

# Mentorship Program 2022: Successful Collaborations

**In 2022**, the Community of Practice (CoP) held its third edition of the Mentorship Program from June to October with the goal to strengthen long-term peer-to-peer relationships in the DRL CoP, and fuel meaningful personal and professional change. Individuals from the CoP community from all over Iraq were paired up based on similar interests - giving them the space to connect with each other one-on-one beyond the usual CoP focal points. Mentors and mentees met up on a regular basis to knowledge share and collaborate on their shared objectives that they defined at the start of the program.

In total, 11 pairs - 15 males and 7 females - consisting of both subgrantees and primes completed the program from 15 organizations. Topics covered included career and professional development (such as time management, CV building, and communication), networking, working in the humanitarian sector, project management, advocacy, and sector-related topics (such as human rights and gender).

For example, Murtadha Ali Altoblany from Al Firdaws Organization for Peacebuilding and Mentor Adil Ahmed Al Jumaili from Al-Mortaqa Foundation for Development said that Following the completion of the program, participants voiced their enjoyment of the program and that they appreciated the opportunity to connect with and learn from their mentor/mentee. Mentor Zhalian Ahmed from the National Democratic Institute noted that

*"it was a refreshing and encouraging experience with someone from NGOs who are not a colleague. The absence of barriers and work responsibilities made the mentorship actual and open."*

Indeed, it was noted that they increased their knowledge and skills, especially for new organizations. Mentee Zhwan Hasan from Search for Common Ground said

*"I feel more aware of the situation of local NGOs and the challenges they are facing."*

Indeed, mentees became more confident in their professional career and on a personal level. Mentor Yousef Jassim from Mercy Corps said that

*"during the program, I was able to motivate the mentee to seek opportunities that take her out of the comfort zone"*

while Ibrahim Al-Reasy from HOPE Organization mentioned that he contributed to

*"developing the mentees' reflective thinking skills and abilities, in addition to developing their research capabilities, through workshops, work research or training courses."*

Since the end, many of the pairs have stayed in touch to continue sharing resources for their programs and have even become friends on a personal basis. Mentee Shashank Singh Chauhan from SEED Foundation stated that he and his mentor from Heartland Alliance

*"will continue to meet to discuss collaboration opportunities between our organizations"*

an apt example for how the mentorship program inspired collaboration across the community. Indeed, the mentorship program was highly valued by those who participated as it provided a unique experience to connect and share experiences on a meaningful level that enhanced both the mentors and mentees skill-set and knowledge and set the groundwork for future collaborations between different organizations.

