

Mentoring women: A win-win approach to growing internal talent

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Career Development Roundtable, 18 November 2015



Description

Mentoring women: A win-win approach to growing internal talent

Organizations are striving for gender parity at all levels, particularly senior management positions. At the same time, they need to find cost-effective ways to develop internal talent. As part of its Gender Action Plan, UNAIDS has launched an innovative mentoring programme for women that aims to support the professional development of women at all levels of the organization. The programme, delivered entirely at distance, helps mentees to strengthen competencies, address workplace challenges and build confidence. It also gives an opportunity to mentors to share their experience and knowledge while developing their skills in guiding and supporting colleagues.

This session, led by UNAIDS and EnCompass LLC, shared recent thinking on mentoring and how it can be used in the context of empowerment of female employees. It also described the mentoring programme for women at UNAIDS, including key success factors and results achieved in the first two years.

Differences: Coaching, Mentoring, Sponsorship



Research on Mentoring

- Mentoring valuable to learning and change
- Significant impact career development
- Informal mentoring more impactful – for men
- Women mentored more than men BUT...
- Mentoring Millennials: A new world
- Multicultural research

Research on Mentoring

- Barriers: Institutional, Cultural, Behavioral
- Engine for growth & competitiveness
- Critical for Sustainable Development Goals
- Progress glacial: More advocacy needed (ILO)

Mentoring Framework

- Managing Work/Life Integration
- Risk Taking
- Driving for Perfection
- Building Strategic Relationships
- Political Savvy
- Making your Words Count
- Asking for What you Want



Coaching Mentors



The foundation for gender action

Closing the gap

UNAIDS Secretariat **Gender Action Plan** to achieve gender balance and the empowerment of women staff in the UNAIDS Secretariat by 2015

7 areas	Leadership and Accountability	Organizational Culture	Recruitment and Selection
Staff Development	Work-life Balance	Communication and Advocacy	Monitoring and Reporting

Goal and objectives

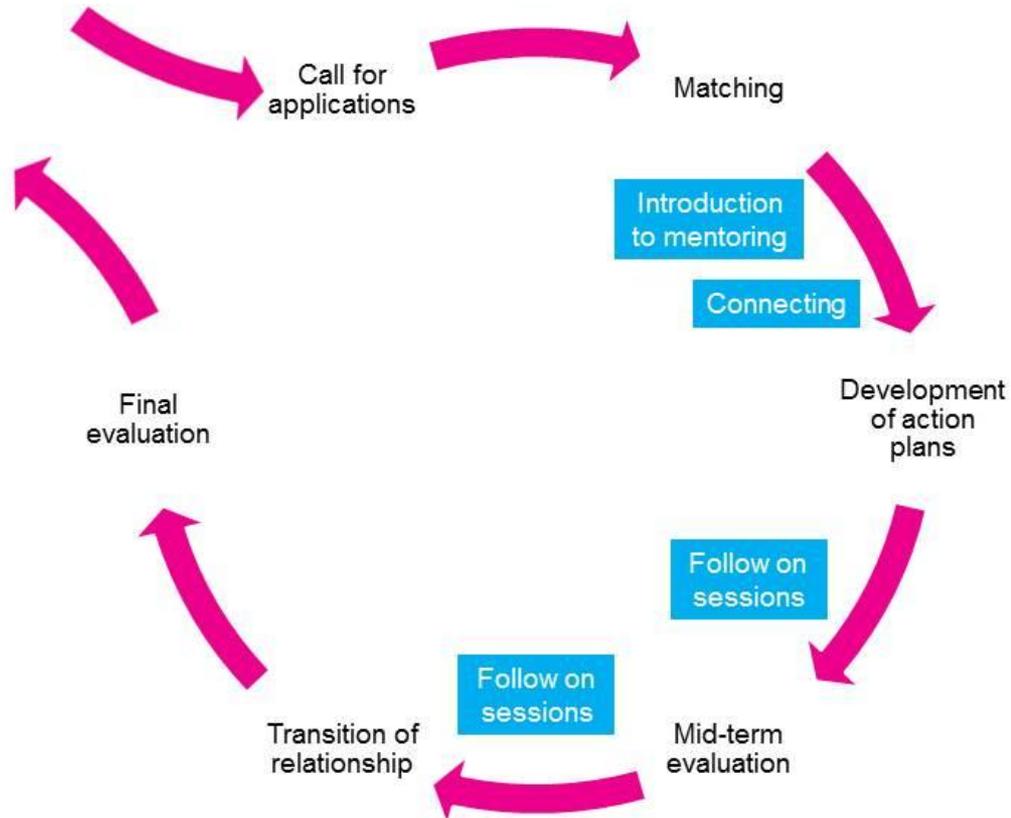
The **goal** of the programme is to improve career development, job satisfaction, and retention of women in UNAIDS.

