Transparency & ACCOUNTABILITY Initiative

Mentoring Programmes:

Supporting Effective Technology Use in Transparency and Accountability Organisations

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The views expressed in this report are attributable to the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of T/AI's members.

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Executive Summary

The transparency and accountability (T/A) movement is growing rapidly as individual citizens and organisations work to hold governments, companies and other institutions to account. Technology can clearly play a vital role within this movement. Some T/A actors harness this potential to brilliant effect. But many others waste money and staff time on technology that isn't a good fit for their mission or organisational capacity.

The typical response to these challenges is to invest in expensive external consultant support or to send individual staff members to workshops that focus on a narrow skill set. But these interventions may not resonate with a particular T/A organisation's needs or context and might only have a short-term impact.

We think that technology mentoring programmes might be a more sustainable and effective response to the reality of the kinds of problems T/A organisations face in trying to use technology well. These problems include 'not knowing what they don't know', the complexity and dynamism of challenges they face over time, the pressure to adopt fashionable tools which might not match their real needs and their lack of internal capacity to effectively manage external expertise. These are challenges that are not easily dealt with by other capacity-building approaches, such as 'one size fits all' trainings or technical assistance. A successful mentorship can help organisations and individuals solve their problems in ways that match their needs and capacity.

This Guide takes an honest look at the successes and failures of the Mentoring Programme run by the T/AI in partnership with Aspiration. Our goal was to help mentees ground their technology use in their organisational vision and mission, where strategy drives technology use and not the other way around. We matched mentors with experience in strategy and technology with mentees working in transparency and accountability organisations, we supported the mentors in connecting and developing as a mutual support group, and we nurtured a spirit of equality, co-creation and trust between mentors and mentees.

We also integrated Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME) right from the start. We built in a process of reflection and learning at every stage of the programme, from vision setting and design through to co-development and implementation. This allowed us to make course corrections as the programme progressed and provided an incentive for honest communication, flexibility and shared ownership.

The Mentoring Programme had an impact on all four levels of our LME framework: on projects, on individual staff, on the mentee organisation as a whole and on mentors themselves as a cadre of capacity builders. Eight out of ten mentorships met most of their objectives.

We learned a lot from the Programme. The key lesson is that there is an urgent need to grow the pool of mentors who have the right combination of skills and experiences. There is much demand for mentoring support and it can be a highly effective intervention if everyone contributes to the programme in a spirit of co-creation and flexibility. For other learning, see the section 'Main lessons we learned: things to think about right from the start'.

Like any intervention, mentoring programmes aren't without risks. Two of the ten mentorships we ran were unable to meet their objectives. The power of mentorships lies in people's ability and desire to connect, as well as the networks which are built. The success of the other eight mentorships rested partly on our ability to leverage the expertise, knowledge and commitment of a very carefully chosen group of mentors. The mentors were effective because they were able to challenge assumptions in a context of trust and leverage a network of expertise when faced with an unfamiliar issue. Organisations that aren't able to leverage these networks of capacity-building individuals might struggle. This drives home the need to build on networks of existing mentors.

The Programme's success also rested on the fact that we could choose mentees who were institutionally ready and able to make the most of mentoring. For this to work, a mentoring programme management team needs to have broad and deep connections and intelligence across the field.

One aim of this Guide is to encourage more investment in mentoring programmes in a range of different contexts. We hope that our example of flexible implementation, combined with built-in learning, monitoring and evaluation will encourage agile, reflexive practice rather than approaches that insist on T/A organisation's having to 'box-tick' sets of pre-determined deliverables.

We really hope the Guide is useful.

As always, we would be delighted to hear any feedback and suggestions you have – many thanks!

I. Who is this Guide for and how can it help?

Achieving a mentoring programme's full potential needs careful planning and implementation. The T/AI has run one such programme and this Guide aims to share our learning from it. But we know there is a need for others to share their learning and for the mentoring field to grow.

We hope this Guide contributes to that momentum, so it is primarily aimed at those who run, or could run, mentoring programmes and those who might fund them. The effective use of technology for transparency and accountability is a widespread challenge. Our hope is that this Guide will be directly useful for those working in the fields of governance, development, human rights and political empowerment – and potentially beyond.

The Guide aims to share lessons about how to set up and run mentoring programmes, and how to build in learning processes throughout in ways that can really enhance impact. This includes some of the practical tools that we used, which are presented in the annexes.

How is the Guide structured?

- **Why do we need mentoring programmes?** Our approach to mentoring and why we think there is a need for more of it to support the effective use of technology in the transparency and accountability field.
- **T/AI's Mentoring Programme: learning and impacts:** A look back at our pilot, what it achieved and a summary of the key lessons we learned.
- **Design considerations in running a mentoring programme:** Effective mentoring programme, running 'Mentoring' and 'LME'.
- **Looking to the future: building more mentoring programmes:** A call to action in growing sources of effective mentorship.
- **Appendices:** Practical ideas to help you build in LME at different phases and with different groups in the programme.

II. Why do we need mentoring programmes?

In this section we'll clarify our approach to mentoring, and look at why we think there is a need for more of it to support the effective use of technology in the fields of transparency and accountability.

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another person or group (the mentee) to develop the skills and knowledge that will allow them to solve problems on their own and achieve their goals.

The definition we use combines three elements and it can be helpful to clarify both what mentoring is, and what it is not.

First, a mentor is an adviser and a support. A mentor is not a consultant. Mentors do not 'do' the work needed and they do not make up for shortages in a mentee organisation's staffing. The mentor stimulates, guides and supports, but it is the mentee or mentee's organisation that must 'do' the implementation.

Second, mentoring is a supportive relationship, not just technical assistance. A mentor may give technical inputs, such as providing training in specific skills or finding other ways of providing technical assistance, but this alone is not mentoring. Mentors facilitate their mentee's growth by sharing resources and networks, by helping the mentee move out of their comfort zone and by helping them develop the capacity to solve problems on their own.

Third, our Mentoring Programme was designed to enable each mentee to identify and address the real issues they face, in real time, in their own context. This can be contrasted with an educational or training approach in which course content is pre-set, somewhat abstracted from a particular individual's needs, and is often undertaken away from the place of work. In mentoring, the stimulus for input is the mentee's needs, and the approach should be flexible and dynamic, and able to evolve with these needs over time.

Why is it vital to support transparency and accountability (T/A) organisations in using technology effectively?

The transparency and accountability (T/A) movement is growing rapidly, as citizens and organisations work to open up information held by key institutions (governments, companies, etc), to participate in decisions which affect them and to hold these institutions accountable for their actions and impacts.

Information and communication technologies and data tools have many diverse and vital roles to play in supporting this movement. With regards to data, for example, technology can facilitate the use of existing information (accessing and analysing it, visualising what it means, disseminating it to broad audiences) and in collecting new data about citizens' needs and views. Technology can support participation by linking citizens to decision-makers, supporting social mobilisation and encouraging accountability by facilitating citizen monitoring and social sanction.

Many T/A organisations and funders recognise this potential. Some are able to harness it well, but many face real challenges in using technology effectively. All too often they end up wasting limited money and time on technology projects that fail, either because they were never a good match for their strategy or context, or because they lacked the capacity to anticipate what they would entail and/or to implement them well.

Some find themselves adopting tool-based solutions that were never a good match for their strategy or context. This is demonstrated through the example of one mentor who explained how this played out in their mentee organisation.

> *"I keep telling them that they need to frame the project separately from the technology they are using. They need to focus on what they really need – rather than choosing the technology in advance, which is what they are trying to do."*

Some don't have the skills and capacities to contract and manage the external consultants they need. This can have a negative impact on the organisation as, without effective oversight, consultants might over-charge and under-deliver. And some lack the necessary resources and skills to implement technology projects effectively. Such projects can suck in other organisational resources as the implementer struggles to make good on their promises to funders and on the investments they have already made. This can undermine their effectiveness in other areas where they are operating well.

So, at its best, technology has huge potential to enhance the impact of transparency and accountability organisations. But, at its worst, it can actually reduce existing impact levels. Why mentoring?

Working out when technology will add cost-effective value and managing technology projects well are unfamiliar skills and processes for many organisations. It doesn't make sense to assume that they will have these skills, or that they will learn best by being left alone to struggle or fail. They need help!

What kind of help do they need?

Existing solutions include training workshops and technical consultant support. These work well where short-term, highly focused interventions will solve the problem, and the T/A organisation has an accurate idea of its needs.

But this does not reflect the reality of the most vital and urgent needs of many of the organisations that we've talked to, including those in TABridge, a network of activist organisations and technology specialists in the T/A space. The challenges they most struggle with in trying to use technology for T/A are:

- **"Not knowing what we don't know":** Organisations need help in identifying the key questions to ask and at which phases, and in anticipating the workload, financial and impact implications of the adoption of different technology strategies.
- **Dealing with complex and evolving challenges as projects progress:** Support is needed on an ongoing basis in the medium- to long-term, especially when sudden and unexpected problems and opportunities arise.
- **Avoiding 'tool-driven' approaches that are about using the latest 'shiny tech toy':** Support is needed to keep squarely focused on objective-driven approaches where the technology is there to support, not drive decision-making. These organisations need 'tool-neutral' advisers who can help them weigh up options objectively.
- **Repeatedly contracting expensive external consultants without the internal capacity to manage them well:** Support is needed in developing organisational capacity to manage consultants or contract out technology work in a cost-effective manner.

This is why mentoring can be such a great fit for these organisations' needs. A strong mentor-mentee relationship can support organisations in developing their own skills in using technology well, help create safe spaces in which they can examine their assumptions and reflect on their progress, provide neutral guidance on tools and the services of external suppliers, and help organisations anticipate challenges and support them throughout. And mentoring is a method of providing ongoing support to organisations, assisting them in a timely way to solve the problems they face and adapting as these evolve.

III. Transparency and Accountability Initiative's Mentoring Programme: learning and impacts

To support the growth of mentoring support, the Transparency and Accountability Initiative (T/AI) partnered with Aspiration to develop a Mentoring Programme for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) seeking to use technology to improve their impact in strengthening transparency and accountability.

Our primary aims were to:

- support participating organisations in understanding and applying technology and data tools in ways that improve their transparency and accountability impact, and to strengthen their capacity to continue to do so into the future
- test ways of building in learning throughout, both to inform the actors during the process and to capture lessons for the field more broadly.

Summary of the Programme's components: Mentoring and Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME)

The T/AI's Mentoring Programme had two main components that were integrated and implemented together from the start:

- The Support part: linking and supporting mentees and mentors
- The LME (Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation) part: building progress monitoring and reflection into every stage of the programme.

