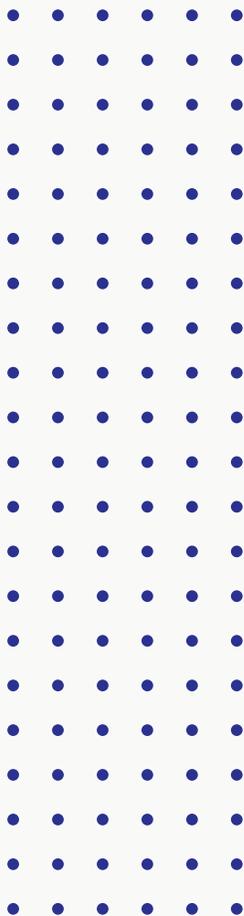
This program deploys a powerful approach to measuring success.

EthicalCoach and The Hunger Project are focused on measurable success. Together the organizations developed an approach to calculating return on investment for coaching programs.

We started by considering three key measures for leadership within an organization. The parameters of these measures were established through the LPI®: Leadership Practices Inventory®:

Self-Awareness: entails an understanding of our strengths, weaknesses, and limitations, of how we gather and process information, of how we handle ambiguous and stressful situations, and of how we are perceived by and interact with others.

Business Ownership: refers to the control over an enterprise, providing the power to dictate the operations and functions.

Creating Better Leaders: This is a measure tracking a leader's confidence to lead and influence in a collaborative and respectful way, while providing praise and recognition to their team.

The program generated a financial return on the investment in coaching.

What is a Return on Investment (ROI)

ROI tells us how much value (quantified in dollars) we got back from the money that we put in.

To calculate it, you divide the benefit produced by an investment by the initial cost of the investment. It's then expressed as a percentage or ratio.

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{Current Value of Investment - Cost of Investment}}{\text{Cost of Investment}}$$

The measurement model

We surveyed leaders' feelings about their relationship to these leadership measures on a scale from 1 - 10 before and after their participation in the program. Every 1 point change, was equated to 2 hours of time saved. The number of hours saved was then multiplied by the hourly wage of the leader.

Some key assumptions

- When we measured time saved, we didn't assume that leaders are productive 100% of every hour. Rather, we assumed that 80% of each hour was productive. That means that for each hour saved, we only took 80% of the potential hourly gains into our calculation.
- We assumed that the productivity improvements were active for the 24 weeks that the program was underway, and 24 weeks after the program finished. Overall we're calculating returns for a 48 week period.

- Investment costs are an expense for employees to participate in coaching when they could otherwise be working productively in their assigned roles.
- The hourly rate for employee time was converted to USD, for those not paid in USD.
- The average hourly rate for coaches time factors in variability in global rates, where $125 USD was used for coaching time and $75 USD was used for any additional meetings.
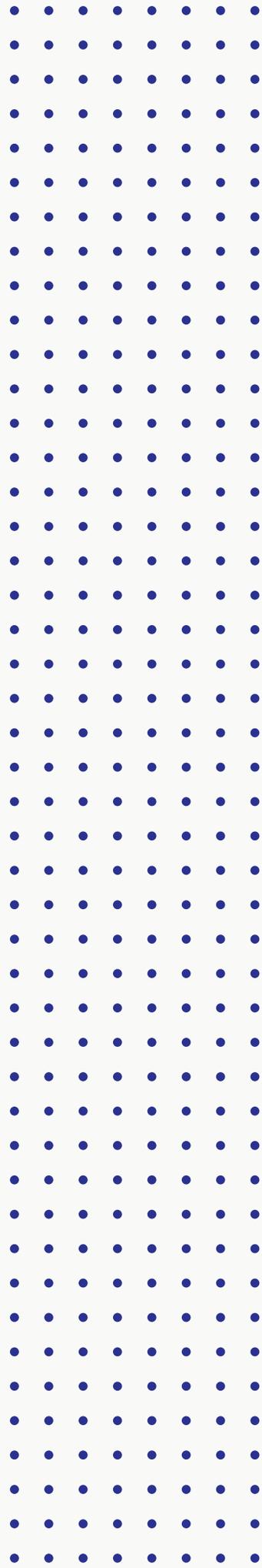
The returns

Including an estimated hourly rate of the coaches that volunteered their time for the program: the return on investing in a leaders' development **was 277%,** based on the indicators we measured.

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\$116,570.88 - \$30,903.84}{\$30,903.84}$$

Removing coaches' hourly rate because they contributed their time:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\$116,570.88 - \$12,018.42}{\$12,018.42}$$

Our ROI increases to 870%.

Conclusion

When working on the community level to stimulate local-level development through local leadership—coaching is a uniquely powerful tool. The adaptability of the practice allows local visions and perspectives to be factored into the leadership development process. The focus on transforming leaders' mindsets and capabilities enables sustainable change through deep investment in the right human capital. Finally, this program has shown that coaching creates meaningful organizational, personal, and programmatic outcomes in the community-led development sector. It's time for us to invest in professional coaching for community leaders.

EthicalCoach

www.ethicalcoach.org

The Hunger Project

www.thp.org

The Movement for Community-led Development

https://mcld.org