



# Women Centric Mentoring Framework For Startup Nagaland

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Implemented



## About GIZ Her&Now

Her&Now (<https://herandnow.in/>) is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH under the project ‘Economic Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs and Start-ups by Women’ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and in partnership with Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India, to support aspiring and existing women entrepreneurs in India.

Under the name of ‘Her&Now’, the project supports in improving the overall framework conditions of women-led businesses through implementation of incubation and acceleration support programmes for women entrepreneurs. The project is implemented in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Northeast Region.

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## 1. Mentoring

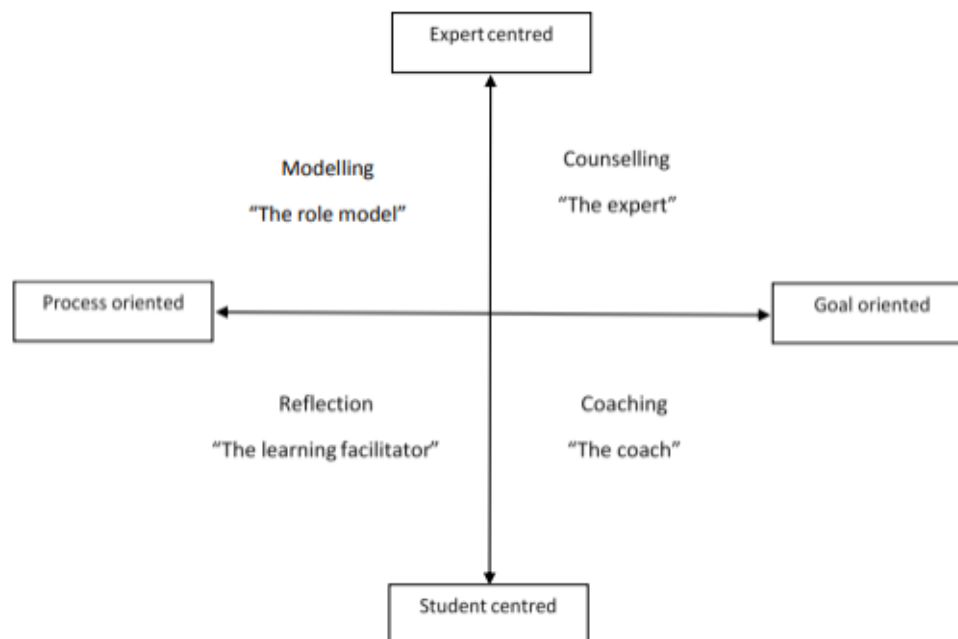
Mentoring can be described as a partnership between two people who have different levels of experience. Mentoring is a mutually beneficial relationship which involves a more experienced person helping a less experienced person to identify and achieve their goals. The word “Mentor” comes from Greek and is based on mythology. Before setting out on an epic voyage, Odysseus entrusted his son, Telemachus, to the care and direction of his old and trusted friend Mentor, thus creating the first mentoring partnership.



Mentor is the more experienced who provides support, a sounding board, knowledge, encouragement, guidance, and constructive feedback by developing a genuine interest in the growth of their mentees’ abilities and talents. A mentor provides support and confronts issues and challenges identified by the mentee. Mentoring is a positive, developmental activity, not a remedial one.

In business mentoring, a mentor guides entrepreneurs from conception of business to product development and business growth.

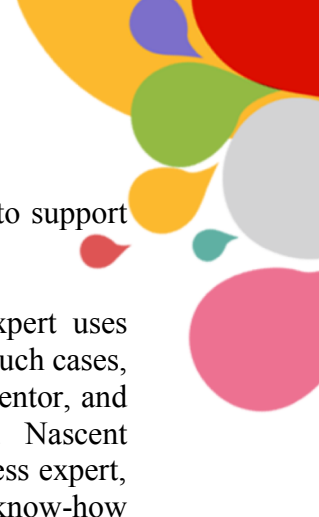
## 2. Models in entrepreneurship mentoring



Utilising a two-dimensional conception, the above figure<sup>1</sup> shows how different entrepreneurial mentoring models can be interpreted. Analysis indicates differences between two core dimensions in entrepreneurial mentoring, namely, “mentoring focus” and “objective-orientation”. These dimensions constitute a model which conceptualises four primary mentoring roles in entrepreneurship development. The vertical axis of the model represents the mentoring focus, i.e. expert centred (focus on active instruction from the expert to “receptive” learners) versus student centred (i.e. focus on learners steering the course of actions through interaction with the mentor). The horizontal axis represents the dimension of degree of goal orientation, with a continuum between the two poles; process and objective orientation, respectively.

