

AFRICA MENTORING THE MENTORS PROGRAM, June 17-18, 2013, Mombasa, Kenya

Notes on individual/institutional/global barriers and solutions group exercise

<p><i>Individual barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust • Lack of time • Competence of the mentor • Poor communication skills • Personality differences • Unclear benefit to the mentor • Cultural differences • Lack of commitment from the mentor • Mentor having bad experiences or no experience with mentorship (never been mentored) • Lack of funding • Lack of mentee not taking initiative • Lack of insight (into what is going on with mentee) • Culture that does not encourage dialogue – mentee cannot “talk back” • Intimidating mentors • Honesty, straightforward • Hierarchy (power dynamics) • Gender dynamics • Competition threats (real or perceived) from the mentee • Lack of realistic expectations by mentees 	<p><i>Individual solutions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs • Create awareness about mentoring within institutions • Time-management skills • Formalizing orientation of incoming students to mentorship culture of institution • Adopting a mentoring program to the context • Clearly define expectations of a mentor-mentee relationship – not too formal, not too informal • Allow multiple levels of communication – develop emotional intelligence • Implementing policies that provide structure to the mentor-mentee relationship
<p><i>Institutional barriers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring is not mainstream in many institutions – not part of the institutional framework • Lack of guidelines within institutions on how to mentor, mentor-mentee relationships, duplications • No recognition at level of institution for mentoring (neither recognized nor encouraged) • Sheer numbers of trainees compared to mentors • No opportunities within an institution to implement anything innovative, which would include mentoring • No resources to put into practice what you want to do • Lack of private office space 	<p><i>Institutional solutions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an institutional framework with documentation • Develop guidelines for the institution (how many mentees each mentor can have, etc.) • Provide protected time for mentoring • Define roles and nomenclature of mentoring • Orienting the mentees to the culture of mentoring at that institution • Clearly spell out the benefits to faculty and to the institutions for developing a mentoring program, institutional framework (Benefits to faculty: recognition, awards, counting towards promotion, providing training opportunities; Benefits to institution:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of awareness of the need for mentoring • Lack of nomenclature – what is a mentor? What is an advisor? • No training opportunities • Resistance to change within institutions 	<p>making the business case for mentoring, which makes the importance of evaluation even more heightened)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making mentoring tools widely available and accessible to mentors and mentees
<p>Global barriers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequalities in support for mentoring local mentees versus North-based mentees (which will impact mentors' ability to be present for local mentees) • Lack of resources (or lack of creativity to work within current resources) • Perceived inequality around commitment of resources in North versus South • Lack of expertise in certain fields (e.g. traditional medicine, not enough mentors to go around) • Lack of resources in information-communication technology which you could have used for mentoring • Lack of opportunities for networking • Conflicts of interest • Gender dynamics • Paternalism (North-South, within an institution) 	<p>Global solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal evaluation of mentoring programs (business model) • Communicate best practices and success stories • Professional development – provide trainings • Collaboration between North-South – true collaboration, not just one way; define the goals of the contract clearly and document • Grants should incorporate some training and development component • Provide global networks: North-South, South-South and South-North • Initiate a global initiative, academy of mentors globally • Get governments to recognize mentoring, put resources into it

Work-life balance

<i>What does it mean?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allocating time to work and then to life without allowing each activity to interfere with the other• Be sensitive to the fact that there are seasons (when children are small versus older, for example)
<i>Effective strategies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize and be able to delegate some of your work• Adapt your definitions and standards of success, prioritize career versus family• Depends on the individual• Time management• Taking time for life can help you energize for work
<i>Time management – differences by setting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time management differences between North-South– private clinics or consultations in evening to make ends meet (CME)• U.S. groups remunerating at African rates rather than international rates (that what causes brain drain)• Being available U.S. time for time differences (collaborative research)

Action plans from 1st day – what did I learn and what do I plan to do?

