

Event Summary

Background: Mentoring and the PAO Development Committee

In recent years there has been an increased focus on mentoring activity between professional accountancy organizations (PAOs) as a valuable method of sharing knowledge and transferring sustainable expertise from one PAO to another. IFAC members around the world are working together through twinning arrangements, donor funded projects, and a wide range of other collaborative partnerships to support each other and assist in strengthening less-established PAOs. In order to support these efforts, and to encourage more PAOs to participate in such activities, the IFAC PAO Development Committee has created the Mentoring Program, a key initiative under the Committee's 2011-2014 Strategy aimed at enhancing mentoring partnerships. The Program's over-arching aims are to:

- raise awareness of mentoring in its various forms as an effective form of collaboration between PAOs to further the development of the profession;
- increase the range of tools and guidance materials available to existing and potential mentors and mentees; and
- create opportunities that encourage and facilitate the formation of mentoring relationships.

The Event: *Mentoring Insights—The Mentor Perspective*

In February 2012, the PAO Development Committee hosted *Mentoring Insights—The Mentor Perspective* in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The aim of the workshop was to facilitate and encourage information exchange regarding the various aspects of mentoring through a mixture of presentations and interactive discussion sessions.

The event was attended by over 40 participants representing 19 countries. This included representatives from four IFAC Recognized Regional Organizations and Acknowledged Accountancy Groupings and member bodies from countries including Australia, Canada, China, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom.

The two key objectives of the workshop were to:

1. Launch the Mentoring Program and obtain early input from a range of mentor organizations for its key deliverables. Feedback will be used to enhance and refine the PAO Development Committee's future activities under the Program—in particular the mentoring toolkit.
2. Recognize and highlight the corporate social responsibility of more established institutions to contribute to efforts to strengthen the global accountancy profession, emphasizing the collective responsibility of influential IFAC members to advance the global profession in the public interest.

The agenda included presentations from a range of perspectives, including the World Bank's Financial Management Manager, Samia Msadek, and IFAC's Executive Director, Quality and Member Relations, Russell Guthrie. A panel session led by Deborah Williams, PAO Development Committee Chair, included presentations and questions and answers with: Ardiana Bunjaku, Executive Director of the Society of Certified Accountants and Auditors of Kosovo; Chimidsuren Choigunsen, Chief Executive Officer of the Mongolian Institute of Certified Public Accountants; and Christian Migan, President of the Ordre des Experts-Comptables et Comptables Agréés du Bénin. All presentations are available on the [PAO Development Committee News and Events section of the IFAC website](#).

The workshop included a series of facilitated roundtable discussions on issues related to mentoring, including the drivers for undertaking mentoring; the areas in which support is most commonly sought by PAOs; and the key success factors and challenges based on the experiences of attendees.

Discussion Summaries

Session 1: The Content of Mentoring Relationships

Participants were asked to discuss the main content areas on which PAO-to-PAO mentoring relationships typically focus—the answers to the “why mentor?” question. There are four prevalent subject areas on which mentoring relationships focus.

- **Strategic planning and implementation**

Emphasis was placed on the formation of a realistic and flexible strategy as the basis from which to approach all other capacity building activities. A planning exercise was deemed necessary to fully understand the nature of the accountancy profession in a given country and to promote understanding by all parties involved of what is appropriate, affordable, and sustainable by the organization. This frequently includes establishing short-, medium-, and long-term goals through the identification of gaps in compliance, setting priorities, and consideration of necessary and available resources—both human and financial.

- **Education and training**

The improvement of education, training, and certification systems was considered one of the most in-demand components of capacity-building mentoring relationships. The importance of all the elements was stressed, namely syllabus and examination design plus development and operations. In terms of in-country needs assessment, a review of tertiary education foundations was considered essential to determine whether these can adequately prepare potential accountancy students. National, regional, and global benchmarking was also considered key to securing a path to future recognition of individual PAOs.

- **Governance and management**

It was agreed that a sound governance and operations structure is of crucial importance to the success of any PAO. Crucial elements were identified as (a) the establishment of a Board or Council structure that is appropriate to the nature of the profession in the country; and (b) full-time and independent executive management and suitably-qualified staff with the appropriate language skills. A sustainable business model was also considered critical. Emphasis was placed on the value of advice from the mentor around options for models of governance, based on a review of good practice in similar economies.