The combination of both dimensions yields four generic roles with corresponding mentoring strategies: “The role model” and modelling, “The expert” and counselling, “The learning facilitator” and reflection and “The coach” and coaching. The role in the upper left quadrant is referred to as “the role model”. Modelling, is a form of demonstration, in this context demonstrating the skills of the entrepreneur. The entrepreneur role model sets an expert example to be emulated by other aspiring entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurial role models could be found among peers, clients, external entrepreneurs and businesses and former students. The dominant function of the role model is “learning by example”. Other important functions are support and inspiration for building motivation. It was found that such role models matter for entrepreneurial intention and that they have a particular influence in the start-up phase of a new venture. In the context of women entrepreneurship, this form of mentoring is extremely relevant. Since historically the number and visibility of women entrepreneurs has been low and business has been considered a male domain, it is advisable

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nmbu.no/sites/default/files/pdfattachments/kubberoed2015men.pdf>



to engage with more women as mentors who would bring in their experiences to support and inspire their mentees.

The role in the upper right quadrant is referred to as “The expert”. The expert uses counselling skills by giving direct advice on what to do in a particular matter. In such cases, the mentees often have a particular question and an explicit objective for the mentor, and the mentoring becomes goal oriented towards managing particular tasks. Nascent entrepreneurs develop management knowledge through mentoring from a business expert, and that the mentor’s experience is an important source of concrete advice and know-how on how to manage and develop a business. Women entrepreneurs, in many cases, suffer from lack of technical knowledge in the areas of finance, governance & legal frameworks, government programs, market opportunities etc. where expert mentors could be beneficial for the growth of women-led businesses.

The role in the lower left quadrant is referred to as “The learning facilitator”. The learning facilitator helps guide the learning process by asking open-ended, non-directive questions. Here, the learners become responsible for their own actions and learning process, and the facilitator does not direct towards specific goals. In this mode of mentoring, the mentee gradually develops the ability to think their own solutions rather than depend on the mentor for a readymade solution. This type of mentoring strategy is proven to result in better entrepreneurial learning outcomes, career satisfaction and entrepreneurial self-efficacy for novice entrepreneurs. One of the greatest challenges that women entrepreneurs face is their own confidence and belief in their abilities. This form of mentorship lets the mentee (woman entrepreneur) take lead and helps her take charge of her own journey while being supported by a mentor. This can help women entrepreneurs sustain their entrepreneurial journey and deal with challenges more effectively.

The role in the lower right quadrant is referred to as “The coach”. In coaching, learners and coach work together towards the same goals, i.e. the performer’s goal becomes the coach’s goal, the mentees’ interests the top priority of the coach. To illustrate, for most people, the term coach initially can be associated with sports, e.g. the coach is helping the performer through concrete feedback to maximize his or her performance towards a particular goal. In the same manner as in the previous mentoring scenario, the learners are self-directed learner defining their own way of working towards a specific goal, and the coach provides direct feedback on learning tasks on the way toward the goal. This mentoring strategy in the entrepreneurial context is about more specific learning customised to meet particular objectives, like managerial skills. It is less general than other forms of mentoring. This form of mentoring allows women entrepreneurs to identify their objectives and work towards them with the help of the mentor. It is important that the women entrepreneurs are at stage where they understand the complex working of their businesses and can prioritize needs and objectives.

Drawing from the above model, it is imperative that mentees (in this case women entrepreneurs can have varying needs and could benefit from a particular mentoring style more than the others. Similarly, it is important to acknowledge that while mentors can perform all these roles, individuals might be better suited to perform one kind of mentor role more than the others. A women centric mentoring program would take these finer nuances into account while designing as well arriving at the mentor-mentee matches.