<p><i>What did I learn from this day about mentoring?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That mentoring can be structured, not informal• Should be mentee-driven relationship• Profiles of faculty on institution website can be helpful• There are areas of mentoring skills that can be taught, teachable tricks (although can old dogs learn new tricks?)• Tools developed by UCSF are helpful – training modules, resources, all helpful in order to provide a template to institutionalize mentoring• Time management skills was helpful – not being consumed by email• Learned that mentoring work needs recognition, support, investment to make the process successful• Desperate need for mentors, even by senior faculty• Work-life balance• Learning to say no to things like reviews, for example• Mentoring is an amalgam of many things: to change the style of mentoring, you may need to change your thinking completely• Advanced form of child-rearing• Mentoring relationship never really ends (lifelong)• A mentor is always also a mentee• If you are in an academic institution, it is not a choice to be a mentor, it is an obligation• Mentorship team was a new concept and makes sense• Can even have a dual relationship with the same person – mentor and mentee. There is value in the other person, even the mentee• Importance of mentoring on personal issues• Sharing challenges with the mentees (crying okay)• “It is a matter requiring more time, thought and commitment than I ever thought”• “The complete and utter importance of a clear mentorship strategy and implementation plan”• “It’s a labor of love”• Overall, if the South is to leapfrog in science, we must mentor <p>7 major themes</p> <p>Emma, please fill in from powerpoint</p> <p>1. Time management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Thinking back, meetings are a major time sink for me”• “How to say no!”• “Manage my day and time better” <p>2. Setting expectations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Some mentees do not know their needs and/or their rights”• “Make a plan before meeting the mentee”• “Need to standardize the mentoring process”• “Give the mentee the mandate to drive the relationship”• “Scheduling time to regularly meet at the outset”
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	3. Tools for mentoring exist
<i>What do I plan to do upon return to my institution?</i>	6 major themes Emma, please fill in from powerpoint
<i>What do I want to talk more about?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference in context between North and South • What if the mentee has a problem? More about mentees and how to change their culture • How to push the mentee to leave the nest?

Mentoring Consultation Clinic – 2nd day

Case #1: Student doing an MPH, registered at local University in Kenya, program started in 2005, had two mentors (supervisors), one assigned and one chosen. Student submitted thesis in 2010 and had multiple issues according to assigned mentor, needed major correcting. However, other mentor (chosen) from other Department signed the thesis without comment. Mentor from the same Department gave multiple corrections but the student said that it was signed by other so why should he correct it? Never got thesis was the outcome

Solutions: Meet with mentoring team all along. Primary (Department mentor) meet with student every 4 weeks and entire team meet (or call) q6 months. Get Chairs involved. Student should be proactive, mentee-driven. Should take initiative to bring his training to completion. Supervisor who reported the problem should have documented electronically all along the suggestions so that student cannot deny the comments. Structured supervision with meeting all along could have averted this. Conflict resolution at this time between the two mentors to come up with a win-win situation. Institution should have a structured mentoring program to monitor all along when things aren't going well.

Case #2: Student in residency (2nd year) and has a new mentor (junior). Working on project and given feedback that is brutal, crushing by the senior mentor. Student leaves the research program and only does clinical work. Mentor gave the project to another student and almost executed now. Original student gave up completely, won't answer calls even.

Solution#2: Create a personal connection, try to figure out if something else is happening with the resident, confront the senior mentor (although new mentor is scared to do that), so maybe go through Department head, etc. Should student have had counseling, mentorship (career mentor) program all along? Does senior mentor need investigation?

Case #3: Mentee's project led to an invention that resulted in a patent. Mentor wants claim on the patent but mentee feels he modified the project to allow for the invention, so he has claim. Questions included – what is the role of the Institute in this case? How will this impact on the mentee's career (not yet finished with the degree and there is an active COI)? What does the mentor and the mentee want? Does legal need to be involved?

Solution#3: Mentor wants to have more ownership of the patent. Mentee willing to do 50:50, but mentor wants more. So, first define what each party wants (fame or fortune?) Invite an independent party to look at the case. Have institutional policies around these sorts of situations. An institutional framework needs to be established for mentoring and these new situations can then be added. Hierarchy inherent in the system which is why these conflicts arise.

Cultural differences and North-South issues (small group):