- **Technical capacity and planning**

Knowledge transfer and the sharing of good practice in the technical areas covered by IFAC's Statements of Membership Obligations (SMOs) was agreed to be a highly valuable area for collaboration between PAOs. It was generally agreed that technical capacity can be phased-in slowly, prioritizing education and examinations in addition to professional standards. A formal role for mentors was considered crucial in three main areas: awareness-raising activities around the SMOs

and their applicability to the national environment; adoption and implementation of standards; and advocacy to standard-setters and IFAC.

Session 2: The Mechanics of Mentoring Relationships

Participants held roundtable discussions prompted by a series of questions on the mechanics of mentoring relationships—the answer to the “how to mentor” question. The questions, and an overview of themes brought up in discussion, are provided below.

1. *Can there really be a clear definition for the term “mentoring” as it relates to relationships between PAOs? To what extent are the descriptions in the current [Mentoring Guidelines](#) accurate?*

The focus of the original Mentoring Guidelines, which covers non-commercial, volunteer arrangements only, was highlighted. It was suggested that mentoring should be long-term, in the form of an ongoing relationship. The validity of the term “mentoring” was debated in commercial and/or limited-scope consultancy arrangements. It was also suggested that “mentee” may not be appropriate terminology in cases of mutual knowledge-sharing between PAOs at similar levels of development.

2. *According to your organization’s approach or your personal experience, what are the main drivers for mentoring another PAO? How is the decision to form such partnerships made within your organization?*

It was generally accepted that drivers for participating in a mentor relationship vary. Donor or other funding was considered a key driver in many cases—for cost recovery, however, and not necessarily for profit. Decisions on whether to proceed with mentoring arrangements were seen to be affected by language commonality, cultural similarities, and responsiveness of the potential mentee. From the mentee perspective, main drivers were considered to be membership in IFAC, recognition of their qualification by other IFAC Member Bodies around the world, and increased regional integration.

3. *What are the key criteria you would consider when choosing a potential partner PAO? What pre-conditions should be considered?*

In addition to the drivers discussed above, it was agreed that pre-conditions such as the economy and the existence of legal and financial frameworks are critical. In order to ensure a successful outcome for both parties, it was agreed that the mentor should conduct a thorough needs analysis in advance of committing to any specific activity.

4. *Is a formal signed agreement essential? Are there instances in which it is more appropriate?*

Formalization of responsibilities was considered important to prevent misunderstanding and avoid difficulties along the road. It was recognized that some mentors are offering free assistance and/or guidance on a case-by-case basis. It was suggested that signing official agreements may be seen as overly-legal and burdensome, and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were considered a feasible alternative.

5. *How do you ensure ongoing effective communication and maintenance of trust between mentor and mentee? Is face-to-face contact essential? Are there viable technological alternatives?*

It was generally agreed that some face-to-face contact is essential, in particular at the beginning of a relationship. Technology was considered a good supplement where distance is an issue, but it is not a replacement for in-person meetings where essential decisions are being made.

6. *What is the most effective way to monitor progress? What has worked best in your experience?*

It was agreed that the first step to effective monitoring is effective planning—both mentor and mentee should agree on specific deliverables and outcomes, and be sure to understand exactly what the journey is about. It was agreed that responsibility must be placed on both parties, not the mentor alone, to deliver, with milestones monitored and met on both sides. Ultimately, the mentee itself will be leading and sustaining efforts, for which it must prepare.

Session 3: The Mentor Perspective

The final discussion session asked participants to reflect on the day's presentations and discussions and agree on three challenges and three success factors of mentoring from the perspective of the mentor. Recurring themes are summarized below.