Mentoring activities

The design of the Mentoring activities of the Programme was inspired by the Capacity Mentoring Programme which Aspiration has been running since 2005. This Programme was in turn informed by an earlier programme called Circuit Riding, used in the mid-1990s in the United States. Circuit Riders' goals were to help an organisation achieve their mission or win a campaign using technology, rather than the starting point being the technology itself. The network of Circuit Riders was characterised by a sharing of methods and tools, a culture of non-territoriality and the open exchange of knowledge. An international network called eRiders grew out of this movement. Aspiration were heavily involved in this network and their experience and learning from these movements informed the design of the T/AI Mentoring Programme.

Some mentees were looking for support on specific projects, including mobile apps and websites, while others were looking for organisation-wide inputs. But in all cases, the Mentoring Programme approach emphasised the need to 'keep eyes on the strategic prize', aiming to help the mentees ground their use of technology in a very clear picture of what each organisation was aiming to achieve; in other words, strategy drives technology use and not the other way around. So while the overall focus was on technology, the programme also had a wider impact on their internal processes.

A group of six mentors and one mentor coordinator supported ten mentee organisations over a six-month period, assisted by a management team. Mentee organisations participating in the programme came from diverse countries and political contexts – from Eastern Europe, the USA, India, the Philippines, South Africa and South America – and were working on issues ranging from education to the environment. To see a summary of their spread around the world, please see the illustration 'Location of mentors and mentees for T/AI's Mentoring Programme' on page 14. Eight of the mentees were chosen as case studies; for a summary of these, please see Table 1 on page 16 'Outcomes and learning for each mentee'.

Section IV on page 26 lays out the key phases and core design elements of the Programme in more detail. This included:

- forming a core management group: T/AI staff coordinated the project as a whole, while Aspiration designed and facilitated the Support programme in close collaboration with the mentors.
- careful selection of the mentors and working to help them connect and work as a group: refining the programme approach collectively, regular group discussion of progress and challenges, calling on one another's expertise and reflecting on the group experience at the end of the programme.
- careful selection of the mentees, including an application process and interviews, with the final phases being done by the mentors.
- up to six months of support from a mentor to a mentee, mostly provided remotely, and with a total budget of $500 for each mentorship (outside of the mentor's fees).

LME (Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation) activites

If it is are to be effective, running a Mentoring Programme must itself be a learning experience. Progress can be unpredictable, needing real-time adjustments in approach. We feel that as a sector we need to learn more from one another about what kind of support really works. To prioritise this learning and to build it into the Mentoring Programme from the start, the T/AI also worked with Jigsaw Consult to develop a real-time and post wrap-up LME process, to support the programme and to generate lessons that others can apply in developing their own mentoring programmes.

MAP: Location of mentors and mentees for T/AI's Mentoring Programme

Lucy Chambers – Berlin, Germany
SLOVAKIA
Fair Play Alliance – Slovakia
INDIA
Transparent Chennai (IFMR) – India
PHILIPPINES
Check my School (ANSA-EAP) – Philippines
SOUTH AFRICA
Ndifuna Ukwazi – South Africa
KEY
Organisations
Mentors

Table 1: Outcomes and learning for each mentee

Organisation and country	Organisational goals	Mentor	Mentorship goals
Fair Play Alliance, Slovakia	Ethical, transparent, professional and effective public administration and political representation.	Dirk Slater	Connect with stakeholders through data projects. More flexible and agile project management techniques.
Environmental Working Group, USA	Undertake original, game-changing research which inspires people, businesses and governments to take action to protect human health and the environment.	Sarah Schacht	Development and launch of mobile app 'Skin Deep'.
Checkmyschool (ANSA-EAP), Philippines	Improve delivery of public education services through social accountability and transparency, using online and offline technologies.	Gabriela Rodriguez	Improving 'Checkmyschool' website, development of mobile application and building organisations' strategic technical skills.
Ndifuna Ukwazi, South Africa	Promote understanding, engagement and collaboration on social justice issues in order to foster active citizenship and leadership.	Tunji Eleso	Budget literacy project 'Our Money'.
Transparent Chennai (IFMR), India	Aggregate, create and disseminate data and research about civic issues in Chennai. Increase government transparency and strengthen residents' voices in planning and city governance.	Lucy Chambers and Mikel Maron	Design of an online tool for citizen reporting to local government.
Directorio Legislativo, Argentina	Working to open data, specifically focusing on publishing expenses for National Congress members.	Sarah Schacht	Extracting information from the Argentina senate website, collating it and turning it into usable data. Build their capacity to reduce dependency on outside staff.
INESC, Brazil	Working with data sets relating to budgets and human rights.	Lucy Chambers	Promoting meaningful change through the use of data visualisation.
Suma Ciudadana, Peru	Providing online resources promoting fair rulings within the judicial system.	Gabriela Rodriguez	Working with stakeholders to develop a database that gives access to information regarding national Peruvian jurisprudence.

Outcomes	Learning to inform future mentorship programming
Allowed space for reflection and development of new strategic plan for organisation. New perspective from having an outsider look at projects.	The mentorship would have benefited from a more fixed structure and clearer objectives at the start.
New approach to product development incorporating user testing. Raising questions and issues that were not being raised internally.	Importance of outlining clear roles and responsibilities between the mentor and mentee, having a shared understanding of what the outcomes and the deliverables will be.
Mentor enabled a shift in focus away from the technology to the needs of the organisation and users. Mentee is now beginning to mentor and train others on the basis of the mentorship she has received.	Mentorship impact dependent on clarity of vision from the mentee of what they want to achieve from it.
Developed methods to facilitate user feedback into the next build of a service delivery-reporting tool for citizens. Mentee able to start mentoring themselves, increase in confidence.	Value of having a mentor who understands the particular context of the mentee NGO.
Shaped programme to make it ready to apply for international funding. Two-year memorandum of understanding (MoU) with local government to implement plans developed in the mentorship.	Need to focus on the human, not technological aspects of proposed project. Pairing two mentors can work if they have a good working relationship and an agreed lead mentor.
Ongoing success of the organisation in persuading the government to open data. Shift in culture of engagement with government officials.	Encouraging mentees to adopt new strategies can be very challenging and use a lot of time and resources, but also bring surprising results for mentees.
Mentee shared knowledge and capacity in the organisation.	Ensure mentee is sharing knowledge internally. Fund pilot projects simultaneously.
Clarification of project goals and repositioning to make it attractive for potential donors. Positive impact on mentee.	Difficulty of evaluating a mentorship based on an early stage project because of lack of specific outcomes.

Section IV that comes later in this Guide lays out how we integrated Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME) into the key phases and core design elements of the Programme in more detail.

But, in summary, this included:

- initial design of the LME approach: the decisions to track impact at four levels, to use a flexible and evolving approach, to combine in-depth case studies with overall tracking and to give regular feedback to mentors and mentees.
- developing the factors and impacts to be tracked with the mentors.
- undertaking interviews at the start of the programme, in the middle, at the end of mentoring periods and six months after completion.
- discussing the findings throughout and at the final debriefing session with the mentor group.

Framing possible impacts and progress made

As mentioned above, we designed our Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME) approach to look at four potential levels of impact:

A. Impact on projects

B. Impact on mentees (individual staff members)

C. Impact on mentee organisations

D. Impact on capacity of mentors to provide further support.

As we were only able to support mentoring for a six-month period, and with a limited budget we did not anticipate enormous impact on the mentees and at an organisational level! But there were some encouraging early signs. And, more importantly, we think it might be useful for other mentoring programmes to explore all these levels of impact, especially in light of our recommendation that longer mentoring programmes might be more effective.

The LME process for the T/AI's pilot Mentoring Programme generated the following findings:

A. Impact on projects

The Mentoring Programme helped eight out of ten of the original mentee organisations meet most of the objectives that they set out in their mentorship proposal. These included designing a proposal for online citizen reporting and successfully launching an app to give relevant information directly to users. It is interesting to note that, in many instances, the mentoring process helped the mentees see a different, more efficient way to achieve their objectives. Such approaches included improving user testing and shifting attention away from technology or data tools to the needs and objectives of their organisations.

For example, Transparent Chennai were able to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a local government in India to provide open data services.

Transparent Chennai, India

Mentors: Lucy Chambers, Mikel Maron

Transparent Chennai wanted to create a single platform for the city of Chennai that would act as an interactive government data portal and a citizen monitoring mechanism. Their hope was that the portal could be used to help citizens challenge governments. From the mentor perspective, Lucy was clear regarding her objective of creating a programme overview that could be used for effective pitching to funders: *"Take a promising but unmanageable project plan and turn it into something that can be compartmentalised and possibly funded in separate chunks."* Lucy Chambers.

On the other hand, Directorio Legislativo in Argentina had aimed to use technology to access and publish the expenses of National Congress members. But during the course of the mentorship, they were encouraged to think first of non-technical, more human and cheaper ways to obtain the data.

Directorio Legislativo, Argentina

Mentor: Sarah Schacht

In this mentorship, Sarah built on her experience with 'Knowledge As Power' in the USA, which launched a free, non-partisan legislation tracking service based on open data. She suggested that it was best to approach government officials in a non-adversarial way: offering to be of assistance and pointing out one small thing that would make everyone's life easier but that would be easy to implement. She also suggested that the organisation approach government through informal contact rather than formal meetings. The impact was two-fold. On a practical level, the government started uploading official documents in accessible formats. On a cultural level, this approach brought about a shift in the way that the organisation was talking to people in power, which was more effective with beleaguered government technical staff.

B. Impact on individual mentees

Outside of liaison with top management, mentorships often involve a mentor supporting one individual, or a small set of individuals, around the project. We were keen to see if this led to capacity development which they would go on to use again. This was not easy to track systematically. But we did hear many anecdotes from mentees describing growth in their own skills and confidence which they have gone on to use in their own organisations and, in a couple of cases, even as 'mini-mentors' to other organisations.

Checkmyschool (ANSA-EAP), Philippines

Mentees: Jecel Censoro and John Aldrich Telebrico. Mentor: Gabriela Rodriguez

"We have begun mentoring others because of this mentorship. I wanted to be able to apply what we learned. I also started sharing what we have learned from this mentorship in other parts of the organisation. Just last week I was asked by another organisation to share some insights on how to use technology for citizen participation. If I hadn't had the mentorship, I wouldn't have been really confident to talk about how we are doing the website – I'm not a techie or a programmer – so the mentorship helped me to understand and be more knowledgeable in how the technical part is working." Jecel Censoro.

Transparent Chennai, India

Mentee: Satyarupa Shekhar. Mentors: Lucy Chambers, Mikel Maron

"It has been awesome – it has been a great experience. I don't consider myself tech-savvy – and my ability to have achieved quite a few things is because of Lucy's ability to break things down and make things less intimidating. I feel less inhibited to try things with her … It has been fun, great. At the same time I have been able to have broader conversations with government officials about the need for tech in Open Data. I have felt more confident to have those conversations because of the mentorship." Satyarupa Shekhar.