1. **Issues of time different:** Africans may have other things to juggle, socioeconomic issues, “children have to eat”, have to have another job, juggling family and tribe (village). Solution: Compensation has to be better for academics to allow African academics to focus on their research and not be pulled in so many directions.
2. **Inequalities in collaborations:** Renumeration not at global scale for African collaborators, but at their salary scale in Africa. Should be standardized renumeration (Indiana has a collaboration with Makerere that does this per one of participants; there are KEMRI models –seek out models that are fair when managing grants)
3. **Power dynamics in the South:** Where the mentor is considered the sun and should be worshipped (culture of impunity), mentees must be unassertive and worship . There are some encouraging signs of change, but more solutions are necessary such as empowering students/mentees to talk up more, fight for their rights. The society is paternalistic. Culture is to not like mentees who have too much confidence. So, another solution is to also help in training mentors to not compete with their mentees, help them understanding that mentees have rights, renumerating the mentors
4. **Honesty:** There may be a culture here where honesty and straightforwardness is not at a premium. People don’t want to hurt others’ feelings (“high context”). Be open and transparent (like with budgeting). Be honest with mentee and do not take their projects. Solution is to not only change culture to be more straightforward but to provide documentation, write up plans for publications (authorship order), etc.
5. **Access to resources:** Due to Northerners having more access to resources, they get to dictate the research agenda without always incorporating Southern priorities. Solutions – need to consider an equivalence of the NIH in the South (Kenya is considering something like this). Kenya considering a move to put 2% of GDP into research grants/funding. Another solution is to have North and South sites to pool resources and develop more infrastructure in the South, local labs (one great example is the Infectious Diseases Institute at U. of Nairobi)
6. **Issue of documentation practices:** Recognition that South is more of an oral culture and North is all about documentation (“paper trial”, “electronic record”). Documentation helpful in conflict resolution and there is a contextual difference here where documentation may need to be incorporated more in the African context
7. **Racism and the post-colonial legacy:** Absorption of colonialist notions of inferiority – “we are inferior because we are not white”. These attitudes need to change since they influence the North-South collaborations. An example is that when a white person walks into the Dean’s office with the African collaborator, the Dean listens to the white collaborator. History in Kenya of paying deference to white people; we have a “poverty of spirit” that seems to pervade much of what we do – a lack of confidence. In the medical schools, this colonialist vestige remains, including the legacy of “hierarchy”, never calling a senior person by their first name, etc. (that may not be African, that may be colonialist residue). This is a human condition in Kenya and in many parts of Africa - part of the colonialist legacy. Moreover, authority and value is given to people who earn more (socioeconomic value) instead of to openness.

8. **Mentoring a new concept:** Not really a part of the culture here. There may not be immediate benefits but there are future benefits so we need to advocate for it. "Mentorship adds value, believe in it, start now". "You can only succeed if you stand on the shoulders of giants".
9. **Paternalism:** From early on, taught to speak respectfully to elders, never question authority *even if they are wrong*. Legacy in Africa, not just colonialist residue. Needs to be changed in order to be able to correct wrongs, to be able to not allow impunity for incorrect acts (even issue of inequalities leading to power/sexual imbalances between female mentees and male faculty brought up).
10. **Humility:** Not necessarily a culture of humility among senior faculty, which can be very damaging to the mentor-mentee relationship

Plans from different institutions to start a mentoring program

KEMRI program:

- Need to think of the target group first, but very diverse Departments, types of trainees
- Mentorship is lacking in the institution and needs to be addressed – this was recognized already so capitalize on that feeling and help KEMRI formalize it
- We need to sell this idea and help KEMRI do it well
- This team who came to the mentoring meeting from KEMRI will be the advocacy group. They will team up, write up a report and present a proposal
- They will suggest the establishment of a task force to work on the full proposal
- Mentorship activities should be included in the appraisal system
- Will adapt materials from UCSF to help tailor a program and then present to the Administration.

Makerere Program:

- Generate evidence for mentorship and present to the University
- Get evidence via a literature review to update the University about how the mentorship process should go – should be mentee driven
- Will adapt the materials for mentoring and adapt them to their setting
- Possible scenarios of a needs assessment within the University (for different levels of trainees and also for mentors)
- Issue of resources – Vice Chancellor, etc. If there are no resources, where can we access?
- Administration needs to be convinced that mentorship activities should “give credit” for the promotions process
- Timeline 6 months

University of Zambia

- Supervision workshop was already being planned so will change it to a supervision and mentoring workshop
- Review already-developed materials at the U. of Zambia and revise them to update on new mentoring techniques
- Identified administrator to whom to present this to
- Plan is to unveil in the last quarter of 2013
- Also approach Undergraduate Dean
- At individual level, will start mentoring right away and also document contextual challenges
- Encourage faculty to update their CVs with mentorship and supervisory activities
- Possible application for the Fogarty mentorship grant

University of Nairobi

- Have existing program, which is not very functional

- See if it can be adapted and updated
- Needs assessment
- Junior faculty mentoring program – materials are on the website, but have not been assessed by various Departments. Update those internet materials
- Look at the individual development plan and tailor it to the setting, pilot implement it in a small group of students, evaluate outcomes
- Request a talk during the orientation week for Level I students undergraduates to help empower them to help seek out mentoring, make it an active process, advocate