### 3. Mentoring Phases

An effective mentoring relationship will pass through four definite stages of mentoring. The time spent at each of these stages differs from relationship to relationship, but all relationships come across four of these stages of mentoring.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Initiation Stage*

In formal mentoring programs, at Initiation Stage, a third party manages the matching process of the mentor and mentee instead of letting them initiate relationships on their own. Good matching programs are dependent on demographic variables, common professional interests as well as mentoring styles. Mentee assignment to a mentor in a formal program varies greatly as mentors and mentees go through a match-making process. Both mentors and mentees may review profiles of each other and select each other, or program managers may match mentors and mentees. Irrespective of the process, a good formal mentoring program would require both parties to discover the relationship and assess the suitability of the mentor–mentee match.

#### *Cultivation Stage*

Once trust has been established between mentors and mentees, cultivation is the first stage of entrepreneurial learning and development. Mentors and mentees create a contract for their relationship. The contract outlines entrepreneurial and social goals along with a legal contract, which may include equity in the mentees' business or other monetary terms. The contract may also include a code of conduct and grievance redressal mechanism. The pair may assess their progress, success, and failures after agreed time period and reaffirm or redesign their goals.

#### *Closure/Separation Stage*

This stage generally defines the end of a mentoring relationship. The relationship may end because of different reasons.

- There is nothing left to learn.
- The mentee has redefined his or her goals, and the mentor may become irrelevant for new goals.
- The protégé wants to have an individual identity.
- The mentor wants the protégé to learn on his or her own and to not become dependent.

It is the obligation of both mentor and mentee to make sure that the end of the relationship is happily accepted by both the mentor and protégé; if not, then this stage can turn sour with either party unwilling to accept the breakup.<sup>3</sup>

#### *Redefinition Stage*

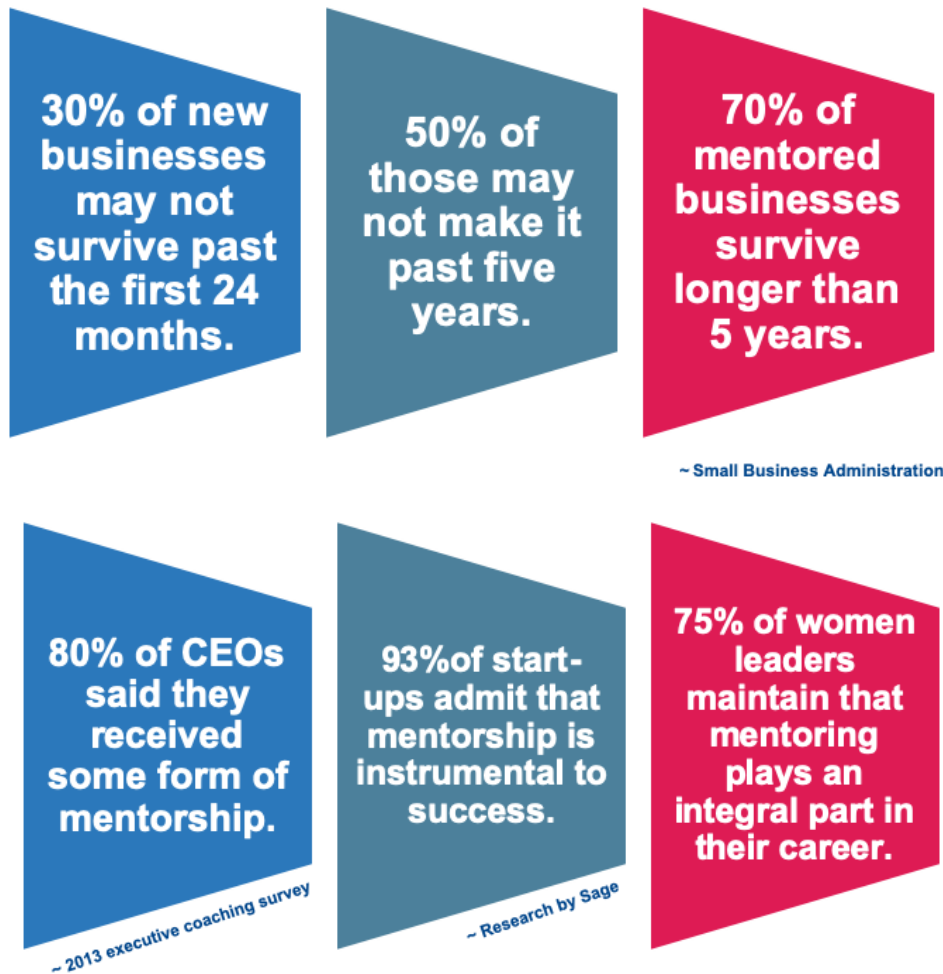
Successful mentoring relationships often last much longer than the formal relationship and are redefined. However, to have a successful redefinition of the mentoring relationship,