While the developmental objectives of each mentee must be established based on individual needs, the programme has the following **objectives**:

- Reinforce core and managerial competencies;
- Strengthen technical competencies and/or programmatic knowledge;
- Address work-related challenges affecting performance and career development.

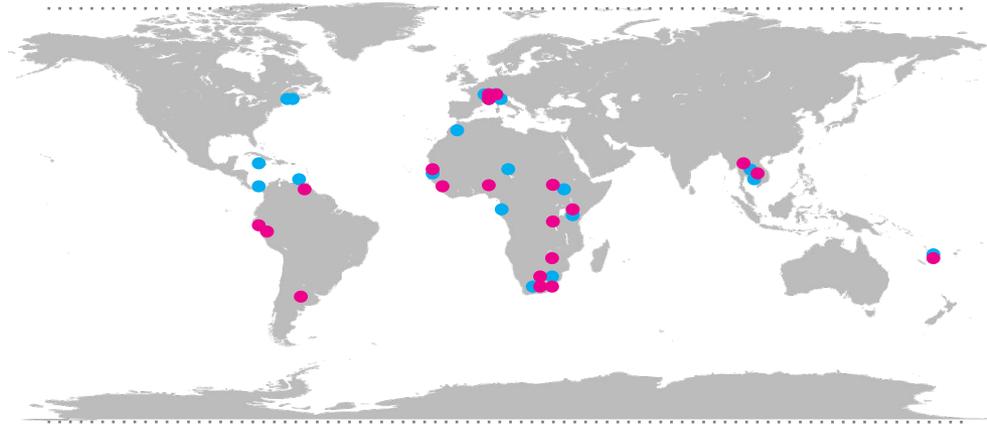


Mentoring cycle



Innovative elements

- First Mentoring Programme for Women in the UN
- Programme implemented entirely at distance
- Highly interactive virtual learning component delivered via WebEx:
 - Chat,
polls,
individual reflection,
breakout activities,
whiteboard



Participants' feedback - lessons learnt

The **matching process** is strengthened.

- ⇒ Consideration of preferences & needs expressed in application form, career history and tacit knowledge. Pre-matching consultation introduced.

Expectations are better managed.

- ⇒ Clearer communication that mentoring programme aims to support the professional development not a shortcut to a promotion.

Mentoring agreements are more realistic.

- ⇒ Stronger emphasis on suggested areas for mentoring during training and quality check of each agreement.

All **mentoring pairs** meet regularly.

- ⇒ Individual connecting sessions where needed. Follow up to support pairs in maintaining their relationship.

Mentoring relationships are adequately **phased out/transitioned** at end of cycle.

- ⇒ Make 2nd follow up webinar also accessible to mentees.

Participants' feedback - in their own words

"[I appreciated] connecting with my mentee and creative ideas from colleagues on developmental activities." (Mentor)

"I will continue my career in UNAIDS." (Mentee)

"The programme helped in clearly setting my career objectives and identifying what I need to boost my career. My interaction with the mentor is very appreciable, because I get guidance and other advices that I could not easily access to." (Mentee)

"Clear and positive approach to this additional learning and mentoring opportunity. Feedback session was useful, as well as storytelling." (Mentor)

"It shows that UNAIDS cares for its staff." (Mentee)

"Was really great. It would have been nice to have this kind of exercise 15 years ago." (Mentee)

"I really think the programme is an opportunity to identify and unleash the full potential of UNAIDS' employees, mentors and mentees alike. From a staff development perspective, I believe the organization has everything to gain from creative, motivated and ambitious employees. By providing the tools to harness female professionalism and strength, the programme has the potential to place UNAIDS at the forefront of gender equality." (Mentor)

"I experienced great support, and appreciate the effort so that I want to be part of 'giving back' and helping others grow." (Mentee)