C. Impact on organisations

Again, there are clear limits to what a six-month mentorship can achieve, mostly undertaken at a distance from the mentee organisation. Despite these limitations, one mentee organisation reported systematic improvement in the way they use technology consultants and develop proposals.

INESC, Brazil

Mentee: Alexander Ciconello. Mentor: Lucy Chambers

"It is much easier to know if we need to hire a technical guy or not. Before we did not have a clue, but now we can be a lot more precise. We know how to hire, how to expand, how to use other technologies – so now I think we are operating at another higher level – it is much clearer for us to present a proposal … the mentorship helped us with this." Alexander Ciconello.

Fair Play Alliance, Slovakia

Mentor: Dirk Slater

In this mentorship, the Fair Play Alliance wanted to learn how to connect effectively with stakeholders through their data projects and use more flexible and agile project management techniques. Zuzana Wienk, their organisational head, described the impact: *"The mentorship was a kick-off to the new strategic plan for the organisation … it made us think about things in a deeper way, create some time for it, and put down on paper how we would like to strategically change our IT work."*

In another, the executive director reported that the mentorship had changed the way she and her entire organisation were now thinking about technologies.

But we don't want to give the impression that mentoring is a straightforward or easy endeavour! There were many ups and downs, many frustrations and many challenges that needed overcoming. Sometimes, this was just not possible.

The evaluation of the programme found that four of the mentorships worked very effectively without facing significant challenges and were able to meet their objectives. Four of the mentorships faced significant challenges but were able to overcome these and meet most of their objectives. Two of the mentorships were largely unable to meet their objectives. The identities of these organisations have been removed. In one instance the mentor felt that the problem was that the mentorship was not a sufficiently high priority for the organisation – and did not have buy-in from the executive director. In the other organisation, several factors were identified.

"The organisation was unrealistic regarding how much can be achieved with the limited time that he has available. Second, it is a new initiative that they are currently starting and because of this, there was no institutional structure in place that would guarantee their commitment." Mentor.

D. Impact on capacity of mentors to provide further support

As summarised above, the T/AI's Mentoring Programme invested in the mentors as a group, ensuring this was a capacity-building experience for them as well as the mentees. The mentors all reported strong impact here in two ways. First as individuals: all reported learning a great deal, both from other mentors and from their mentees. Second as a group: the Programme invested in bringing the mentors together at the start and end of the Programme, and in regular calls throughout. This enabled them to seek advice from one another, share learning and relevant resources, and use one another to fill gaps in their own expertise. This social capital has continued after the Programme and the mentors continue to share and support one another.

The mentors all described how much they valued the connections which had developed between them.

Ndifuna Ukwazi, South Africa

Mentor: Tunji Eleso

"Touching base every two weeks has been of immense value. We can share the different challenges that we are facing – it is very valuable. It means that the whole TABridge team is supporting me … the team of mentors has been a big help – I'm in awe of the resources and knowledge that exists within the mentor team."

Fair Play Alliance, Slovakia

Mentor: Dirk Slater

"It enabled us to connect and was a phenomenal experience – I am still in touch exchanging emails about projects. I just facilitated a retreat for [related organisation], I'm looking for ways to work with [related organisations]. I still miss the mentor calls, those were great for me. I gained by adding those mentors to my network – so professionally it was great."

Main lessons we learned: things to think about right from the start

Section IV of the Guide outlines the key things to think about in each of the seven key phases of implementation. But the following is a summary of the main lessons we learned for such programmes as a whole:

A. There is strong demand for mentoring support and it can be a highly effective intervention

We had many more requests for support than we could meet. The impact assessments showed the approach to be effective, even with only six months of support, but there were strong indications that most mentorships might benefit from a longer-term process.

B. Clarify and immerse the overall 'co-creation attitude' to mentoring for the programme at the start

The aim is not to create anything that looks like knowledgeable expert mentors issuing orders to uninformed mentees. Rather, the approach needs to be one of co-creation and co-learning. The mentor needs to be humble in respecting the knowledge of the mentee and in seeking to serve their needs. That said, the mentee needs to be open to being pushed by the mentor to really examine their assumptions and approach.

C. Rigid pre-determined approaches won't work

It is true that very clear objectives for a mentorship need to be negotiated and agreed between each mentor and mentee at the start. But there also needs to be a great deal of flexibility on how to get there and willingness to revisit these objectives. This might prove necessary because the context changes or new learning suggests the need for a change in direction. The Programme was deliberately designed to give participants room to manoeuvre, rather than insisting on rigid frameworks of deliverables. The LME process was embedded from the outset, allowing for course corrections and honest communication. This promotion of a flexible, learning approach involved all Programme stakeholders – core organising team, mentors and mentees.

D. Building in Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME) approaches might improve impact

It's a good idea to do this right from the start, continue throughout and involve follow-up six months after the Programme is complete. Again co-creating the LME framework, questions, indicators and feedback mechanisms with the mentors and mentees will encourage their receptiveness to what the LME process shows up during implementation, increasing the chances of positive evolution. Done right, having an LME-focused person can help people strengthen their perspective on the whole process. Both our mentees and mentors reported that their progress had been enhanced by the reflection that the LME process generated.

E. Mentors need to be thought of and cultivated as a group: this will increase the scale and sustainability of their impact

During selection, this means picking those with a willingness to collaborate, as well a deliberately wide range of knowledge and skill sets likely to match the mentees' needs: geographic, cultural and language profiles as well as technical and strategic skills. Then it means bringing them together physically early in the project to get to know one another, to finalise the Programme's design and to jointly select the mentees. Throughout the Programme, regular group calls can be a 'safe space' where they can share their progress and their challenges, and share advice and resources. And at the end, it means bringing them together to reflect and share learning. Ideally, it also means facilitating some form of regular light follow-up so they can continue to support one another in providing mentoring beyond the Programme.

F. The process of selecting mentees and matching them to mentors is critical, can be challenging and requires strong investment of time upfront

Mentees must be at the right stage and have the commitment and capacity to really benefit from mentoring. The mentors must feel some personal connection and interest in what the mentee is trying to achieve. Having mentors as a group select the mentees from a shortlist, matching up to interests and profiles, is very helpful. It is also vital to build in a first 'dating period', when potential mentors and mentees can talk to each other and really have time to explore if the 'chemistry' will work, and if a practical focus and approach can be agreed upon. Capacity-building organisations are best placed to run effective mentoring programmes as they have networks of potential mentors and mentor-ready organisations in place. Other types of organisations might struggle to recruit and vet appropriate mentors without these personal connections.

Finally, though we did not have the resources to do so, we would strongly recommend paying travel costs so that mentors and mentees can meet together face-to-face, at least at the start of the Programme. The mentorships which had an in-person component seemed to be stronger for it, so it could be a reliable way to produce stronger outcomes and better relationships between mentor and mentee.

G. Practicalities matter

A strong core management team needs to be established from the start to set the vision for the Programme, select and coordinate the mentors and ensure close follow-up and communication with the mentees. The needs of T/A organisations can change quickly so lead time between application, selection and first interaction with the mentor needs to be short. Time zone and language differences can be a huge challenge, and mentors need to understand the context in which the mentee is operating. Having locally based mentors can help a lot. Feasible, regular discussion times and protocols for dealing with staff turnover or changing priorities need to be agreed from the start.

H. Understand the risks and plan for failure as well as success

Mentorships are complicated, evolving relationships. Of the ten mentorships we ran, only four worked in a relatively straightforward manner. Four of the mentorships faced significant challenges but were able to overcome these, but two of the mentorships were largely unable to meet their objectives. It's important to have communication channels for the mentor and mentee to talk directly to the project leaders, to detect any problems (such as if a mentor or mentee behaves inappropriately or any conflict starts to develop,) and to develop back-up plans for a range of eventualities.

IV. Design considerations in running a mentoring programme

Running an effective mentoring programme is an art, not a science. Naturally, the way you structure and support it will vary with your goals and with the dynamics of your mentors and mentees. So what we offer here is not intended as a recipe. Rather, it is meant to share our learning from our pilot Programme in the hope that it will provide some pointers and stimulate further reflection and exchange in the field.

Run your Mentoring and LME (Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation) activities in parallel

Below we describe the seven phases of our Mentoring Programme to show how it played out for T/AI. We think building in a learning process to accompany your mentoring activities might help increase your impact, by helping you adjust as you go during the program, and learn from your experiences for the next time. So in the diagram and table on the following pages, we outline some of the key activities and challenges you might want to explore for both your Mentoring and LME (Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation) activities and show how both can run in parallel for each phase.

The seven phases are as follows:

- Setting your vision
- Design and early set-up
- Initial work with mentors
- Co-development of specific mentorships
- Implementation of mentorships
- Winding up of mentorships and impact assessment
- Final reflection and learning.

Diagram: The Seven Phases of a Mentorship Programme – Running Mentoring and LME (Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation) activities in parallel

The table below outlines seven phases of a mentoring programme, showing how Mentoring and LME activities are best planned together and run in parallel throughout the life of the programme.

Mentoring Activity

1 Setting your vision

- Discuss goals and objectives
- Discuss overall approach
- Discuss staffing
- Set strategic frame

2 Design and early set-up

- Set time frame and budget
- Form core management team, detail roles, responsibilities and communication methods
- Define criteria for mentees – as individuals and as a group
- Define criteria for mentors – as individuals and as a group.
- Clarify process for choosing mentors and run process to recruit them
- Clarify process for choosing mentees and run first phase to produce shortlist

3 Initial work with mentors

- Convene mentors to:
  - Get to know each other
  - Clarify aims and approach of the Programme
  - Discuss shortlist of mentees
- Run 'dating period' – mentors interview possible matches
- Final mentor-mentee matches chosen

LME Activity

1 Setting your vision

- Discuss LME goals and purpose
- Discuss LME overall approach

2 Design and early set-up

- Set time frame and budget
- Clarify relationship and functioning between core management team and LME staff
- Define criteria for LME staff/ consultants
- Clarify process for choosing LME staff and select/recruit them

3 Initial work with mentors

- Convene mentors with LME staff to:
  - Agree aims and objectives
  - Deal with fears about LME,
  - Agree processes of data gathering and sharing for LME
- Collect mentor and mentee history questions to inform match-making

4 Co-development of specific mentorships

- Mentee and mentor agree:
  - Objectives
  - Roles
  - Means of communication
  - Early work plan
- Collect baseline information, post-objective setting
- Feed appropriate information back to mentors and mentees

5 Implementation of mentorships

- Mentors interact with mentees on a customised basis
- Core group closely monitor progress and manage support
- Mentor group meets virtually regularly to discuss progress and challenges

If conducting case studies, collect data on progress and challenges at appropriate times for each mentorship

6 Winding up of mentorships and impact assessment

- Mentors wrap-up mentorships
- Final impact assessment

At end of mentoring period, interviews conducted with mentees and mentors

If feasible, longer term impacts assessed through further data collection 6 or 12 months after completion

7 Final reflection and learning

Mentors and core group meet to debrief (see LME), ideally with mentees

Collaborative review undertaken – strengths, areas to improve, lessons to share with others, remaining questions

Table 2: The Seven Phases of a Mentoring Programme – Running Mentoring and LME (Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation) activities in parallel

The table below outlines seven phases of a mentoring programme, showing how Mentoring and LME activities are best planned together and run in parallel throughout the life of the programme.