<sup>2</sup> Stages of Mentoring (Kram, 1983; B. R. Ragins & Kram, 2007)

<sup>3</sup> (Merkel, Cole, & Wesson, 2012).

there must be successful termination of the relationship. The mentee should feel a sense of achievement. Women are more likely to forge longer term social relationships and that reflects in their mentoring too. Women entrepreneurs, if satisfied with their formal mentoring experience, are likely to stay connected with their mentors and even invite their mentors to engage as advisors, consultants or other such business roles.

## 4. Mentoring Women Entrepreneurs



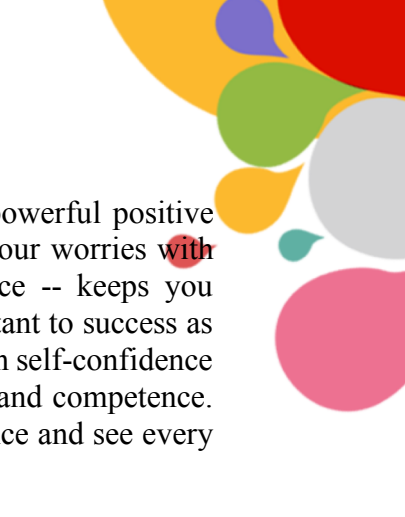
**Over half of all WE do not have a mentor because (67%) don't / can't ask for help and (52%) never encounter an appropriate person to serve as a mentor. – (William,2011)**

- **More reassurance and self-confidence**

*Despite comparable levels of education and experience, nearly two-thirds of men are confident they can start businesses, but less than half of women feel they have this capability.<sup>4</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> 2012 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor U.S. Report





It has been proven by research that a quality mentorship has a powerful positive effect. Having someone who practically guides you and shares your worries with you -- often placating your fears with their years of experience -- keeps you reassured that you'll be successful. Self-confidence is very important to success as entrepreneurs. A 2014 Telegraph report revealed that having a high self-confidence contributes significantly to career success -- more so than talent and competence. Mentors have the capacity to help WE tap into their self-confidence and see every challenge as an opportunity.

Emotional intelligence is crucial to entrepreneurial success. When a WE has a more mature and successful mentor who advises them, they are likely to have greater control over their emotions.

Mentoring develops professional competence and transforms into an improved sense of self for women entrepreneurs.<sup>5</sup>

- **More role modelling**

*Research confirmed that role-modelling by women mentors resulted in a higher level of career satisfaction for women.<sup>6</sup>*

Mentoring was reported to be a tool women entrepreneurs could use when facing barriers and challenges. The key function of mentors is to be role models for women entrepreneurs<sup>7</sup>. Mentors as role models are valuable because they counsel women entrepreneurs where they are and help them decide where they want to be in the future. Mentoring enables women entrepreneurs to realize what is possible and attainable<sup>8</sup>. Research conducted by Jandeska and Kraimer (2005) confirmed role-modeling, by women mentors, resulted in a higher level of career satisfaction for women.

- **More diverse networks**

Women also tend to have smaller networks than men, which puts them at a huge disadvantage. Studies have shown that entrepreneurs with larger and more diverse networks grow their businesses bigger. Women also tend to seek advice from more personal sources, such as family and spouses, whereas men tend to ask their friends and business networks. Mentors can help increase business network and introduce the entrepreneur to helpful business contacts.

