**APPENDIX 1. SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**Introduction**

Thank you very much for coming today. We are working with the Ministry of Health to learn about health professionals’ motivation for working in rural and remote areas in [INSERT NAME OF COUNTRY]. We are interested in understanding the factors that you think about when you decide where you want to work as a health professional. This focus group should take approximately 1-1.5 hours. Your participation will help us to create the survey questionnaire that we will administer as part of this study.

[HAVE EACH PERSON READ CONSENT FORM AND SIGN]

I will now ask you some questions. Please let me know if anything is unclear or confusing.

**Introductory question**

1. Can you please introduce yourself?

**Experience working in rural areas**

2. Are you from a town/urban area or a rural village?

3. Have you ever worked or lived in a rural area?

**Main content**

4. What are some of the important issues you consider when thinking about where you want to work?

5. Do you think working in rural areas allows you to provide the kind and quality of health care you want to provide (e.g., the scope of practice you were trained to provide)? How important is this to you when deciding where you would like to work?

6. How would you compare the quality (e.g., cleanliness, equipment, etc.) of health facilities in rural areas as compared to urban areas? How important is the quality of the facility to you when deciding where you would like to work? What particular factors related to facility quality are most important (e.g., equipment, reliable drug supply, etc.)? Is safety an issue?

7. How would you compare health managers in rural areas to urban areas? Is there a difference in the support the Ministry of Health gives to rural facilities as compared to urban facilities? How important is management support to you when deciding where you will work?

8. Should there be a difference in salary for workers posted in rural areas as compared to urban areas? What salary increase for rural postings do you think would motivate workers to take those positions?

9. Are living conditions important to you?

• Would you prefer an allowance for housing, or rather that the Ministry provide housing?

• What particular aspects of living conditions are most important? Communications (phone, Internet, etc.), water, electricity?

• Is access to social activities important?

10. Are transport considerations important to you?

• Would you prefer an allowance for a car or public transport, or rather that the Ministry provide transport?

11. Are considerations related to your children’s education important?

• In terms of children’s education what would make working in a rural area more attractive (e.g., education allowance)?

12. Are there any other allowances that would be important to motivate health workers to work in rural areas? Are bonuses important? What should bonuses be given for? How much should bonuses be?

13. How would you compare the opportunities for career promotion if you work in a rural area and an urban area? What should the career promotion opportunities be to make working in a rural area more attractive? How important are these opportunities when considering where you will work?

14. How would you compare opportunities for in-service training if you work in a rural area and an urban area? What should the in-service training opportunities be to make working in a rural area more attractive? How important are in-service training opportunities when considering where you will work?

15. How would you compare opportunities for study leave if you work in a rural area and an urban area? How important are study leave opportunities when considering where you will work? How many years do you think you should have to work in a rural area versus an urban area before you are given study leave?

16. How would you compare community support given to health workers in rural areas and in urban areas? How important is community support to you when considering where you will work?

17. Are there any other factors, which have not yet been mentioned, that are important to you when deciding where you will work?

We have now discussed several unique factors that may affect your decision on where you choose to work as a health professional. These factors include:

• The types of health care you may provide (scope of practice)

• The quality of facilities, including availability of equipment, drug supply, etc.

• Supportive management

• Career mentoring programs

• Salary

• Housing

• Living conditions (electricity, water, social activities)

• Transportation

• Performance bonuses

• Children’s education

• Career advancement/promotion opportunities

• Opportunities for continued education

• Community support

• (Add any other factors mentioned that seem important).

18. Thinking about these factors, please rank which four are most important to you, starting with the most important.

(Facilitator: Distribute a copy of the table below to each participant for them to rank their top four choices. Collect the form from the participants when they are done.)

**Job Factor Ranking\* Form**

Considering the job factors below, please rank which four factors are most important to you, starting with the most important as #1.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Factor | Ranking (#1-4) |
| Scope of practice |  |
| Quality of the facility |  |
| Supportive management |  |
| Salary |  |
| Housing |  |
| Living conditions |  |
| Transportation |  |
| Performance bonuses |  |
| Children’s education |  |
| Career advancement/promotion opportunities |  |
| Opportunities for continued education |  |
| Community support |  |
| Other: |  |
| Other: |  |
| Other: |  |

\* Where ranking values are 1=most important, 2=second most important, 3=third most important, 4=fourth most important), then the overall ranking is determined by adding up the rank value (if rank=1, then 4 points; if rank=2, then 3 points; if rank=3, then 2 points, if rank=4, then 1 point).