	Mentoring	
Phase	**Support Activity**	**Support Questions/ Challenges to consider**
1. Setting your vision	Discuss goals and objectives	• What is the overall purpose of the mentorship: short-term technology use or longer-term capacity development to help mentees use technology effectively?
	Discuss overall approach	• What will be the tone of the mentoring relationship (teacher-learner or co-creation)? • What are the problems/challenges that the mentoring programme will and won't support? • How pre-determined do outcomes and processes need to be? • Will we charge for mentoring support?
	Discuss staffing	• Do we need a lead mentor to facilitate? • Who do we need to run the programme?
	Set strategic frame	• What kind of needs is this mentoring programme aiming to meet? • What are the risks? • What does a minimum and maximum vision of success look like? • What does failure look like? • How might we deal with failure?
2. Design and early set-up	Set time frame and budget	• What's the maximum support period that we can offer? • Can we afford to pay for mentors to meet mentees at least once? • How much mentor time will we pay for and what other costs will we meet? • How many times will we bring the mentors together and for how long?
	Form the core management team and detail roles, responsibilities and communication methods	• Who will manage mentor recruitment, support and coordination? • Who will manage mentee recruitment? • Should we offer mentees an extra point of contact in case of relationship breakdown? Who will this be? • How will communications work between core members? And with others?
	Define criteria for mentees: • As individuals • As a group	• What kinds of needs will we be willing to help with? • What kinds of organisations will be prioritised? • What levels of capacity do they need? • How important is the management commitment to the mentorship? How will we judge this? • Are we looking for a 'spread' in kinds of mentees we support? What skills and attributes are we looking for? • Do mentors need to, know mentees language and context and be in the same time zone?
	Define criteria for mentors: • As individuals • As a group	• What combination of skills, languages, and locations do the mentors need as a group to cover mentees' needs? • Other criteria are as above. (This approach presumes that we will involve mentors in final mentee selection.)
	Clarify process for choosing mentors and select them	• Will we recruit through contacts and word-of-mouth recommendations or open advertising? • What attributes do we need to explore in an interview to get a picture of interests, skills and gaps?
	Clarify process for choosing mentees and run first phase to produce the short list	• As above (This approach presumes that we will make the final mentee selection by involving mentors).

Learning, monitoring and evaluation (LME)	
LME Activity	**LME Questions/ Challenges to consider**
Discuss LME goals and purpose	• What do we want to achieve with our LME process? What will be needed if we want to learn and adapt as we go? • What will be needed if we want to reflect on our completed process? • How do we want the LME process to help the core management team, mentors and mentees? • What will a successful LME process look like?
Discuss LME overall approach	• How can learning be balanced with monitoring and evaluation? • Are we looking for an in-depth or light-touch approach? • Will we be combining quantitative and qualitative methods? • What approach will be a good fit for the scale of our programme?
Discuss LME staffing	• Do we want to maximize objectivity by using an external LME expert or internal capacity building and learning by allocating internal staff time from core management team? Or a combination?
Set LME strategic frame	• What kinds of methods meet our learning and evaluation needs? • What are the risks of our LME approach and how can we mitigate these?
Set time frame and budget	• What will be the key LME milestones – when do we need to need to know what? • What does that mean for the timing of the use of the different LME methods? • What budget does our LME process need – including sharing our learning with others if that is appropriate?
Clarify relationship and functions between core management team and LME staff	• Is the aim to keep LME staff at arm's length, or to fully integrate into core management team? • If using external staff, who will manage LME expert recruitment and support? • How will communication and coordination with core group be managed?
Define criteria for LME staff/consultants	• What skill set with regard to methods, experience in the field and personal approach do we need?
Clarify process for choosing LME staff and select/recruit them	• Will we recruit through contacts and word-of-mouth recommendations or open advertising? • What attributes do we need to explore in an interview to get a picture of interests, skills and gaps?

Table 2: Continued...

	Mentoring	
Phase	**Support Activity**	**Support Questions/ Challenges to consider**
3. Initial work with mentors: setting up the mentor group	Convene mentors to: • Get to know each other • Clarify the aims and approach of the programme • Discuss the short list of mentees, see which ones they might be interested in, and how distribution might best work across the group	• Will you physically bring mentors together for a first meeting? We strongly recommend it! • Will you have a facilitator to run the discussions? • How can you best establish the norms of co-creation and mutual mentor-mentee respect needed? • Will you drive the mentee selection or let the mentors choose which ones are a good and exciting match to their skill sets and interests? • What are the individual mentor's interests and skills? • Which mentees are ready for mentoring, and which match the mentors?
	Run the 'dating period' • Mentors interview possible matches • Final mentor-mentee matches are chosen	• Will this be done remotely, ie, by phone and Skype? Or face to face, either by sending mentors to mentees, or by bringing potential mentees and mentors all together? (We have not tried the latter yet!)
4. Co-development of specific mentorships	Mentee and mentor agree: • Objectives • Roles • Means of communication • Early work plan	• How much interaction and involvement of the mentee's senior managers do you need to secure to protect the mentorship? • How much should the mentor push the mentee to change their original conception of what they way, eg, if it is over-ambitious, ill-conceived, etc, or allow that to emerge during the mentorship? • What are the key staging posts that mentee and mentor agree they will work towards? • Is there a primary mentee in place who is committed to participating throughout the duration of the mentorship? • Is there a shared understanding of the objectives? • Have the mentor and mentee agreed feasible commitments to time, communication and delivery?
5. Implementation of mentorships	• Mentors interact with mentees on a customised basis • Core group closely monitor progress and manage support • Mentors group meet regularly (eg, every two weeks) to discuss progress and challenges	• Are the mentorships progressing well? • Are any changes in objectives or approaches required? • Has there been turnover in mentee staffing that needs to be addressed? • Have any relationships broken down? Are any mentees trying to communicate directly with the core group 'around' their mentor? • Are the mentors functioning as a group and supporting each other? • Could any mentees be connected to support each other?
6. Winding up of mentorships and evaluating their impact	Mentors wrap-up their mentorships	• Are there any final supports that can be put in place? • Will the mentor-mentees continue to have any contact?
	Final impact assessment See right for LME	
7. Final reflection and learning	Mentors and core group meet to debrief (see LME) Ideally mentees join See right for LME	

Learning, monitoring and evaluation (LME)	
LME Activity	**LME Questions/ Challenges to consider**
Convene mentors with LME staff to: • Agree the aims and objectives • Deal with fears about the LME and start to generate an atmosphere of openness, trust and real learning • Agree the phases/processes/questions of data gathering for LME and when/how this will be shared with mentors/ mentees and used to inform programming	• Will you physically bring mentors together with the LME staff for a first meeting? We strongly recommend it! • What parameters and limits need to be agreed to establish openness, trust and real learning?
Collect mentor and mentee history questions – use to help inform match-making	• What is an appropriate level of data collection without overwhelming mentees/mentors? • How far can questions go before selection is complete and trust is starting to be built?
• Collect baseline. Collect it for mentees after the objectives for their mentorship have been agreed • Feed appropriate information back to mentors and mentees	What remaining information is needed to clarify the baseline for the four levels of potential impact – project, mentee individual staff, mentee organisation, mentors?
If conducting case studies, collect data on progress and challenges at appropriate times for each mentorship	Is anything becoming clear that could be usefully fed back to mentors/mentees and the core group to improve progress?
• At the end of the mentoring period, interviews conducted with mentees and mentors • If feasible, longer-term impacts assessed through further data collection e.g. six or 12 months after completion	• What was the progress against the four levels of potential impact – project, mentee individual staff, mentee organisation, mentors? • Did any of the changes which were seen earlier sustain? • Are there signs of new impacts?
Collaborative review undertaken – strengths, areas to improve, lessons to share with others, remaining questions	• What worked? What did not? Were there any unintended consequences? • What programme changes are needed? • Would anything from this project be useful to share with others?

1. Setting your vision

Mentoring

Vision for the programme as a whole: As we outlined in our 'Why mentoring?' and 'Main lessons we learned' sections, the kinds of problems that organisations face in using technology effectively for transparency and accountability are complex, unpredictable and constantly evolving. Many issues relate to the need to ensure that strategy drives technology use and not the other way around. And most organisations will face repeated and escalating challenges if their own internal capacity is not built.

The vision for mentoring programmes needs to be focused on developing mentees' long-term capacity to use technology in ways that help them meet their goals, rather than solving problems for them in the short term. It needs to be flexible enough so that this is about adaptive support, not pre-determined inputs and outputs.

Attitude and 'tone' of the Programme: We think it's also vital that the Programme should be designed with a spirit of equality and co-creation, where the skills and knowledge of the mentees are as equally valued as those of the mentors, and everyone is there to learn from one another in service to the mentees. As one mentor noted about his mentee:

Fair Play Alliance, Slovakia

Mentor: Dirk Slater

"She is an expert in some areas that I know nothing about – I really respect that she knows a hell of a lot about some stuff that I don't. I think she feels the same way about me. I'm going into this thinking that I'm going to be learning as much as she is."

The intention of the Mentoring Programme was to provide targeted, strategic learning at a sustainable pace, tailored to the specific needs of the participating organisation and their operating context. The mentees and their needs must be central, not the needs of the organisers or the mentors. As the lead mentor facilitator noted:

"We need to put the focus on the work of the mentees' organisations, their mission and leadership. Our mission is to serve their missions." Allen Gunn, Aspiration.

Establishing your strategic frame: Now is the time to make sure that there really is a need for the mentorship and to make sure that the funder isn't driving the demand. This is a good time to look at what a minimum and maximum vision of success might look like and also to do a reality check on what might happen if the project fails. Now is the chance to quantify the risks involved and think about fallback plans.

Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation – embedded throughout

Embedding LME from the start and throughout: Our experience is that a mentoring programme will be much more effective if LME are fully embedded within the mentoring programme and shaped collaboratively. The intention was that it would be useful to participants and provide constructive input throughout the programme, and that it would also generate learning of broader use to the field.

