

## **Mentorship for Entrepreneurship Action Team: Challenges and Recommendations for Building Mentorship Programmes.**

### **Introduction:**

The mentorship for entrepreneurship action team conducted a review of 7 global mentorship programmes using the Youth Business International (YBI) mentorship diagnostic tool. This review highlighted key challenges that organizations face when implementing mentoring programmes. Considering this, this resource highlights some of the challenges identified and recommendations to address these pertinent challenges.

### **Key Challenges Facing Mentorship Programmes:**

For the 7 mentorship programmes reviewed across the globe the following key challenges facing global mentorship programmes were raised:

- Low motivation of young people in the process of mentoring.
- The Digital divide which hinders the most marginalized from accessing virtual mentorship programmes.
- Mentees or mentors disappearing during the relations.
- Keeping mentors motivated during the project.

### **Recommendations from Youth Business International (YBI) Mentoring Standards:**

To address some of the following challenges and build robust mentorship programmes, YBI mentoring standards provides some recommendations and useful guidance that is highlighted below:

**Recruitment** – Finding people to be mentors is the critical first step in launching any mentoring programme. Programmes need clarity on criteria for recruitment and strategies on where you will find mentors and how you will engage them. It is necessary to have recruitment channels identified and communication materials in place for those volunteer mentors most suitable for your target audience.

**Screening & Selection** - The process of screening and selection performed by an organization ensures that the right match is made between the work to be done and the person who will do it. A robust screening and selection process will help to ensure that the volunteers meet the criteria and are safe to work with your entrepreneurs. It is essential to have an established process for those candidates deemed not suitable on this occasion.

**Training and onboarding** – In order for all involved to gain maximum value and learning from their mentoring relationship, the evidence tells us that providing a learning opportunity to prepare both the mentor and mentee is critical to programme success. Induction training for mentors covers the basics

of roles and responsibilities, developmental relationships, techniques for mentors, planning and preparing for mentees, and ways to get the most from the relationship. Core techniques include active listening and guidance on how to ask the right questions. Training ideally provides opportunities for practice and feedback. Planning is required to determine training content and material, who will be delivering the training, how long training sessions will be and how quality will be measured.

**Monitoring** - Once successfully matched, a mentoring relationship is confidential to the mentor and mentee, yet it is important that regular check-ins are scheduled and that the Mentoring Programme Manager understands if there are challenges. Monitoring is important as it both supports pairs and ensures that the organization can track programme successes or challenges.

**Motivation** - Mentors voluntarily contribute their time and expertise. Their ongoing development requires investment and support. A motivation and development strategy needs to be integral in the programme design. This is often overlooked but failing to motivate your mentors may lead to challenges. The more skilled your mentors, the easier they are to match and the better the experience will be for your mentees. Motivation can come from recognition through mentor awards, the opportunity to network with other mentors, and ongoing training especially when practically focused with discussions of real-life challenges and successes with mentees.