

Mentoring at USAID's Regional Development Mission in Asia (RDMA)



Nipattra Sanguannuan- Wilkes (May), USAID/RDMA highlighted key elements of her mission's mentoring efforts.

“To make the program user-friendly, we built easy steps for our mission staff. Participation in the program is voluntary”.

Step 1: Assessment of capacities and needs of both Mentors and Mentees

All mission staff have access to our online toolbox to register in the program. When they enter the online toolbox, they can choose between “Become a Mentor” and “Become a Mentee” (Exhibit A). Once they click the appropriate button, it will lead to a simple Google Form, requesting them to fill in their name, office, and other basic information, and then select the category in which they are interested in having a mentor (or where they are comfortable acting as a mentor themselves).

The categories to choose from are:

- Technical Skills (IT, Particular Program ex: Gender Equality, Vulnerable Populations)
- Organizational Skills (Work flow in AID, new to USAID/RDMA process)
- Professional Skills (HR, Leadership, Soft Skills ex: Conflict Management, Time Management, Customer Service, and Secretarial skills)
- Cultural Skills (Thai/American cultures, Asian Value, American working style) – demonstrates willingness of each individual to learn from their co-workers and/or to dedicate themselves to share their aspect of cultures they are familiar with.
- Other interests

Exhibit A: RDMA Mentoring Toolbox



Step 2: The match-making process

RDMA set up a working group that consisted of FSN and American staff to be a Mentoring Committee and complete the matching process using the matching keys of Mutual Interest, Expertise, Skill Sought, Personalities and Professional Development Gaps. The mentorship is not limited to a one-on-one formal relationship, but includes other types of mentoring such as Group, Flash/Speed, Situational, Peer to Peer, Supervisory, or Reversal Mentoring, depending on the demand of each category and the needs of the mentee.

Step 3: Tracking numbers and progress of the Mentoring relationship

Once there is a successful match, both mentor and mentee set goal(s) and timeframes on their own terms. Both will sign a Mentoring Agreement Form for the purpose of tracking the growth of the program (see Exhibit B). Mentorship is executed by both mentor and mentee, with no intervention from the Mentoring Committee. They will set

Mentoring at USAID's Regional Development Mission in Asia (RDMA)

preferred ways to communicate and create learning activities between each other, allowing the mentorship to grow organically. Within this process, the Mentoring Committee acts as Points of Contact in the case the mentor and/or mentee need consultation or advice. The Mentoring Committee will also be responsible for creating workshops and brownbag sessions on how to be a good mentor/mentee.

In the case of group or flash mentoring, the Committee will seek expertise from mission staff, organize the session, advertise the function, and track the participation of mission staff. This includes gathering feedback after the sessions to see how it went and if there are demands to have similar learning events in the future.

colleagues. To institutionalize the process, we can assure the tradition will be embedded in our working culture.

Step 4: Mentorship Evaluation and Celebration of Success

Both mentor and mentee meet regularly to make sure they work toward their goals. Once they finish their mentorship, they have the option to highlight their success stories to the mission staff. The committee created a web page to display these stories and their positive reaction to the program with no specific, or forced, delivery model: they can make a photo essay, report, write a short testimonial, or participate in an interview. Mentor and mentee also have the choice of extending their relationship if they feel it benefits both sides.

Exhibit B: RDMA Mentoring Agreement Form

The form is titled "RDMA Bangkok Mentoring Program Agreement" and includes the USAID logo. It contains fields for "Date", "Mentor's Name", and "Mentee's Name". A "Terms of Agreement" section includes checkboxes for "Confidentiality", "Expectations guideline", "Meetings", "Communication", and "Length of Relationship", each with corresponding text. At the bottom, there are lines for "Mentor's Signature" and "Mentee's signature".

The key to success of Mentoring Program is everyone at the mission level is aware that we are already having a mentorship relation with our

Exhibit C: RDMA Mentoring Highlights Intranet Page