"As a minimum, it is recommended that mentoring programmes such as this one should include a light-touch learning process that it integrated throughout. This does not necessarily need to be a fully independent presence and the role could be fulfilled internally by a member of the core programme team. The important thing is to ensure that someone within the programme (who is not the programme lead) is given time to focus on the process, identifying and highlighting the emerging challenges and opportunities throughout. This could be accomplished through a couple of informal but structured interactions with each mentee and mentor to review progress. This should be someone who is able to build trust with the programme participants, and is given the opportunity to provide input into the ongoing implementation through structured feedback." Dr David Hollow, Jigsaw Consult

Flexibility of the LME approach: The design of the programme was driven by a desire on the part of the T/AI to model approaches to LME which focus on incentivising honesty, flexibility and co-creation, rather than on an organisation meeting rigid frameworks of deliverables. Thus the indicators evolved over the first third of the Programme in a collaborative process, which was intended to be more realistic than 'top-down' indicators and more likely to get mentors/mentees buy in.

This learning approach matched the programming approach, which aimed for an attitude of agile and flexible working, encouraging participants to focus on minimum viable deliverables and developing visions for the next step on the path. This was intended to allow them to iterate upon success and adapt quickly if things weren't working.

Mentees and mentors explained how the LME conversations had given them the time and the space to reflect on their own practice.

Fair Play Alliance, Slovakia

Mentee: Eva Vozarova. Mentor: Dirk Slater

"I must say that I really appreciate the way you [the LME team] have been checking in on us. Dirk gave a certain structure to the whole process of the mentorship and these talks with you have helped us frame the process even better. You helped me make it clear what we are doing – I like it that you are evaluating this way and I think it is very meaningful."
Eva Vozarova.

Ndifuna Ukwazi, South Africa

Mentor: Tunji Eleso

Tunji noted how the LME had provided opportunity for someone external to help him reflect: "It was valuable having you drawing out our experiences by asking us questions."

One of the mentee's organisational leads reflected that she wanted the LME process to become part of her organisational culture:

Environmental Working Group (EWG), USA

Mentee organisational lead: Heather White. Mentor: Sarah Schacht

"One of the good things about the mentorship is the emphasis on continual learning – we want this to become part of our organisational culture. We would certainly do it again!" Heather White .

Combining methods: We used a range of methods for our LME programme and the benefits of each are shown in the table below, together with references to the interview and scale scoring guides that are included in the Appendices. This approach meant we were able to triangulate the information from each method.

The use of the scale-scoring exercises was intended to help us increase the rigour of the assessment and help the participants to go into greater depth. We have included the questions in the Appendix to show how we approached this.

Table 3: Methods for Learning monitoring and evaluation programme

Method	Description	Benefits	Sources
Interviews	Primary method of data collection. Semi-structured interviews lasting 20–90 minutes conducted via Skype and face-to-face during the mentor gatherings. Final round conducted six months after the completion.	Semi-structured approach meant listed questions acted as a guide but weren't restrictive, interviewees were able to explore other issues that were outside the Guide . Tracking progress and long-term reflections gave holistic picture of impact.	Appendix 1: Suggested LME interview questions
Case studies	Provide in-depth descriptive narratives of the mentorships from the perspectives of mentors and mentees.	Provides space to explore causal factors in depth for a sub-set of mentorships.	
Light-touch reviews	Brief descriptions of mentorships.	Provides a snapshot of impacts and learning for all mentorships.	
Participatory design and observation	Participation in the mentor workshops and calls, collective research exercises.	Get buy-in for LME, understand ongoing issues.	
Scale scoring of self-assessment of key factors influencing the mentorship	Conducted at mid-point and end of mentorships, based on factors chosen from baseline interview data.	Number-based valuing of factors enabled comparative analysis.	
Self-assessment of capacity development	Mentees asked to assess capacity development through the Programme at a personal and organisational level.	Number-based valuing of factors enabled comparative analysis. Means to understand mentees perspective on capacity development.	Appendix 2: Mentee assessment of capacity development

2. Design and early set-up

Mentoring

Some timing and budget issues: One of the earlier decision points relates to the duration of the Mentoring Programme. We only had the resources to run a pilot programme for six months, but it was clear that it would have been beneficial to have had a much longer time frame. This is not to say that most mentees need constant support at the same level of intensity over time, but it would have been useful to be able to return as their activities evolved.

Another lesson is connected to the value of face-to-face interactions. We had enough resources to bring the mentors together as a group at the start and end of the project. This clearly helped a lot in generating commitment and connections, and we'd recommend that you build this into budgets if at all possible. We did not have enough to pay for all mentors to meet with their mentees face-to-face, and most meetings were held remotely by phone or Skype. This was much more challenging. It did prove possible to make the mentorship work in most cases, but often meant that its full potential was not realised. So again, we'd recommend building in funds for mentor-mentee meetings.

Management core group is vital: It proved crucial to set up a core management team to manage the process. In our case, we split this into two main functions. The T/AI acted as the hub and coordinator, while Aspiration led on facilitation of the mentors.

> *"The refinement and experience of the mentorship process that Gunner brought to the table really helped the mentors be more effective in their work."* Sarah Schacht.

We were surprised by the amount of time and work it took to support the Programme – managing selection of mentors and mentees, coordinating mentor meetings, facilitating when hiccups occurred in mentor-mentee relationships, coordinating with the LME expert and so on. It's worth learning from our experience to ensure you have adequate human capital for the Programme! It's also important to give the mentee a point of contact directly to the core group, just in case anything starts to go off-track.

Selecting the mentees: The process of selecting mentees and matching them to mentors is critical, can be challenging and requires a great investment of time upfront. Mentees must be at the right stage and have the commitment and capacity to really use mentoring well. The mentors must feel some personal connection and interest in what the mentee is trying to achieve.

For these reasons, we chose to split the mentee selection process in two. In the first part, the core group thought long and hard about the criteria for selection and how to build that into the application process and first interview. We ran the selection process to produce the short list. Then, in the second part, the mentors and mentees were involved (see more of this in 'Initial work with Mentors').

Six characteristics of organisations that can benefit from a mentor

Evaluation of the T/AI Mentoring Programme identified six characteristics that mark out organisations which might benefit from having a mentor.

Table 4: Characteristics of suitable mentee organisations

Characteristics	Reason
Maturity	The mentee organisation needs to be at a level of maturity sufficient to digest the help they are requesting.
Executive buy-in	The mentee organisation's leadership must be on board and understand its value for the organisation as a whole.
Motivation	The offer of help shouldn't be the sole motivation. Motivation should be generated by organisational recognition that they could and should be doing something better.
Good timing	There are intervention points when a mentor might be especially useful to an organisation, eg, when they are struggling with project management or wish to launch a technology project, or to redefine their strategic use of technology.
Mentee authority	The organisation is willing to give individual mentees decision-making power to implement changes brought about by the mentorship.
Willingness to be disrupted	The organisation realises that to make improvements, some things might need to change and that some of these might involve changes in approach, staffing, priorities, etc.

Some reflections from the T/AI's Programme illustrate these issues. Having undertaken two contrasting mentorships, one mentor emphasised the importance of understanding what phase the mentee organisation is at within their cycle of development.

Lucy Chambers anticipated that organisations further through the cycle might often be better positioned for mentorship: *"If you have something already to work with, then you may be able to suggest concrete modifications rather than just process-based changes."*

Another mentor worked with one of the smallest organisations to be mentored. He noted that, although size is an influencing factor, and that their small size did contribute towards the challenges faced, it is not inevitably a warning sign of a problematic mentorship:

"The size wasn't necessarily the problem – I am alright with unstructured small groups – it is about the amount of time that they had – they had good ideas and were passionate and were starting to make lots of connections … We were focused on bringing on additional resources and volunteers and figuring out the strategy… they had good beginnings but it really needed them to put in significant time to get over that hump. The lesson is that if they are small, then they need to work very hard to demonstrate commitment – and the mentor needs to work hard to clarify expectations and parameters at the outset. I like that it was a start-up … But on reflection I think there is a lot of risk with that and ways to engage with groups that are ramping up – but if you are asking for particular commitments – then no matter how passionate they are – mentorship might not be the best structure for them at that stage." Mikel Maron

Other mentors felt that buy-in from senior management was the key issue:

Transparent Chennai, India

Mentors: Lucy Chambers, Mikel Maron

"The structure of the organisation helped – even though it is hierarchical, it is still transparent. My mentee is immediately below the bosses and they want her to become a strong leader within the organisation. The key for the success of the mentorship is that the bosses want her to progress within the organisation." Lucy Chambers.

Finding and selecting mentors: With mentors, it's not enough to have a particular technical skill or expertise; they need the right attitude and inter-personal skills. To find mentors, the T/AI recruited from their existing networks, especially the TABridge network, and then grew the pool of prospective mentors by asking those individuals and other contacts to recommend other potential mentors. The learning from this process is that it would be very challenging to establish mentoring programmes without a network of mentor-ready organisations and individuals, and that there are serious risks in recruiting 'unknown' individuals without serious investment in vetting.

The T/AI Programme included mentors from a variety of backgrounds, including non-profit technology consultants, software developers and technology entrepreneurs. But they all needed to show the right attitudes and character traits, as well as showing willingness and interest in working as a group. The following are summarised from the mentors' reflections on what's needed:

Table 5: Traits of a good mentor

Trait	Description
Empathy and humility	• Help the mentee own the process • Distinguish between what mentor and mentee thinks is valuable • Draw on relevant experience, listen intently and be patient • Prioritise humility over ego • Be open, accessible and collaborative
Flexibility and creativity	• Go at the pace of the mentee • Identify root issues and address with appropriate practical solutions • See the big picture and detail
Organised	• Provide a structure for interactions with mentee • Support good project and time management • Design and implement a LME plan
Connected and resourceful	• Be effective at communicating and listening • Be willing to carry out research on behalf of mentee • Act as node to connect mentee to other expertise and advice
Desire to keep learning	• Demonstrate specific knowledge and experience of subject area • Invest in achieving the mentee's goals • Expect to learn as much from the mentee as the mentor learns from you
Passion and expertise	• Be keen to share knowledge with mentees and network • Be honest regarding any lack of knowledge

Matching to mentees' needs: The T/AI worked to find mentors from around the world, to increase the chance that mentors would understand the context in which the mentee worked, would speak their first language and would be in their time zone. But it can be very challenging to match all those plus skill needs for each mentee.

Ndifuna Ukwazi, South Africa

Mentee: Shaun Russell. Mentor: Tunji Eleso

"The first important thing is having a mentor that gets you: I worked well with Tunji. He understood technology and is super knowledgeable, but he also understands how African communities work and the financial and technological constraints of the people you are working with." Shaun Russell.

Learning, monitoring and evaluation

Deciding whether to use an external evaluator/learning lead: We hired an external consultant to lead this work for three reasons: expertise, objectivity and to allow participants to speak honestly with anonymity, if they wished. However, you might decide you can generate the right learning conditions by using your own staff, and that will help develop internal capacity. The important thing is to be conscious of the strengths and weaknesses of whatever staffing approach you take to LME.