- **More Help with Decision Making**

Successful mentoring helps women with decision making while reducing feelings of isolation<sup>9</sup>. Studies have pointed that women entrepreneurs learned from their mentors that it is very necessary to create, develop, and implement business

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<sup>5</sup> (Koro-Ljunberg & Hayes, 2006)

<sup>6</sup> Jandeska and Kraimer 2005

<sup>7</sup> (Kickel & Gundry, 2006)

<sup>8</sup> (Aubert, 2014)

<sup>9</sup> (Woodd, 1997)

strategies based on their visions for success. Mentors guided mentees through these processes.

Sole proprietor women entrepreneurs benefit by using mentors as sounding boards providing valuable advice and shortcuts.<sup>10</sup>

- **Address gaps in their skillsets**

Mentoring is a means of support to women entrepreneurs as they address gaps in their skill sets (Doyle & O'Neill, 2001). The American Express Report on the State of Women-owned Businesses (2014) recommends finding a mentor (expert) to fill in gaps of knowledge. Mentors are collaborators who help mentees work through their business and personal issues (Aubert, 2014).

Women don't like asking for money and the stats that illustrate this are quite shocking. Research shows that women are more likely to be financially conservative and don't ask for money until they're ready for it. Women entrepreneurs only get 19 percent of angel funding and about six percent of venture capital, making it much more challenging for women entrepreneurs to build incubators that can grow and succeed. Mentors can guide you through the funding process and encourage you to ask for funds if needed.

- **Using a women mentor**

Studies have pointed a significant relationships between gender and mentoring. As far as mentees are concerned, female mentors provided personal and emotional guidance to a greater extent than male mentors; female mentors provide career development facilitation to a greater extent than male mentors and female mentees are provided with career development facilitation to a greater extent than male mentees.

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<sup>10</sup> Laukhuf 2014

## 5. Nagaland Context

### 5.1. Women Entrepreneurship in Nagaland

Women in Nagaland, one of the farthest north eastern corners of the country, have been making significant contributions to the economy of the state by contributing to 44.7% of its workforce and owning 21% of its enterprises, but there is scope for further growth (Gender Statistics, 2019). Women entrepreneurs across India face several challenges to set up and operate enterprises that are social, cultural, economic, or regulatory in nature. Due to the geographical, social, and cultural diversity in Nagaland, the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs are similar and yet distinct from those faced by entrepreneurs in other regions of the country. They might be shouldering an inequitable care burden and struggling to secure funding like women entrepreneurs elsewhere in India, but in addition, they also have unique challenges such as value chain and supply chain gaps due to a lack of adequate infrastructure and logistical facilities.

According to the available literature, women in the state traditionally worked in the farmlands, and this continued in modern times. With common lands or community lands getting acquired for commercial purposes, it impacted women's traditional work on farms and they started to look for alternate means of livelihood like animal husbandry, weaving, and retailing. As a result, it can be observed that the overall workforce participation rate of women in Nagaland stands at 44.7%, against the country average of 25.5% (2011 census). The rural sector has a higher female workforce participation rate of 52.3% than the urban sector, where it stands at only 25.9%. During 2017-18, the percentage of female employment in the public sector constituted 23.36% of the total employment, whereas, in the private sector, it constituted 52.81% of total employment. (Gender Statistics Report, 2020)

Self-employment and informal micro entrepreneurship among women are common in the state. Most women entrepreneurs are engaged in trades such as selling readymade garments, second-hand goods, beauty parlours, retail stores, flower shops, and also into vegetable vending. Formal forms of entrepreneurship are a recent phenomenon. Most women entrepreneurs are active in traditional sectors. A sample study indicates that the total number of establishments under Naga women ownership by nature of operation accounts for 70.6% in the perennial sector, 22.5% in the seasonal sector, and 7% in the casual sector (Dutta, 2019).

Women entrepreneurs in Nagaland struggle in the entrepreneurial field because institutions and infrastructure in the state have not yet evolved to meet their specific needs. The deep-rooted social norms and customary laws limit their inheritance of land and ownership of immovable assets. Therefore, the lack of collateral like land, limits women entrepreneurs from taking loans from formal financial institutions. These challenges are in addition to lack of access to information, incubation/acceleration support, and market linkages. The data from the Sixth Economic Census indicates that approximately 79% of women-owned businesses in India were self-financed. For the same

period, data for Nagaland showed that 93.99% of the women-run enterprises were self-financed.

