

## Module 6: Developing People

### **Mentoring Relationships: Small Group Discussion**

This exercise provides an opportunity to reflect on the benefits and challenges of mentoring relationships for individuals and organizations. Keep in mind that mentoring relationships can be formal or informal, structured or unstructured.

The discussion questions are adapted from two Mentoring Modules produced by the Canadian Coalition For Global Health Research, *An Introduction to Mentorship* and *Competency in Mentoring* (June 2007). (Accessed online at [http://www.ccghr.ca/docs/Mentoring\\_Modules/Mentoring\\_Module1\\_e.pdf](http://www.ccghr.ca/docs/Mentoring_Modules/Mentoring_Module1_e.pdf) and [http://www.ccghr.ca/docs/Mentoring\\_Modules/Mentoring\\_Module2\\_e.pdf](http://www.ccghr.ca/docs/Mentoring_Modules/Mentoring_Module2_e.pdf).)

*The first set of questions lends itself to discussion in small to medium-sized groups. For the second set of questions, exploring personal experiences, you may wish to break into smaller groups of 2 to 4 people. The questions are structured to flow from reflection toward problem solving and action.*

#### I. Mentoring Discussion Questions

- 1) Are there any 'defining moments' in your life or your career that were a direct or indirect result of participating in a mentoring relationship?
- 2) What are the benefits of a mentoring relationship
  - a. for the mentor?
  - b. for the mentee/protégé?
  - c. for the organization?
- 3) How does mentorship strengthen capacity in the maternal and child health field?
- 4) How does your organization recognize or reward mentoring?
- 5) Does your organization consider mentoring to be an important part of its culture? Does this affect the willingness of individuals to engage in mentoring relationships?
- 6) Would your organization benefit from a greater emphasis on mentoring?
- 7) What resources are available to you to facilitate mentorship in your organization?
- 8) What are the challenges to achieving or sustaining direct, indirect or collegial mentorship in your organization?
- 9) What strategies could address those challenges?

*Suggested next step: Create an action plan for promoting mentorship in your organization, using the benefits you identified as an advocacy tool.*

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### II. Exploring Personal Experiences with Mentoring Relationships:

- 1) Describe a setting you've worked or learned in that incorporated mentorship.
  - a. How was the relationship initiated?
  - b. Was the mentorship formal or informal?
  - c. What was it about the mentor or mentee that contributed to your decision to enter into the mentoring relationship?
  - d. What impact did the mentorship have on the mentor and on the mentored?
  - e. What made the mentorship effective? What made it ineffective?
- 2) What explicit or implicit elements of the relationship were most important to you?
- 3) What elements were not present but would have made the relationship more effective?
- 4) What kinds of problems or dysfunction can occur in a mentoring relationship?
- 5) What personal and administrative strategies can be used to prevent or respond to problems or dysfunction in mentoring relationships?