Taking an adaptive approach: We did early work with the consultant to design the overall LME framework, levels of impacts and to share our initial thoughts on indicators and questions to explore. But this process was finalised with deep discussion and input from mentors and mentees.

3. Initial work with mentors: setting up the mentor group

Mentoring

Bringing the mentors together to work as a group: The mentors need to be thought of and cultivated as a group. This will increase the scale and sustainability of their impact. As discussed above, this means picking people with a willingness to collaborate, as well as with a deliberately wide range of knowledge and skill sets likely to match the mentees' needs. Then it means bringing them together physically early in the project to get to know one another, to finalise the programme's design and to jointly select the mentees.

Throughout the Programme, regular group calls can then be a 'safe space' where they can share their progress and their challenges, and share advice and resources. At the end of the Programme it means bringing them together to reflect and share learning. Ideally, it also means facilitating some form of regular light-touch follow-up so they can continue to support one another in providing mentoring beyond the Programme.

Running a 'dating period' so mentors and mentees can choose each other and bond: As mentioned above in Section II, the core group selected a short list of potential mentees from the applicants. But the final selection involved the mentors and mentees. This involved two phases. First, the mentors discussed the short list in their first workshop together and selected those who matched their skills and interest. This was followed by a 'dating period' during which mentors had calls with mentees whom they thought might be a fit, allowing both sides to see if the there was a match and whether the 'chemistry' worked. It's important to remember that mentoring is a relationship and people have to be able to connect on a personal level.

Learning, monitoring and evaluation

Bringing the LME staff together with the mentors to co-create the approach and build trust: It is not unusual for the LME to appear as an annoyance at best and a threat at worst. This can happen if those being tracked don't see the value of the process or are worried that they will be face unfair consequences for 'failure'. Also, the monitoring and learning may not get at the really important issues if the key protagonists are not involved in its design. For this reason, we brought the LME expert together with mentors and mentees early on. This enabled us to have a frank discussion about how findings would be used, to clarify how learning was at least as important as evaluation, and to get everyone's input into the design of the indicators and measurement approaches. These indicators and approaches were not firmed up until the mentorship objectives were finalised.

4. Co-development of specific mentorships

Mentoring

Investing in allowing the mentors and mentees to meet face-to-face in the mentee's context: We ran our Mentoring Programme without the funds to do this. Most relationships worked, but both the mentors and mentees felt things would have been smoother and more productive if they could have met at the beginning to get to know each other and help the mentor understand the mentee's context better.

Ndifuna Ukwazi, South Africa

Mentor: Tunji Eleso

Tunji noted that the only thing he would change if mentoring again would be to try and have the initial planning with the mentee take place face-to-face as it *"…gives you that connection to start the process off – you can do a lot very quickly at the beginning. You wouldn't really need it at the end – the initial connection is the priority."*

Checkmyschool (ANSA-EAP), Philippines

Mentees: Jecel Censoro and John Aldrich Telebrico.

Jecel explained that she would have been helped if Gaba had visited her: *"She would have got to see the environment – she would experience what the Internet connection is really like here, what the environment is like in the Philippines – without that she can have the information but it isn't the same."* Jecel Censoro.

Allowing the mentors and mentees time at the start to re-articulate the objectives of each mentorship: We did not hold the mentees to the original objectives they had put down in their applications. Rather, they had the space to re-articulate them, both in terms of how their mentor could support them and when early discussions showed that there might be a higher order priority or alternative way to conceptualise what was needed. For that to work, mentees had to be willing to have their normal ways of doing things 'disrupted' by the mentor.

Environmental Working Group (EWG), USA

Mentee: Chris Campbell. Mentor: Sarah Schacht

"It is the first time we've had a mentor… so the questions we were asked weren't things we were used to being asked questions about! We think we know what we need to do and we go ahead and do it. We don't normally have questions on what we have decided to do from outside people. But I think that was valuable – even though it is a different way of doing things – people don't like change and it was change… a different way to work on projects – it took longer … although it made the product better in the end." Chris Campbell.

Developing empathy and trust is key: One of the important intangible factors affecting the success of mentorships is empathy. Building a bridge of empathy between mentor and mentee enables trust to be developed quickly so that the objectives are more likely to be achieved.

Fair Play Alliance, Slovakia

Mentor: Dirk Slater

"One thing I've learned about being a mentor is that drawing out the things you have in common is really critical, levelling the playing field … finding commonality when you are coming in and talking about technology is really key, otherwise they just identify you as a techie geek."

Various mentors talked about the importance of trust within the mentorship relationship, and how they proactively worked to build a foundation of trust before engaging with the more practical tasks of the mentorship.

Mentor quote we've decided to keep anonymous

"I struggled with how to build trust. And I was looking at any expertise that I had to bring to the table, anything respected – it felt like a moving target for trying to build trust so I sort of had to pick my battles. And fortunately I was able to find one, maybe two, people on the project who did eventually grow to trust me over time. But it was really difficult, and I think that it was partly my fault in that I didn't make my skill sets as clear as possible because I was so enthusiastic about the project."

Table 6: What mentor approaches and traits can help build trust with a mentee?

Approach / Trait	Description
Support and service approach	• Delivering tangible benefit quickly • Ensuring mentee has ownership of the process • Researching the mentee and their organisation • Ensuring clarity on success indicators • Building rapport with organisational head
Reliable and clear communicator	• Planning sessions in advance • Sticking with the agreed schedule • Narrating a plan for where the mentorship will go so mentee understands the trajectory • Ensuring clarity about limitations and boundaries to support on offer • Accountability and follow through
Credibility	• Relevant expertise that will help with mentees' specific needs • Making network of contacts and resources available
Values equality and co-creation process	• Non-judgemental approach to discussing strengths and weaknesses • Respecting the knowledge of the mentee and going at their pace • Non-hierarchical relationship

Clarifying how the mentorship will run, establishing mutual commitments and ways to communicate: It's vital that both mentors and mentees are realistic about how much time and resources they can actually commit. The enthusiastic lean to over-ambition and this can create frustration down the line. So being concrete and realistic, and keeping honest communication flowing about what both sides can and can't do is key. Effective mentors have a passion for seeing individuals develop and are willing to share knowledge throughout their interactions with the mentee. But alongside this, in order to make progress, they also need to manage time strictly and stick to agreed schedules.

"If they hadn't done their homework, I didn't do the next session with them because I felt that, until they'd done it, there was nothing new I could bring."

Table 7: Summary of key goals in the early phases of a Mentoring Programme

Goal	Purpose
Attract a large set of applicants	Rich and varied roster of mentors from which to draw
Allow mentors to select their own organisations from the sifted shortlist	Enables ownership
Aim for shared language and time zones between mentees and mentor	Eases communication and process
Decide on the number of individuals who will be involved from each mentee organisation	Need one individual who has decision-making power
Assess risks of failure and plan mitigations accordingly	Need to be prepared for possibility of failure
Have short lead-in period	NGOs work in fast-moving environments and staff turnaround is high
Establish expectations at outset	Ensures mentees are committed and have a project on which to work
Articulate at outset what will happen if the individual being mentored leaves	Mentee's personal motivation is critical and contingencies need to be put in place if they leave
Generate buy-in from mentees, have consequences if mentees fail to fulfil commitments	Mentors need leverage when things aren't working out

Learning, monitoring and evaluation

Collecting baseline information only after the objectives have finally been agreed: Again, in an effort not to hold mentors and mentees to out-of-date, irrelevant indicators, baseline data collection was only collected after the final objectives were negotiated and agreed between mentor and mentee.

5. Implementation of mentorships

Mentoring

Mentors and mentees need to be able to interact according to their needs, and the approach needs to be characterised by co-creation and evolution. Mentorship is not a precise science with a pre-determined trajectory but a journey that the mentee and the mentor are on together. One of the less anticipated attributes of an effective mentor is the ability to understand the 'story' of the programme on which the mentee is working, and to evolve as that story develops.

> *"It's a lot about storytelling … this project is a story [the mentor needs to] understand where you are at and what you are wrestling with … once you've done that we can identify possible interventions which we can explore, and then we'll prioritise them."* Allen Gunn, Aspiration.

An approach of mutual learning rather than of imposing a prescribed approach allows a mentor to be more transparent regarding their own limitations, and to be willing to connect mentees with other people when their expertise is more tailored to their specific needs. It also allows the mentees to blossom.

> *"Without co-equal space you don't create the optimal safe-space for learning to occur and you don't give the other person freedom to innovate in their learning: if there is a one-dimensional learning experience, then the other person is in imitation mode … but if you create co-equality, the other person feels empowered to extrapolate or come back with new ideas".* Allen Gunn, Aspiration.

And this can work in a range of cultures:

> **Checkmyschool (ANSA-EAP), Philippines**
>
> Mentee head, Don Parafina. Mentor, Gabriela Rodriguez
>
> *"In the context of East Asia – if the mentoring is just one way, driven by the mentor all the time, bombarding the mentee with information – that will not be productive. The kind of relationship that is helpful in mentoring is a two-way relationship. I would like to emphasise the cultural appropriateness of the mentorship in this. In East Asia we tend to just receive things – so the effective mentorship must ask us difficult questions – to really ensure that learning is taking place."* Don Parafina.

Keeping the mentee's leader involved and committed can be key: Often mentors are working with mentee staff who have only limited authority within their organisations. The mentorships worked best when they were working with staff with authority, or the organisation's leader was involved and/or backed the changes that the mentorship required.

Fair Play Alliance, Slovakia

Mentee Organisational Head, Zuzana Wienk. Mentor: Dirk Slater

"I was pretty much involved during the whole process, Eva (direct link person with the mentor) consulted me when we drafted the request and set the needs. Then we also closely debated how to approach it together. I was also present for part of the week that Dirk was here for. During the mentorship I talked with Eva at important milestones: this is how I like to do it – overseeing important milestones and leaving the rest to them." Zuzana Wienk.

Checking in regularly with the mentees and mentors: It's important that the core group checks in regularly with the mentees to ensure everything is going smoothly and to address issues promptly. Our mentors also found it extremely useful to have regular calls among themselves to talk through challenges, get ideas and celebrate successes.

Bringing in other mentors can be appropriate but needs care: In one of our mentorships, a second mentor was bought into an existing mentorship to great effect, but this takes careful set-up and management:

The mentorship with Transparent Chennai was the only one which involved two mentors working with the same organisation. It is worth reflecting on the dynamics of this in order to learn for future similar situations that may be encountered. The mentorship started between Lucy and Satyarupa, and then Mikel Maron was added as a mentor and Vinaya Padmanabhan as a mentee.

Lucy, as the initial mentor, had a positive experience of mentoring with Mikel and expressed how "It was really good to be on a mentorship with somebody else because we could think about how it worked, approaching each of the tasks before we did it."

