

MODULE 2

FACILITATION AND MENTORSHIP



U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

▶ **MODULE 2.1**

THE ROLE OF FACILITATION IN EVENT-BASED SURVEILLANCE TRAINING

Defining Facilitation

Facilitation is a form of teaching that puts the student at the center of the learning process. It asks them to actively engage with the curriculum to develop their understanding and skills under the expert guidance of the facilitator. In a facilitation setting, students are more like ‘participants’ in the learning process; the classroom is an arena for experimentation, discussion, and small group activities; and the facilitator is chief navigator and subject matter guide.

Facilitation techniques are frequently used in adult education settings because adults respond well to active engagement in the learning process and being asked to take responsibility for their learning. Additionally, they have experiences and existing knowledge that can be valuable sources of learning if they are allowed to operate in a learner-centered environment, rather than being told what they need to know by the ‘expert,’ as can happen in more traditional classroom environments.

How Does It Differ From Mentorship?

Facilitation can be distinguished from mentorship in that mentorship usually involves a sustained relationship between the mentor and mentee, whereas facilitation often involves just a single encounter between the facilitator and participants. In mentorship, the mentor functions as an experienced and trusted advisor to the mentee, whereas in facilitation, the facilitator acts as a learning guide who helps participants to find the answers for themselves. More information on mentorship can be found in *Module 2.2 The Role of Mentorship in Event-Based Surveillance* of this module.

Key Principles of Facilitation Within the Scope of the Training Curriculum for Event-Based Surveillance in Health Facilities and Communities and Internet-Event Based Surveillance

Facilitation can be distinguished from more traditional ways of teaching according to the following principles:

- ▶ It recognizes that learners must be intellectually active to learn.
- ▶ It helps students reach their own conclusions by encouraging critical inquiry.
- ▶ It is an act of guiding students to the right answers rather than telling them what they are.
- ▶ It fosters self-directed learning.

Within the scope of the *Training Curriculum for Event-Based Surveillance in Health Facilities and Communities and Internet-Event Based Surveillance*, these principles are applied by:

- ▶ Providing frequent opportunities for active learning through small group discussions, role-plays, and case study analyses,
- ▶ Developing critical inquiry using brainstorming and question and answer techniques,
- ▶ Encouraging multiple viewpoints while helping participants see how they fit or diverge with expert advice from the field, and
- ▶ Providing opportunities for students to reflect on the learning process and what is needed to achieve the learning objectives.

Knowing Your Audience

This approach to facilitation combines several approaches to adult education that have been developed according to the unique characteristics of adult learners. Adult learners are used to taking responsibility for their actions and making decisions for themselves, and therefore need to be considered by others as capable of self-direction. They come to the classroom with a wealth of experience and various beliefs that should be recognized and valued as a source of learning in themselves. Adult learners need to know why they are learning and what they will be learning in advance. They are ready to learn what they need to know to deal with situations they will encounter in their real lives, and they need to be actively involved in the learning process.

These characteristics inform the principles that should be used to guide adult education program delivery:

- ▶ Set clear goals and learning objectives in advance and communicate these to your learners at the start of each learning intervention.
- ▶ Wherever possible, present authentic, real-world scenarios that are relevant and useful to the situations that learners will encounter in their lives.
- ▶ Connect learners' experiences and existing knowledge to the curriculum being taught.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for reflection about what is being learned and how it is being learned.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for learning through activities rather than instructions.
- ▶ Know your learners and, wherever possible, tailor learning to their needs, objectives, and the context in which the learning will be applied.

FACILITATING EVENT-BASED SURVEILLANCE TRAINING

Who Should Facilitators Be?

Facilitators will be selected to assist in event-based surveillance (EBS) training at intermediate, health facility, and community levels. Facilitators should have experience with indicator-based surveillance (IBS) in their countries, as well as have a deep understanding of all aspects of EBS. In addition, they should have knowledge and expertise on group facilitation using adult learning theories and principles, and should be familiar with the training materials in advance.

Facilitator Role

Facilitators will be tasked with effectively administering EBS training to staff at various administrative levels. This includes preparation and set-up of the training; delivery of the training and management of participants; and reinforcing concepts and encouraging learning for the duration of the training. Facilitators should also remain neutral and objective throughout the training process.

Facilitator Skills

In addition to familiarity with adult learning principles and group facilitation techniques, facilitators should possess the following skills and competencies:

- ▶ Strong communication skills to effectively communicate EBS concepts, build rapport with participants, and keep them on track throughout the training,
- ▶ Active listening to accurately understand participants' needs and understanding of EBS concepts,
- ▶ The ability to read and manage the room, including making changes as necessary to accommodate participants' learning pace and group dynamics to ensure everyone is comfortable participating, and
- ▶ The ability to remain flexible and exhibit a positive and encouraging attitude throughout the training.

