



**EARTHE**

## **Activity 2**

# **Digital toolkit for innovative curriculum and methodological development**

**Module - Leadership**

**Method – Mentoring and coaching**



## Module 5 - Leadership

# Case study - Empowered to Lead: Peer Coaching for Community Activation

### ***Related Method - Mentoring and coaching***

#### ***Context and Background***

This case is drawn from a local NGO that provides leadership training for women aged 30–50 from rural and underserved communities. Most participants had minimal access to formal education and low self-confidence in public or professional roles. The organization aimed to equip them with tools to lead micro-projects in their local areas—ranging from community clean-ups to adult literacy circles.

#### ***Problem / Challenge Presented***

Although enthusiastic, the women showed hesitation in initiating leadership actions. Many expressed fears of making mistakes or “not being taken seriously.” In group sessions, some voices dominated, while others withdrew. Trainers realized that traditional leadership training (presentations, planning tools) was not sufficient participants needed personalized support, confidence-building, and safe spaces for reflection and articulation.

#### ***Actions Taken / Method Applied***

The NGO introduced **peer mentoring and coaching sessions**, using the *Leadership Conversations Lab* and *Goal Map Mentoring Exchange* from the EARTHE methodology. Participants were paired in rotating roles of mentor and learner. Structured conversation guides helped focus the dialogue on personal growth, community goals, and perceived barriers. Sessions were held weekly over six weeks, integrated with project planning.

#### ***Outcomes and Results***

Participants reported **increased confidence** in expressing their ideas and asking for help. Over 70% successfully initiated small community actions (e.g., organizing workshops, mobilizing neighbours). Peer relationships strengthened participants continued meeting informally after the program to support one another. One woman, previously silent in group



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



**EARTHE**

settings, began facilitating the NGO's monthly meetings. Trainers noted a shift from passive to **proactive participation**, with more curiosity and resilience.

### ***Lessons Learned***

Empowerment grows not from teaching, but from **being truly listened to**.

Leadership development must start from within—clarity, confidence, and voice.

The **non-directive approach** of coaching helped participants build ownership, rather than dependence on facilitators.

### ***Key Success Factors***

Safe relational environment where participants felt emotionally supported

Structured tools (e.g., question prompts, goal templates) that provided a framework without pressure

Peer-to-peer dynamics that removed hierarchy and fostered mutual respect

Consistency and repetition, allowing confidence to grow gradually

### ***Challenges Encountered and How They Were Addressed***

Some participants were unsure how to “coach” a peer. Trainers modelled conversations and reassured that “you don’t need to be an expert to be a great listener.”

Difficult life experiences surfaced during mentoring. Facilitators offered private check-ins and established emotional boundaries.

Weekly follow-up and celebrating small wins kept motivation high and participation stable.

### ***Applicability / Recommendations for Educators***

- Use **mentoring and coaching** as a core component of leadership training, especially in contexts with emotional or confidence-related barriers.
- Start with **scripted structures**, then gradually increase openness as trust builds.
- **Model vulnerability and listening** as a trainer—your behaviour sets the tone.
- Integrate coaching with **real-world goals**, so participants see tangible value in their reflections.
- Encourage participants to **mentor others** later on—this creates sustainability and ripple effects in the community.