Mikel reflected on how to make paired mentorships work effectively. He noted the importance of it being a mutual decision, agreed by everyone and with clear added value. The idea of introducing Mikel into the mentorship happened when all the individuals involved were talking face-to-face at a technology camp, with Satyarupa and Lucy making the initial suggestion. As Mikel expressed:

"It was a really good atmosphere – we all felt very optimistic and positive… Lucy had set things up really well – she brought all their ideas together, helping them focus and think about the structure of what they wanted to do – when I came in we could jump in and get rolling straight away. It was short, we had one month but we got a lot done in that time … we were very careful to position Lucy as the lead mentor, and I came in for something in particular. It works if there is an overall lead, good relationship and good communication between the mentors – this is important. It is important to have a good working relationship between the mentors – you couldn't just throw two mentors together as it wouldn't work."

Learning, monitoring and evaluation

Collect information on the progress and processes of the mentorship: In our Programme, the LME expert undertook interviews for the case studies in the middle of the implementation process to help us understand the progress and challenges. But participants also felt that this made them more effective by helping them reflect on their own progress.

6. Winding up the mentorships and evaluating their impact

Mentoring

Decide what is going to trigger the winding up of a mentorship: Rather than being terminated on a pre-set timeline, ideally mentorships should be allowed to end when the mentorship goal is achieved, the mentor is no longer needed or their skill set is no longer a match for the mentee's primary needs.

Clarify whether the mentee can still contact the mentor for ongoing support, formally or informally, and whether the mentor group will continue to convene. It can feel like a bit of a shock to be left without any mentor support for mentees and mentors alike. It might be useful for the Programme to consider offering light-touch continued connection.

Learning, monitoring and evaluation

Using the LME process to help mentors and mentees reflect at the end of the mentorship: As with normal evaluation processes, interviews at the end serve the purpose of determining whether a programme was successful or not, and how and why it succeeded or failed. But they can also serve as a way to help mentors and mentees reflect on what they've learned, and think about whether their organisational processes are working to support good programming and good learning, and where they go from here.

Undertaking follow-up evaluation 6-12 months after the mentorship ends: We would strongly encourage building such a stage into your programme design. This is vital, even if you are only interested in whether particular projects worked out in anticipated ways. But they are even more important if, like most capacity builders, you are also interested to know whether the project had broader sustainable impacts on individuals and organisations.

7. Final reflection and learning

Learning, monitoring and evaluation

Running a final debrief session will enable you to reflect on what worked, what did not, unexpected developments, what to do differently next time and what to share with others. In our pilot we brought all the mentors together with the core management group to do this and it was a great way to share and distil learning. You might also consider bringing in mentees to deepen that process.

V. Looking to the future: building more mentoring programmes

Mentoring programmes can be an important and effective means to help transparency and accountability organisations make the most out of the opportunities offered by new technologies and digital tools.

Mentorships can address the reality of the kinds of problems organisations face in trying to use technology effectively: the 'not knowing what they don't know', the complexity and variety of challenges and how they evolve over time, the pressures they face in adopting technology that might not match their needs and their lack of internal capacity to effectively tap external expertise. These are challenges that are not easily dealt with by other capacity-building approaches, such as 'one-size-fits-all' training or technical assistance.

This Guide has shown how mentorships can have positive effects on many levels: on the project, on the mentee's individual staff, on the organisation as a whole and on mentors themselves as a cadre of capacity builders. The power of mentorships lies in people's ability and desire to connect, and the networks that are built. The mentors weren't effective just because they brought an outside perspective, but because they were able to challenge assumptions in a context of trust, and leverage a network of expertise when faced with an unfamiliar issue or challenge.

But, as we have seen, the positive impacts of a mentoring programme need careful nurturing: a clear vision from all parties of the goals of the mentorship and buy-in from the organisational lead, deliberate support of the mentors as a group, and a very strong core management and facilitation group supporting the whole programme.

So we'd like to suggest that mentoring programmes should be designed with a spirit of equality and co-creation, of service provision to organisations and with the goal of growing networks of mentors who are able to support NGOs in ways that are a good fit for their context, advocacy goals and technology capacity. We also hope that the example of flexible implementation, combined with built-in learning, monitoring and evaluation, will encourage agile, reflexive practice, rather than approaches that insist on NGOs 'box-ticking' sets of deliverables.

Despite the current shortage of mentoring programmes, we hope that these reflections illustrate their potential and serve as a catalyst for building networks of mentors and future development of such programmes in a range of different contexts.

Appendix 1:

Suggested Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation (LME) interview questions

Mentor history questions – at the start of the Programme

- Please describe your background and any previous experience you have of technology mentoring.
- Please explain what you hope to achieve (regarding impact and personal learning/professional development) through participating as a mentor in this Programme.
- What (if different) do you hope your mentee will achieve through participating in this Programme?
- What (if different) do you hope that the Mentoring Programme will achieve overall?
- What do you think will be the most significant factors in making this Mentoring Programme successful?
- What do you think will be the most significant barriers stopping this Mentoring Programme from being successful? How do you anticipate overcoming these barriers?
- What do you anticipate will be your main strength as a mentor? What do you anticipate will be your main weakness as a mentor?
- What are you most looking forward to about the Mentoring Programme?
- What are you least looking forward to about the Mentoring Programme?

Mentee history questions – before objectives are finalised

Please talk about your background and how you got where you are today:

- How did you come to be working in the NGO sector on issues of transparency and accountability? (What is it about this sector that interests you?)
- How did you come to be using technology in your work? (What is it about using technology that interests you?)
- Anything else you'd like to tell us about how you got where you are?

Please talk about your organisation:

- How long have you worked within your organisation?
- What is your role within your organisation and what does that involve?
- Could you describe your organisation and the way it is involved in the transparency and accountability sectors (how many people work in your organisation, when was it established, how many layers of personnel are there, how many people in your organisation are directly using technology for strategic work on transparency and accountability objectives?)
- What are the main technology/strategy challenges that your organisation faces?

Please talk about your thoughts on the Mentoring Programme:

- Please provide an example of when you have used technology to overcome a problem you have faced in working in the transparency and accountability sector. (And how you did it)?
- Could you explain to us why you chose to apply for this Mentoring Programme?
- Could you talk about your personal/organisation's hopes for participating in the Programme?
- Could you talk about any concerns you have for your participation in the Programme as an individual?
- Could you talk about any concerns you have for your participation in the Programme as an organisation?
- Could you talk about any concerns you have for your participation in the Programme in relation to this model of mentorship?
- What do you think will be the most significant challenges to overcome in making this mentorship a success?
- Is there anything that you think would be useful for me to be aware of at this stage?

Mentor baseline questions (post-objective setting)

Current situation (all these questions were asked to each mentor):

- What is your overall feeling on the current situation with your mentee?
- What is the best thing/decision you have done/taken so far?
- Any major challenges you have encountered so far – or anticipate up ahead?
- Any mistakes you feel you've made so far?
- Do you think you made a good choice with selecting your mentee – why?
- What has been your most and least enjoyable moment so far?

Learning so far – mentorships:

- What have been the most important things you have learned so far through participating in the Mentoring Programme (and what has been your most significant learning moment)?
- What do you think, so far, are the key strengths of the Mentoring Programme that should not be changed (the vital components for success)?
- What would be your main lesson so far on how to make technology mentorships work effectively?
- If you were designing the Mentoring Programme again for the future, how would you approach it differently (what changes would you make regarding structure, length, regarding your personal engagement and approach)?
- In what ways are the mentorships meeting your personal objectives? And in what ways could things be changed in order to meet your personal objectives more effectively?

Learning so far – mentees:

- What would be the most significant change at an individual level and an organisational level that would enable them to incorporate what you have learned on the Mentoring Programme into their working practice more effectively?
- Do you expect they will be successful in translating the mentorship into change within the organisation – why or why not?
- Do you expect to be able to track the progress of your mentee through the process – and how do you intend to do this?

Now that the objectives have been set, how would you assess your mentee's current capability regarding:

- Ability to achieve the objectives that have been set for the mentorship (and are they realistic, ambitious, easily achievable)?
- The main group(s) that they are seeking to influence through their use of technology (donors, supporters, beneficiary groups, etc)? How well do they understand how to do this and do they have an awareness of the most significant barriers they will face in seeking to influence this group?
- Who they would go to (people or organisations) if they wanted to find a solution to a technology challenge (at a strategic level and at an operational level)?
- What are the most important issues they would consider when deciding whether a particular option of using technology is appropriate (understanding of cost benefit analysis, sustainability, etc)?
- The potential of creating unintended harm through their use of technology for accountability and transparency (and how to ensure that does not happen and, if it did happen, knowing how to fix the damage)?

Please share any reflections regarding the significance of the following different indicators in influencing the mentorship effectiveness (this list changed according to the detail of each mentorship):

- The length of time (and level of engagement) that the mentee individual has been involved in the network
- The seniority/decision-making power of the mentees within their organisation
- The pre-existing knowledge level of the mentee
- The mentee capacity, motivation, time, attitude
- The length of time (and level of engagement) that the mentee organisation has been involved in the network (is pre-existing contact an important factor?)
- The size of the organisation (too big or too small)
- The structure of the organisation (hierarchical or egalitarian)
- The sector that the organisation is within
- The geographical location of the organisation
- The pre-existing knowledge level of the organisation
- Organisational capacity, motivation, time, attitude
- The wider funding context.

Mentee baseline questions (post-objective setting)

Questions focused on the individual:

- What are your expectations (personal goals, most significant objectives) for this Programme and what do you hope to achieve through participating in it (and compare at the end – did it meet them, how, why)?
- How much time do you anticipate dedicating to the Mentoring Programme each week? (And compare at the end, also asking whether they think this was the right amount of time, too much or too little?)
- What level of priority do you anticipate the Mentoring Programme will be for you? (And compare at the end, also asking whether they think they made it the right priority, or too high or too low?)
- What are you most looking forward to about the Mentoring Programme (and compare at the end, also asking what the most enjoyable aspect of the Programme was)?
- What are you least looking forward to about the Mentoring Programme (and compare at the end, also asking what the least enjoyable aspect of the Programme was)?
- What has been the best thing so far about the mentorship?
- What has been the worst thing so far about the mentorship?
- What do you think will be the critical factors in making this Mentoring Programme successful – for you as an individual (from an operational perspective and a content perspective)?
- What do you think you will need to do in order to make sure you get maximum benefit from the mentorship?
- What do you think are the gaps in your knowledge (as an individual) regarding how to make effective use of technology in meeting strategic transparency and accountability objectives in your organisation (please give examples relating to the specific focus of your mentorship)?