If supported with skills, opportunities and resources to build their market confidence, Naga women entrepreneurs can emerge as economic actors by starting new enterprises or scaling their existing businesses. The social system is changing slowly, where a woman faces no restrictions in starting or managing a mainstream formal business. However, women still feel that the society does not have faith in them and does not believe that they can be good business leaders or entrepreneurs. A woman is seen as inexperienced and has to prove her competence every time at every level.

## 5.2. Mentoring Needs

Following are the top needs that have emerged for women entrepreneurs in Nagaland. Focusing on meeting these needs would go a long way in building entrepreneur confidence and achieving desired social and economic results for the individual as well as for the region:

- **Vision Clarity**

Clarifying for oneself and for the other stakeholders, the vision and purpose of one's business, is often a complex exercise. While an entrepreneur knows deep down what she hopes and wishes for her business to become, it's often not articulated well. Coupled with this, the tendency for self-doubt often restrains women entrepreneurs from communicating their vision clearly. Mentoring contributes in building a belief in one's ability and facilitates clarity in one's vision.

- **Help in understanding the gaps**

Knowing where the one needs support is the first step towards business growth. Mentoring, especially facilitative style, supports women entrepreneurs in understanding the areas where their business is performing well and others where they could improve. This identification helps in seeking relevant support from mentors as well as from other experts and advisors.

- **Legal setup and compliances**

Women, traditionally, have been kept away/have stayed away from legal and compliance domain. Years of patriarchy and conditioning has led to the belief that women do not have the skills set and ability to navigate this domain. This, along with huge male dominance in these workspaces, restricts women's participation and control over this aspect of business. Mentoring can not only help women explore their own undiscovered strengths but also provide the right kind of knowledge and expertise to navigate legal and compliance processes for their business.



- **Business planning**

Women entrepreneurs, unlike their counterparts from other genders, balance multiple social roles. Hence, at several junctures, their business takes a backseat when a domestic or family issue takes priority. For this women, many women entrepreneurs focus on the actual operations of the business (in order to keep it running while balancing their other responsibilities) and are not able to fully focus on strategic activities like business planning and risk assessment. Mentoring could help ease this burden by facilitating the business planning process effectively.

- **Networking for business development**

Women often have limited professional networks and rely on their informal social networks for business needs as well. While this works in their advantage in several ways, it also restricts their access to market information, customer leads, new trends and technology etc. Mentoring could help women entrepreneurs bridge this gap by leading them to professional networks and updating them about relevant business information.

- **Building readiness for financing (debt and/or equity)**

Studies have well established that the gender gap in financing exists due to biases against women. However, analysis also states that often the preparedness of women entrepreneurs to access formal finance is low making them ineligible for well-intended schemes, programs and products. Mentoring could help bridge this preparedness gap.

- **Funding**

Mentors can play a crucial role in supporting women entrepreneurs apply for funding. Experienced entrepreneurs and experts familiar with banking and investment procedures can support their mentees meet the compliance requirements and submit investible business propositions.

### 5.3. Mentoring Challenges

- **Real need vs. perceived need**

Many mentoring conversations do not reach the desired results as the needs of the entrepreneur are not well articulated or not well understood. It has been seen that often what entrepreneurs articulate as gaps or challenges are actually symptoms of a deeper issue that needs to be resolved. Example inadequate customer traction could be due to poor product design, supply chain gaps, inappropriate pricing or entrepreneur's lack of confidence in her own product. Mentoring processes need to invest time and resources in finding the real needs rather than responding to perceived needs of the mentees.



- **Assessing mentoring readiness**

Most entrepreneurs benefit from mentoring support, however not all are ready to receive that support. Mentoring readiness includes several aspects including openness to feedback, ability to reflect and analyze one's business trajectory to identify gaps, willingness to seek support, readiness to share business details etc. The process of mentoring also brings the mentee to difficult questions or having to make tough choices. Preparedness towards this needs to be assessed before enrolling an entrepreneur for mentoring support.