Facilitation Techniques

Facilitators should be familiar with the following facilitation techniques, as they are used throughout the *Training Curriculum for Event-Based Surveillance in Health Facilities and Communities and Internet-Event Based Surveillance* to support the principles described earlier in this chapter.

Icebreaker Activities

These are simple activities to use at the beginning of training to get participants engaging with each other for the first time in a fun and non-demanding way. As the name suggests, these activities are used to break down barriers between participants and help position the training as a group project requiring frequent communication between group members, including the facilitator.

Energizers

These activities can be used to break up the training and re-energize participants whenever the facilitator senses the group is losing focus or tiring during the workshops. They are simple, fun activities, such as the lie detector game, that provide light relief from the serious work at hand. The facilitator should be alert to signs that participants are tiring and feel free to use an energizer, even if it's not scheduled in the agenda.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming sessions are used to generate ideas about a topic or problem by getting participants to articulate what they already know, what they imagine the topic is about, or what the solution might be. There should be no right or wrong answers in a brainstorming session, as the aim is to generate ideas and solutions where previously there were none or only a limited number. The facilitator's job is to encourage the participants to be as spontaneous and creative as possible by valuing all responses equally, withholding judgement, and ensuring that all ideas are recorded during the session. Once the brainstorming is finished, the facilitator should help the group evaluate the proposals based on their merits.

Small-Group Discussions

Facilitators will frequently be asked to set up small group discussions during EBS training. These are usually guided discussions where the group is given a set of questions to answer together. Small group discussions give all participants an opportunity to be involved in the conversation, especially those who might not feel confident to speak in front of the whole group. They enable collaborative, active learning, and generate multiple perspectives on the topic. The facilitator should monitor these discussions and be ready to steer the conversation in the right direction if groups are struggling for ideas or are clearly off-course, and be prepared to answer questions if they arise. Feedback sessions provide an opportunity for groups to present their answers and for the facilitator to guide participants in evaluating the merits of the answers being presented.

Plenary Discussions

In plenary discussions, the facilitator helps the group as a whole develop their understanding of the topic using a range of questioning techniques such as: asking for clarification; questioning the underlying assumptions inherent in participants' answers; asking for reasons and evidence for certain viewpoints; teasing out implications and consequences; and asking questions about the question such as, 'Why do you think I asked that?'. In this way, facilitators help participants develop their critical thinking about the topic and encourage active learning.

Lectures

Lectures are used throughout the *Training Curriculum for Event-Based Surveillance in Health Facilities and Communities and Internet-Event Based Surveillance* to consolidate the discussion work and present model answers and threshold concepts. They are an important method of communicating key definitions and processes that are mission-critical to EBS and for which participants need a clear answer. Participants can still be active during lectures by making notes in their journals and participant guides and asking clarification questions if needed.

Role-Plays

Role-plays are used at various points in the *Training Curriculum for Event-Based Surveillance in Health Facilities and Communities and Internet-Event Based Surveillance* to facilitate learning on several levels. Firstly, role-plays help contextualize learning by getting participants to imagine the real-life environments in which scenarios are taking place. This can help them develop a richer understanding of what they will experience in the field and help them prepare for unpredictable and sometimes hostile settings. Secondly, they are a way for students to practice what they are learning by enacting processes and using communication strategies they will need to use in their surveillance roles. It is, therefore, a great way to help participants develop skills. Thirdly, role-plays can help participants develop their understanding of different viewpoints and behaviors by asking them to take on the role of others and feel what they are feeling and act as they would act. This helps participants develop empathy with those they will be working with and choose appropriate strategies to achieve desired results.

Case Studies

Case study analyses provide participants with opportunities to learn from authentic, real-world scenarios so that they can predict how things might play out in the field based on lessons learned from the past. They can be used to develop participants' analytical, problem-solving, and decision-making skills by asking them to identify successful strategies from the examples being presented. The facilitator thus has an important role to play in helping participants make these connections and see applications to their own work in the field.

▶ **MODULE 2.2**

THE ROLE OF MENTORSHIP IN EVENT-BASED SURVEILLANCE

Defining Mentorship

Mentorship is a sustained, reciprocal relationship between a person with significant experience in a field (the mentor) and a person with less experience (the mentee), with the purpose of developing the mentee's professional and personal capabilities in that field. Mentors provide mentees with advice, support, and counsel, through coaching, teaching, and modelling behaviors needed for mentees to become established members of their professional domain.