Questions focused on the organisation:

- What do you think are the three most significant ways in which technology can be used for meeting strategic transparency and accountability objectives in your organisation (please give examples)?
- What do you think are the three most significant challenges and barriers to making effective use of technology in meeting strategic transparency and accountability objectives in your organisation (please give examples)?
- How confident and equipped do you feel in making strategic use of technology to reach your transparency and accountability objectives as an organisation as a whole (especially in regard to the specific focus of your mentorship)?
- What do you think will be the critical factors in making this Mentoring Programme successful – for your organisation?
- What do you think are the gaps in your knowledge (as an organisation) regarding how to make effective use of technology in meeting strategic transparency and accountability objectives (please give examples linked to the specific focus of your mentorship)?

Questions focused specifically on strategic thinking:

- How confident and equipped do you feel to make strategic use of technology to reach your transparency and accountability objectives as an individual within your organisation?
- What are the main groups you are seeking to influence/connect/mobilise through your use of technology (donors, supporters, beneficiary groups, etc)?
- What do you think will be the most significant barriers you will face in seeking to influence/connect/mobilise this group?
- At present, who would you go to (people or organisations) for assistance if you wanted to find a solution to a strategic technology challenge? (Note the need to define 'strategic'.)
- At present, who would you go to (people or organisations) for assistance if you want to find a solution to an operational technology challenge? (Note the need to define 'operational'.) [Ask these two questions at the beginning and at the end, the assumption being that their networks and capacity to access knowledge will grow.)
- What are the most important issues and processes you would consider when deciding whether a particular option of using technology is appropriate (talk about cost benefit analysis, sustainability, etc)?
- Please explain any ways that you think using technology for your accountability and transparency work (with additional focus on the specific topic of the mentorship) has the potential to cause damage (unintended negative consequences) within your organisation and within your sector overall (how would you seek to ensure that did not happen and, if it did happen, how would you solve the damage?).

Additional questions:

- [If applicable] How well does senior management at your organisation understand and value the role of technology for achieving your mission, or is this something you have to struggle to convey?
- [If applicable] How much time does your organisation as a whole spend on matters related to technology (ask re operational and strategic)? This could be % or hours per week. And what proportion of people within the organisation have technical skills (and expand on what)?
- [If applicable] How much money (and proportion of your budget) gets spent on technology-related items? Do you think this is too much, the right amount, too little (can compare and contrast at the end of the mentorship process)?
- At present, how do you track the progress and assess the impact of your technology-related projects?

Mentor end of mentorship interview questions

At the end of the mentorship, the mentors were asked to review the questions in the mentee self-assessment exercises, supplemented by the following questions, as appropriate:

- What are your overall summary reflections on the mentorship now that it has come to an end?
- What do you think are the most significant lessons you have learned through this mentorship process?
- If you were doing this again, what would you do differently and what would you keep the same?
- What have you enjoyed most/least about the process?
- Looking back, what would you say are the key principles to work from to ensure effective mentorship?
- Looking back, what would you say are the key pitfalls to avoid in maximising the effectiveness of the mentorship?
- How fully do you feel you have reached your initial objectives – and what are the key factors that have helped/hampered this?
- How much have you used the initial work plan through the mentorship?
- What are your hopes for the future of the mentorship?
- If you were asked about 'impact', 'value for money' and 'business case' for these mentorships, what would you say?
- Do you have any reflections on the role of the LME exercise – challenges/opportunities that it has presented?

Mentee end of mentorship interview questions

At the end of the mentorship, the mentees completed the self-assessment exercises again and this was supplemented by the following questions, as appropriate:

- What are your overall summary reflections on the mentorship now that it has come to an end?
- What do you think are the most significant lessons you have learned through this mentorship process?
- If you were doing this again, what would you do differently and what would you keep the same?
- What have you enjoyed most/least about the process?
- What do you think has been the best thing about the way your mentor has worked with you?
- What do you think your mentor could improve regarding the way they have worked with you?
- What were the biggest challenges you faced during the mentorship and how did you overcome them?
- Are there any ways in which the mentorship has also had an effect on your organisation as a whole?
- How fully do you feel you have reached your initial objectives – and what are the key factors that have helped/hampered this?
- What were some of the things that happened which you were not expecting (the unintended consequences)?
- What are your hopes for the future of the mentorship?
- Do you have any reflections on the role of the LME exercise – challenges/opportunities that it has presented?

Mentor six months after mentorship

Now that you have had six months to reflect on the mentorship, please answer the following questions:

- What level of interaction do you have now with your mentee? (Is this what you anticipated/wanted, and what do you anticipate the level of interaction will be between you in the future?)
- What is your perspective on the impact of the mentorship – on your mentee?
- What is your perspective on the impact of the mentorship – on you as a mentor?
- Is there anything that you would have done differently in the way you interacted with your mentee and their organisation?
- Overall, did the mentorship process meet your expectations (if yes, how, if not, how)?
- Do you have any suggestions for funders who are considering undertaking a Mentoring Programme like this one?
- Looking back, do you have any reflections on the role of the LME exercise? Do you think it is valuable component or not (why)?
- Are there any other stories you would like to share?

Mentee six months after mentorship

Now that you have had six months to reflect on the mentorship, please answer the following questions:

- What level of interaction do you have now with your mentor? (Is this what you anticipated/wanted, and what do you anticipate the level of interaction will be between you in the future?)
- What is your perspective on the impact the mentorship had on you?
- Is there anything that you would have done differently in the way you interacted with your mentor or in the way you worked with your organisation on the mentorship?
- Overall, did the mentorship process meet your expectations (if yes, how, if not, how)?
- Having completed the mentorship, do you think that it is an effective model (why or why not)?
- Looking back, do you have any reflections on the role of the LME exercise? Do you think it is valuable component or not (why)?
- Are there any other stories you would like to share?

Organisation heads post-mentorship interview questions

- Can you explain what your involvement has been in the Mentoring Programme?
- Please explain your relationship to and/or level of interaction with the mentee on a day-to-day basis?
- How often and in how much detail did you interact with the mentee during the mentorship regarding the mentorship?
- How often and in how much detail did you interact with the mentor during the mentorship regarding the mentorship?
- What do you think was the most effective part of the mentorship process?
- What do you think was the least effective part of the mentorship process?

- What has happened to the project that the mentee was being mentored in since the completion of the Mentoring Programme?
- Is there anything that you personally did particularly well/badly that affected the success of the mentorship (that others could learn from)?
- What did you personally learn from the mentorship process?
- What do you think the mentee learned from the mentorship process?
- What do you think was the effect of the mentorship on the individual mentee during the mentorship process?
- What do you think was the effect of the mentorship on the Programme/ organisation as a whole during the mentorship process?
- What do you think has been/will be the long-term effect on the mentee/ Programme /organisation as a whole? (Outcomes – have there been any? Application – how have you been doing it?)
- Would you be in favour of your organisation applying to participate in a mentorship again? Why/why not?
- What do you think is the most important lesson that can be learned from your experience about how to undertake effective mentoring in this sector?

This scale scoring assessed the change in the strategic capabilities of the mentees before, during and after the mentorships according to the answers they provided in the interviews.

Score	Meaning	Additional details
0	Demonstrates no ability to engage strategically with the issue/question	• Descriptive and simple answer with no analytical content and no awareness of complexity and change management • No strategic, evaluative or critical thinking
1	Demonstrates little ability to engage strategically with the issue/question	• Mainly descriptive answer, limited analysis and awareness of complexity and change management • Limited strategic, evaluative or critical thinking
2	Demonstrates some ability to engage strategically with the issue/question	• A combination of descriptive and analytical answer given, some awareness of complexity and change management • Some strategic, evaluative and critical thinking
3	Demonstrates good ability to engage strategically with the issue/question	• Mainly analytical answer, strong analysis and good awareness of complexity and change management • Good strategic, evaluative and critical thinking
4	Demonstrates very good ability to engage strategically with the issue/question	• Nuanced analytical answer, very strong analysis and very good awareness of complexity and change management • Very good strategic, evaluative and critical thinking

Appendix 2:

Mentee assessment of capacity development

At the mid-point and at the end of the mentorship, the mentees and mentors were asked to assess their capacity development of the mentee and also retrospectively assess their capacity level before the mentorship.

A ranking sheet was used to assess the change in the strategic capabilities of the mentees before, during and after the mentorships according to the answers they provided in the interviews. Each of their answers given in the interviews was ranked from 0-4 in order to assess the change that took place – according to the following scale. [The indicators are separated into two groups: personal capacity development and organisational capacity development. Each of these was expanded with follow-up questions.]

Score	Meaning (using 'I have' for the personal capacity development and 'there is' for the organisational capacity development)
0	• I have / there is no ability in this area • I have / there is no confidence in this area • I have / there is no idea how I / the organisation would approach this issue
1	• I have / there is a little ability in this area • I have / there is a little confidence in this area • I have / there is a little idea how I / the organisation would approach this issue
2	• I have / there is some ability in this area • I have / there is some confidence in this area • I have / there is some idea how I / the organisation would approach this issue
3	• I have / there is good ability in this area • I have / there is good confidence in this area • I have / there is good idea how I / the organisation would approach this issue
4	• I have / there is very good ability in this area • I have / there is very good confidence in this area • I have / there is very good idea how I / the organisation would approach this issue
N/A	• This is not relevant for me / the organisation

Area of capacity development						
Personal capacity development	0	1	2	3	4	N/A
My project management skills						
My strategic planning skills						
My technical/programming skills						
My budgeting skills						
My ability to deal effectively with funders						
My ability to track, monitor and evaluate the progress of my project						
My enjoyment of/fulfilment in my work						
My ability to teach myself to improve my practice						
My ability to train others effectively						
My ability to lead my team effectively						
My ability to help my organisation grow and develop						
My ability to decide who to hire and why to hire them						
My ability to negotiate with external contractors						
My ability to solve my problems on my own in the future						
My ability to assess whether a particular option of using technology is appropriate or not						
My ability to use technology to enhance my everyday work						
My ability to make strategic use of data						
My ability to present data clearly in a way that will be accessible to the target audience						
My ability to communicate the value of technology in T/A work to my organisation						
My ability to locate and connect with people/organisations outside my organisation who can help me find solutions to the technology challenges I am facing						
Other: anything else that is significant that has not been mentioned						

Area of capacity development						
Organisational capacity development	0	1	2	3	4	N/A
The strategic planning skills of the organisation						
The technical/programming skills of the organisation						
The ability of the organisation to evaluate its progress						
The ability of the organisation to reach its desired objectives						
The ability of the organisation to make effective decisions regarding the use of technology						
The ability of the organisation to communicate the value of technology in T/A work						
The ability of the organisation to respond to and implement what is being learned (through the mentorship)						
The ability of the organisation to understand how technology can be used effectively to help improve the internal operations of the organisation						
The ability of the organisation to understand how technology can be used effectively to help achieve the strategic objectives of the organisation (T and A)						
The ability of the organisation to connect with others						
The ability, within the top management of the organisation, to understand the benefits and challenges of technology						
Other: anything else that is significant that has not been mentioned						

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