

# “Pressing the Right Buttons”

*Jennifer Musisi for New City Leadership*

## *Practitioner Guide*

JORRIT DE JONG AND ERIC WEINBERGER

### Overview

A case study is a story about how a person or group of people faced and dealt with challenges or opportunities. It is based on desk research and interviews with key actors but does not provide analysis or conclusions. Written from the perspective of the protagonist(s), it is designed to raise questions and generate discussion about the issues they faced. Cases are meant to help participants develop analytic reasoning, listening, and judgment skills to strengthen their decision-making ability in other contexts.

A case-based conversation is a way to anchor a conceptual discussion to concrete examples. It can bring a case to life and allow participants to place themselves in the shoes of the case protagonist(s), while also allowing a variety of perspectives to surface. This guide is designed to help you lead a conversation about the case, “Pressing the Right Buttons: Jennifer Musisi for New City Leadership.”

### Role of a Facilitator

The facilitator leads a conversation with a clear beginning and end, ensures that everyone is heard, and keeps the group focused. The conversation can be broken into three distinct segments: exploring the case, applying the central questions of the case to your organization’s challenges, and formulating takeaway lessons. Some facilitation tips and tricks to keep in mind are below.

#### **BEFORE the discussion**

Make sure everyone takes the time to read the case. Participants also have the option to fill out the attached worksheet to prepare themselves for the case discussion. If you choose to use the worksheet, make sure you bring enough printouts for all. When setting up the room, think about situating participants where they can see you and each other. Designate a notetaker as well as a place where you can take notes on a flipchart or white board. Plan for at least sixty to seventy-five minutes to discuss the case and takeaways and have a clock in the room and/or an assigned timekeeper. Mention that you may interrupt participants in the interest of progressing the conversation.

**DURING the discussion**

Encourage participants to debate and share opinions. State very clearly that there is no right or wrong “answer” to the case—cases are written so that reasonable people can disagree and debate different ideas and approaches. Be careful not to allow yourself or others to dominate the discussion. If the conversation is getting heated or bogged down on a particular issue, consider allowing participants to talk in pairs for a few minutes before returning to a full group discussion. Do not worry about reaching consensus, just make the most of this opportunity to practice thinking and learning together!

## Case Synopsis

Jennifer Musisi, a career civil servant most recently with the Uganda Revenue Authority, was appointed by President Museveni as executive director (equivalent to city manager) of a new governing body for Uganda’s capital, the Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA). Previously, power in Kampala had been held by an elected body, the Kampala City Council (KCC), dominated by opposition politicians and notorious for corruption, poor service delivery, and inadequate tax and revenue collections.

As head of the new KCCA, a quasi-corporate authority now under central government, Musisi’s job was to change all that, and quickly, by fighting corruption and modernizing (thereby increasing) tax and revenue collections. She had to decide which municipal fees or taxes would recoup the greatest revenues for maximum impact on her city-improvement agenda of better roads, clean streets and markets, modern drainage and lighting, and more.

The case describes an extremely difficult, often dangerous situation in a fast-growing African capital city, and a leader determined to make Kampala the model city she believed it could be. *How did Musisi even begin? What was the best strategy for raising own-source revenue (OSR)? How did she navigate the politics—both ways, that is, with opposition city politicians who cultivate the poor, and also with President Museveni and his governing NRM party?*

## Conversation Plan

**Part 1: Exploring the Case** (20–30 minutes)

The goal of this part of the conversation is to review the case from the point of view of the people involved. Use the board to notate opinions and reasoning using the questions below. (Sample answers included if needed as prompts.)

- *What social problems did Musisi want to address? (e.g., dirty streets, crime, poor services)*
- *What government problems did Musisi want to address? (e.g., corruption, complacency, underqualified staff)*
- *Musisi wanted to take on both social and government/administrative problems, but what did she do first and why?*

**Part 2a: Diagnosing Collaborative Challenges** (20–30 minutes)

This part of the discussion allows participants to analyze what Musisi and the KCCA were attempting and why.

- *How would you characterize Musisi’s approach? Was she an effective agent of change? Consider these topics:*
  - Setting priorities (e.g., increasing revenues; extending the taxpayer base; bringing order to Kampala)
  - Communicating her vision to stakeholders (e.g., embodying a powerful work ethic; lobbying Parliament or President Museveni; developing technology for public services)
  - Dealing with resistance (e.g., entrenched collection agents like the UTODA transit cartel; local politicians—nominally her KCCA colleagues; street vendors)
- *Did Musisi create sustainable change?*
  - A key goal is arriving at “irreversibility,” where the change the protagonist led is successful and sufficiently grounded to last. *Did Musisi reach that point—and if so, when? For revenue collections, what would mark the tipping point toward true sustainability?*

**Part 2b: Application** (20 minutes)

Participants may break into groups or plenary to apply the concepts discussed to their own challenges. The following question is suggested to structure this section:

- *Consider an issue in your own work. In attempting to implement change, what is your approach with respect to the three topics (setting priorities, communicating your vision, and dealing with resistance) outlined above?*

**Part 3: Formulating Lessons** (15–20 minutes)

This part of the conversation focuses on the case lessons that participants will continue to reflect on and apply to collaborative challenges in their own work.