Mentoring in professional settings provides benefits to both mentors and mentees. Mentoring helps mentees achieve career goals such as better performance on the job, enhanced professional identity, increased career satisfaction, less stress and role conflict, promotion, and greater acceptance within the organization as a whole. Mentors may derive satisfaction and a sense of achievement through their mentees' successes, as well as a greater commitment to their own role. Mentoring may also equip mentors with a deeper understanding of how it relates to their own personal goals and the goals of the organization.

Key Principles of Mentorship

Mentorship typically requires a combination of knowledge, attitude, and skills. Mentors require a deep understanding of the domain in which they operate, as well as the domain of mentorship itself. It is not enough to be an expert in the field. Knowledge of mentoring methods and when to apply them are essential for promoting the growth of the mentee. Mentors and mentees also require the right attitude for the relationship to be successful. Trust, mutual respect, and a sincere desire to achieve positive outcomes for the mentee should be the drivers of the relationship. As with most domains, mentorship comes with a set of techniques that, when skillfully applied, can help both mentor and mentee achieve their goals. Skills such as coaching, challenging the mentee, sponsoring them to take on new roles, affirming and encouraging them to take on increasing responsibility, providing emotional support, protecting them, and correcting them when needed are just some of the techniques that can be used during the mentorship. With the right combination of knowledge, attitude, and skills, the mentee will achieve the growth they desire, benefiting them, their mentor, and the organization as a whole.

How Does Mentorship Differ From Facilitation?

Mentorship can be distinguished from facilitation in that mentorship is usually sustained over time. The mentor and mentee enter into a relationship in which the mentor functions as an experienced and trusted advisor to the mentee. The mentor's job is to listen, provide feedback, help their mentee explore the options available, provide them with the resources needed to support their decision-making process, and help them develop new capabilities. In contrast, facilitation may involve just a single encounter between facilitator and participant with the facilitator guiding the participant to find the answers for themselves rather than coaching them towards answers based on their experience. More information on facilitation can be found in *Module 2.1 The Role of Facilitation in Event-Based Surveillance Training* in this module.

MENTORSHIP FOR EVENT-BASED SURVEILLANCE IMPLEMENTATION

As event-based surveillance (EBS) is a relatively new concept, mentorship can be employed to develop and sustain the capacity of public health workers to implement EBS within their countries. In a given country, a network of mentors with an in-depth knowledge of EBS and how it is applied in their countries can provide peer-to-peer support and training for the implementation of EBS. Mentors should be trained on all aspects of EBS,

how to be a mentor, and how to train public health workers in EBS. They should be involved in the training of public health workers, as well as providing ongoing support to them tailored to their individual needs.

Why Is It Important?

EBS mentors play an important role in increasing the number of public health workers who are able to implement EBS within their countries, as well as helping address the gaps in knowledge of EBS and ways to implement it. Mentorship allows for increased understanding of EBS concepts, which are likely to be new for many staff and may otherwise not be acquired as thoroughly. It will also contribute to the development of a sustainable and country-owned EBS program. As mentors will be nationals of the implementing country, they can ensure that mentees receive contextually appropriate EBS mentorship.

Mentor Role

EBS mentors should have a strong background in epidemiology and surveillance, as well as previous training in, and a deep understanding of, all aspects of EBS. They should have facilitation skills and the ability to engage adult learners in training as they will play a vital role in delivering the *Training Curriculum for Event-Based Surveillance in Health Facilities and Communities and Internet-Event Based Surveillance*. They will need to be committed to intermediate and/or long-term mentoring for those implementing EBS, and should be wholly committed to the successful implementation of EBS in their country. Additionally, mentors should be willing to advocate for EBS among a diverse group of stakeholders at the community, local, intermediate, and regional levels.

Mentors are expected to support the advocacy of EBS to a diverse group of stakeholders, train staff in EBS, and support the implementation of EBS in their countries, in both the short- and long-term. This means that they should remain available to provide guidance and assistance to staff on EBS as needed throughout EBS implementation.

Mentor Skills

To fulfill the mentorship role, individuals should possess the following skills and competencies:

- ▶ Strong interpersonal and communication skills,
- ▶ Ability to build rapport with staff involved in EBS implementation,
- ▶ Ability to promote and maintain interest in EBS implementation among staff,
- ▶ Ability to effectively correct, direct, and advise staff in a positive and encouraging manner, and
- ▶ A positive attitude.