Success Factors

- The commitment of leadership within the mentee PAO is crucial to success—a capable full-time executive acting as a champion is necessary.
- Full dedication from both mentee and mentor—the former with a desire for change and the latter with genuine passion for its work. Both organizations should take responsibility and see the relationship as a partnership.
- An appropriate and flexible funding model that covers expenses.
- A mentor that understands the environment, the legal and financial framework, and the culture of the mentee organization.
- A mentee that is aware of its position on the road to IFAC membership and understands the importance of adoption and implementation of international standards and the IFAC Compliance Program as a whole.

Risk Factors and Challenges

- Unrealistic expectations of the mentor, mentee, donor (where applicable), or all three.
- The imposition of inappropriate or unrealistic solutions by the mentor.
- A lack of awareness or respect for the culture and/or mentee on the part of the mentor, and lack of awareness or respect for the experience and/or limitations of the mentor on the part of the mentee.
- Failure to acknowledge and appropriately address language barriers.
- Lack of funding.

Next Steps

- A summary and event slides will be made available on the IFAC website.
- The event report will provide the basis for discussion at the Tunis meeting of the PAO Development Committee in May 2012 around progress made. It will also provide an opportunity to review the deliverables of the Mentoring Program, as outlined in the [PAO Development Committee Strategy 2011-2014](#). The Committee will consider the response to the Dubai event and determine whether the planned Mentoring Program deliverables remain appropriate.
- The input from mentors, mentees, and regional bodies in the *Content of Mentoring Relationships; Mechanics of Mentoring* and *Mentor Perspective* discussion sessions will be used to shape future guidance around mentoring (currently the envisaged “mentoring toolkit”).
- Following input from the PAO Development Committee, the Mentoring Task Force will consider and agree to an outline for future mentoring guidance, which will be made available to those member bodies who have indicated a willingness to support the Mentoring Program in future.



IFAC thanks all participants for their valuable contributions. The range of information gathered through the workshop will be used to inform the PAO Development Committee Mentoring Program, and, in particular, the mentoring toolkit due to be produced in 2012-2013—an initiative that will involve input from a number of IFAC members.

Ahmad Almeghames	Saudi Organization for Certified Public Accountants (SOCPA) <i>Deputy Chair—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	Saudi Arabia
Alfiya Valiyeva	<i>CEO—Chamber of Professional Accountants of the Republic of Kazakhstan (CPARK)</i>	Kazakhstan
Amarjit Chopra	<i>Member—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	India
Arif Mirza	<i>Head—Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)</i> <i>Technical Advisor—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	Pakistan
Bernard Kleiner	<i>Director—Direction du Développement et des Partenariats Internationaux (DDPI)</i>	France
Bill Palmer	<i>Director-Asia—Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (ICAA)</i>	Australia
Carmen Mataragiu	<i>Member—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	Romania
Chimidsuren Choigunsen	<i>CEO—Mongolian Institute of CPAs (MonICPA)</i>	Mongolia
Christian Migan	<i>President—Ordre des Experts Comptables et Comptables Agréés du Benin (OECCA - Benin)</i>	Benin
Clare Morley	<i>Director of Global Development—Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)</i>	United Kingdom
Cong Xiaohua	Chinese Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CICPA) <i>Technical Advisor—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	China
David FitzGerald	<i>Director Member Services—Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland (CPAI)</i>	Ireland



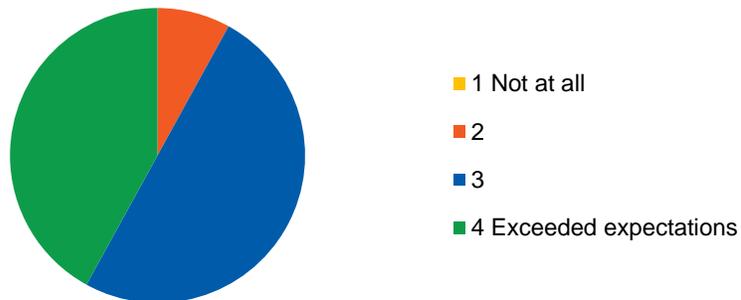
Deborah Williams	<i>Chair—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	United Kingdom
Devika Mohotti	<i>Member—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	Australia
Elizabeth Adegite	<i>Chair of Committee on Mentoring—Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN)</i>	Nigeria
Fiona Harvey	<i>Markets Director—Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)</i>	United Kingdom
Gabriella Kusz	<i>Technical Manager, Member Body Development—IFAC</i>	USA
Ganapathy Ramaswamy	<i>President —Institute of Chartered Accountants of India Technical Advisor—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	India
Gary Scopes	<i>Member—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	USA
Gordon Ferrier	<i>Assistant Director—Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Technical Advisor—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	United kingdom
Jean Precourt	<i>Member—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	Canada
Kathy Grimshaw	<i>Director, Markets—Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)</i>	United Kingdom
Lyle Handfield	<i>Vice President-International and Corporate Affairs—Certified General Accountants Association of Canada (CGA-Canada) Technical Advisor—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	Canada
Margaret Unubun	<i>Executive Secretary—Association of Accountancy Bodies in West Africa (ABWA)</i>	Nigeria
Maria Teresa Venuta	<i>General Secretary—Fédération des Experts Comptables Méditerranéens (FCM)</i>	Italy
Dr. Mark Campbell	<i>International Business Development Manager—Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)</i>	United Kingdom