- **Finding pool of mentors**

It is not always easy to find appropriate mentors who have the relevant expertise, skills and mentoring style. Finding mentors for women entrepreneurs invites these additional considerations:

- **Women mentors** – Mentor panels across the ecosystem are dominated by the male gender. Women professionals, for personal and structural reasons have had limited participation in mentor pools. Planned efforts need to be made to change this trend and bring more women to support women entrepreneurs.
- **Gender sensitive mentors** – Apart from women mentors, mentors from all genders need to challenge their own conditioning and become sensitive to needs and behavior of other genders.

- **Preparing the mentor community**

It is assumed that if one is an expert in a particular domain, she/he is equipped to mentor another person on the same. This might not be true in all cases. Mentoring is a specialized skill which needs practice and honing just like any other skill. It is, hence, important that mentors undergo structured capacity building sessions that prepares them to guide and support an entrepreneur's journey, share expertise while letting the entrepreneur be in-charge. Preparing the mentor community to understand, respect and respond to gender specific challenges is absolutely crucial for the success of a women centric mentoring program.

- **Mentor Mentee matching**

Very often, mentor-mentee matching becomes a function of availability and logistics than of skill, business objective and mentoring style. As discussed in the following sections, matching needs to rely on a good need-expertise fit and also synergetic personalities and mentoring style.

- **Designing mentorship program for women**

As with many other programs and products, mentoring programs are also designed ignoring the gender specific needs, aspirations and challenges of women entrepreneurs. This makes programs ineffective in the short run and reduces incentive for women to seek mentoring support in the long run.

- **Closing mentoring relationships**

It is as important to close the mentoring relationships effectively as it is to initiate them. Often mentors or mentees feel betrayed or lost after a relationship closes abruptly or either one of them stops participating. This not only creates a bad taste for the persons involved but also lends mentoring process a negative image.

## 6. Role of Startup Nagaland

### 6.1. Preparing Incubators and ESOs - *Designing Women Centric Mentoring Programmes*

The program design and planning stage enables you to create a roadmap of how incubators and ESOs will manage, implement and evaluate a mentoring program. This plan can be modified as per the circumstances and experiences. As a key stakeholder for promotion of entrepreneurship in the state, Startup Nagaland can facilitate the incubator/ESOs to define some of the following elements as building blocks for their women centric mentoring program.

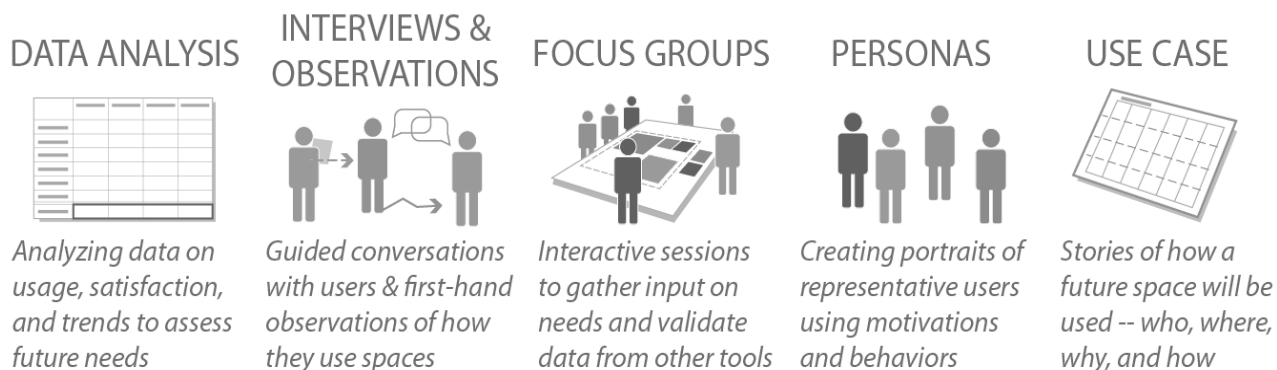
#### 6.1.1. Understanding the user group

The foundation of a successful women centric mentoring program lies in its understanding of the user base. Women Entrepreneurs is not a large homogeneous group and hence it is important to understand the specifics of the sub-group for whom the mentoring program is being designed. Some of the following factors can be studied:

