THE KHANYISA INANDA COMMUNITY PROJECT MENTORSHIP GUIDE

PREPARED BY
BRIDGE

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KICP

Overview of the Khanyisa Inanda Community Project (KICP)

Prior to 2016, Inanda Seminary's social development programme involved the school working in two primary schools running an afternoon oral literacy programme and bringing in FET science and maths learners from a neighbouring high school for Saturday classes.

At the same time, the matric results of the students in the 20 Inanda North High Schools had been generally poor and the Seminary had ongoing requests from neighbouring schools to develop principals, staff and students wherever possible.

The Khanyisa Inanda Community Project (KICP) was thus birthed officially at the beginning of 2016 and includes the following interventions:

- A fully operative Saturday School Programme providing maths, science, and English classes for high school students
- The SMILE primary school oral literacy programme
- Professional development for teachers from community schools
- Teacher-intern programme in Ndwedwe
- ICT access for high school students – they are busy building a new computer centre which will also house the new offices for KICP

The purpose of the Khanyisa Inanda Community Project is to provide high-quality education and professional development to disadvantaged learners, and interested teachers and leaders in public schools in the greater Inanda area.

KICP's intervention in professional teacher development is the focus of this guide. This part of the programme includes the training of veteran teachers as mentors who then go on to support new teachers in their respective schools. This mentorship training programme is explored in further detail below.

1. Introduction to Mentorship

Finding your way as a new teacher can feel overwhelming and even isolating at times. There is so much responsibility that lands on you all at once, and even though you've trained for it, it can often feel overwhelming. New teachers need support from experienced, patient, knowledgeable veteran educators to help them refine their practice and overcome obstacles related to classroom management, lesson planning, marking, etc.

High-quality mentoring is educative in focus, and is based on a relationship of trust and shared responsibility. A mentoring relationship develops over an extended period, during which a mentee's needs and the nature of the relationship tend to change. A mentor will try to be aware of these changes and vary the degree and type of attention, help, advice, information, and encouragement that he or she provides. In the broad sense intended here, a mentor is someone who takes a special interest in helping another person develop into a successful professional. KICP trains experienced educators to become such individuals, and the information in this guide details the KICP training model.

In this guide you will find:

1. A step-by-step guide to implementing the KICP mentorship training model

2. Challenges mentors often encounter and how to overcome them

3. Lessons learned from implementing the KICP mentorship training programme

4. Useful resources that form part of the KICP mentorship training programme

2. Six Common Challenges of Mentoring

Mentoring programmes can bring many benefits to organisations, and the mentors and mentees participating, but they don't come without a few challenges. Fortunately, there are solutions for many of the challenges that may arise when planning and implementing a mentoring programme. Here are 6 commons mentoring challenges and what you can do to mitigate them.

1. **Effective Matching**

   It's important to remember that mentee's typically look at a potential mentor's title rather than their experience and knowledge. Be sure that you cover the importance of effective matching during your mentee training. Having a successful mentoring relationship is imperative to the mentee's success in the program.

2. **Providing Structure**

   Providing support and continuous communication for your mentors and mentees is crucial to the success of any mentoring program. This can be done through continuous training and check-ins. It's also helpful to create a communications plan so that this isn't forgotten.

3. **Goal Setting for Mentees**

   Unfortunately, mentees can't always articulate what they want from their mentoring relationship. It's important to help them set goals by communicating the discussing possible objectives, supplying them with the necessary tools, and continuous training.

4. **Open Feedback**

   It isn't uncommon for mentees to be guarded.They may be worried about making a good impression or being completely open about how the mentoring relationship is going. Providing guidance on how mentees can remain confident while working with their mentor is a great way to help them get the most out of the relationship.

5. **Keeping Mentees Engaged**

Keeping mentees motivated can be just as important—and just as challenging—for a mentor as passing on knowledge and skills. Mentees are often enthusiastic at the start, but for varying reasons, they can get burnt out, discouraged, or even lose interest in continuing a mentorship. That's when the timely guidance and encouragement of a mentor can sustain good results and keep the mentee engaged.

The following are some ways to keep mentees engaged:

- **Encourage** your mentee to initiate conversations about progress and development from time-to-time.

- **Plan** your activities well in advance and keep a written schedule so that both parties are in sync.

- **Change** the style of meetings once in a while to break the monotony and keep your interactions interesting and engaging. You might alternate the format you use for meetings, such as phone, video, or email conferencing.

- Ensure that your mentee is **aware** of your confidentiality so as to encourage transparency in communication and motivate honesty.

- **Encourage** your mentee to revisit goal statements and long-term plans on a regular basis and make adjustments to them based on progress and new knowledge gained.

- Clearly **state** your expectations from the beginning and find out what expectations your mentee has.

6. **Tracking Outcome**

   Setting objectives for your mentoring program is important, but it won't be effective without tracking the outcomes of the program and reporting them.

What has been the greatest benefit you've experienced from being a part of the mentoriship programme?

Even as a mentor, I've learned from my mentee. She's taught me new terms and she comes with different ideas on teaching like using games. She has taught me a lot about daily preps.

Ms Mthembu (KICP mentor)

3. Lessons Learned

Everything learned from previous projects, whether they were successes or failures, can teach project implementers important lessons. These learnings are not simply a record of mistakes, but also a record of best practices which can then be replicated in future interventions.

The following are **12 key learnings** gained from the implementation of the KICP mentorship training programme:

1. It's important to ensure mentors understand the value of having teacher-interns in their classrooms. Mentors should be encouraged to see this as a valuable professional development opportunity, and not as an additional burden to their existing workload.

2. Implementers must work hard to clarify that teacher-interns are there to learn how to teach and manage classrooms from their mentors, not to run errands for them.

3. Mentors must understand that their mentorship roles are crucial to making teacher-interns effective 'helpers' in the classroom. For example, teacher-interns cannot be asked to assist with marking without first being taught how to mark.

4. Proper channels of communication must be established within the school and between the teacher-interns, mentors, school principals and the programme's implementers. Communication between each participant of the programme must be carefully managed. For example, teacher-interns cannot be expected to take full responsibility for communicating to schools or principals.

5. It's important to have a clear annual or term calendar that should be shared with the schools prior to their own planning to avoid clashes. Further, constant follow up regarding upcoming events is important to remind schools as they do not always check their calendars.

6. Remember that getting mentors to attend mentor workshops during school holidays does not always work, and one cannot have more than two mentor workshops per term as teachers are also involved in workshops organised by the Department of Education.

7. In the event that the school is short staffed, teacher-interns should be encouraged to take responsibility for classes even if their mentors aren't present.

8. A key truth to remember: being an excellent teacher does not make one an excellent mentor as the functions are different.

9. Impelmetors must ensure teachers buy into the mentoring programme and aren't being forced to be mentors by the school management.

10. Mentors need a lot of assistance with formulating and executing an Action Plan to avoid over burdening teacher-interns with too many skills at once.

11. Giving feedback to teacher-interns can be a difficult and delicate . Mentors need assistance in this area. Implementers should offer step-by-step guide to giving feedback.

12. One cannot assume that teacher interns have professional morals and values and basic etiquette because they come from different backgrounds. These skills need to be developed, and teacher internes need to be reminded of the importance of values and professionalism through personal development workshops.

What has been the greatest benefit you've experienced from being a part of the mentoriship programme?

Sharing ideas with the other teachers in the programme. We help each other and we learn from each other. We really collaborate.

MsNdolvu (KICP mentor)