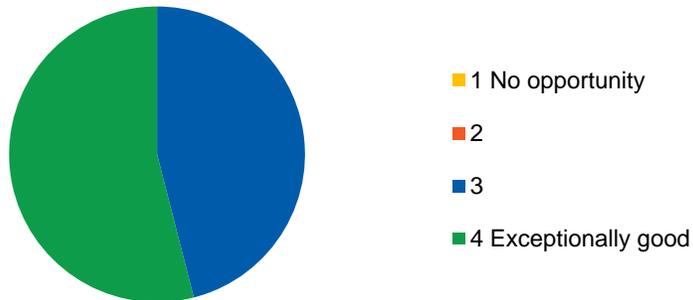
Marta Russell	<i>Technical Manager, Member Body Development—IFAC</i>	USA
Michel De Wolf	<i>President—Institut des Réviseurs d'Entreprises (IRE)</i>	Belgium
Michèle Cartier Le Guérinel	<i>Déléguée Générale—Fédération Internationale des Experts-Comptables Francophones (FIDEF)</i>	France
Paul Hurks	<i>Manager-International Accountancy Education & Development—Koninklijk Nederlands Instituut van Registeraccountants (Royal NIVRA)</i> <i>Technical Advisor—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	Netherlands
Russell Guthrie	<i>Executive Director, Quality and Member Relations—IFAC</i>	USA
Samia Msadek	<i>Manager, Financial Management, East Asia and Pacific Region—World Bank</i>	USA
Sha Ali Khan	<i>Director, Practice Monitoring—Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)</i>	United Kingdom
Shahied Daniels	<i>Chief Executive—South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA)</i>	South Africa
Vickson Ncube	<i>Chief Executive—Pan African Federation of Accountants (PAFA)</i>	South Africa
Xavier Aubry	<i>Vice President—Conseil Supérieur de l'Ordre des Experts-Comptables (OEC)</i>	France
Zhuoqi Zhang	<i>Member—IFAC PAO Development Committee</i>	China

Quantitative Feedback Overview

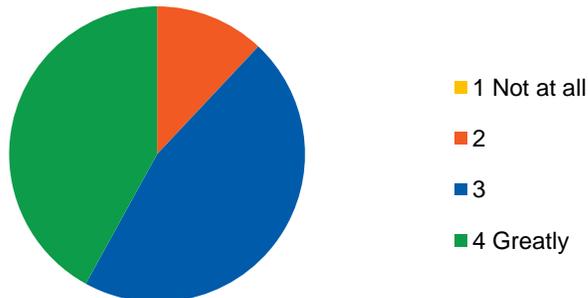
With 1 being “not at all” and 4 being “exceeded expectations,” to what extent did the workshop meet your expectations?



With 1 being “no opportunity at all” and 4 being “exceptionally good,” to what extent did you find the workshop a good opportunity to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and learn from peers?



With 1 being “not at all” and 4 being “greatly,” to what extent did the workshop enhance your understanding of the value, benefits, and challenges associated with mentoring?





529 Fifth Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10017
T + 1 (212) 286-9344 F +1 (212) 286-9570
www.ifac.org