- nature of businesses,
- scale of businesses,
- growth challenges and needs
- support needs
- expectations from a mentoring program
- understanding of a mentor-mentee relationship

The following info graphic also highlights a variety of tools that can be used to assess the needs and requirements of the women entrepreneurs in a given context.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND TOOLS



©brightspot strategy



### 6.1.2. Understanding where women entrepreneurs are in their mentor- ability journey

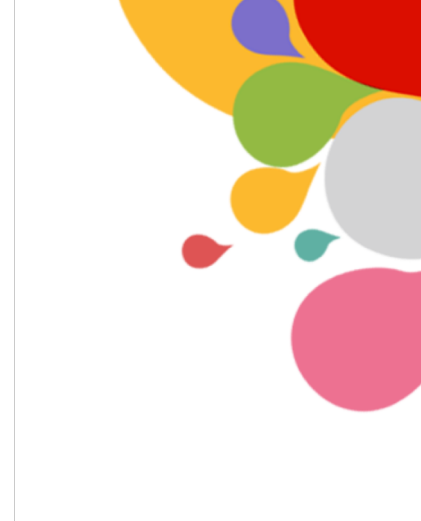
As detailed in the earlier parts of the document, mentoring can take various forms and styles from expert advice to facilitative, mentee-led learning. It is imperative that a mentoring program designs methods to assess where the entrepreneurs are in their journey and their preparedness to benefit from one or more of the mentoring styles.

### 6.1.3. Creating a pool of mentors

While each mentee has their own individual needs, incubators and ESOs benefit from having a panel of mentors who are available to mentor women entrepreneurs as and when the cohort is ready. This panel also becomes a key stakeholder and a resource from future program design and strategic thinking for the incubators/ESOs. Having a longer term relationship with the mentors also helps the incubators/ESOs understand their skills and strengths better and assess their dominant mentoring style, which is crucial for effective mentor mentee matching.

Some examples of exciting call for mentors:





**CALL FOR SCALE-UP MENTORS!**

Have you scaled a company? Our mentees are looking for you! Lend your expertise with the support of a team, an easy-to-use-app, and awesome perks to earn along the way.

Together we can help make Washington, DC the #1 city for women founders!

**SIGN-UP BY 11:59PM AUG 1ST**

**THEBEACONDC.COM/NEWS**



Support a #LadyBoss!

## 6.1.4. Key Elements of a Mentoring Program

- **Mentor onboarding**

Onboarding new mentors is a very important step in the mentoring design. If mentors are being on boarded for a specific cohort with identified needs, the same could be communicated upfront. However, if the ESO is looking to create a panel of mentors that could support several cohorts in future, the scope of engagement and expectations will need to be specified.

Typically the onboarding process would begin with an expression of interest. This could be followed by a structured evaluation and selection process that could give

the ESO a fair idea of the individual's strengths and challenges and hence evaluate a good fit. Following are some of the aspects that could be considered while creating a mentor pool:

- No. of mentors – gender disaggregated
- Functional Skills
- Subject Matter Expertise
- Access to linkages and Networks
- Personal Characteristics
- Mentoring Style

### **Annexure 1:** Why be a mentor?

- **Mentoring Orientation Plan**

A good mentoring program would ensure that both the mentors and mentees have a fair understanding of the mentoring design, expectations, elements etc.

***Mentor orientation*** – While mentors come with vast experience, skills and subject matter expertise, it is important that they are able to empathize with the women entrepreneurs, visualize their requirements and challenges and are able to contextualize their mentoring support to the mentees' needs. An orientation session should help them do that.

### **Annexure 2:** Top 5 pit falls in the mentoring relationship and how to resolve them

***Mentee orientation*** – While running and managing businesses is not new to women, they have not been able to access and leverage mentoring support as much as their male counterparts. This puts many women entrepreneurs in a disadvantageous position when it comes to mentoring. Many of them are first time mentees with limited or no understanding of how to benefit most from a mentoring relationship.

Following are the elements that could be used to design an orientation program for mentors and mentees:

- Value system
- Objectives
- Process
- Roles & responsibilities,
- Expectation management
- WE context
- Non negotiables
- Eliminating gender bias from mentoring relationship

- **Mentor- mentee match**

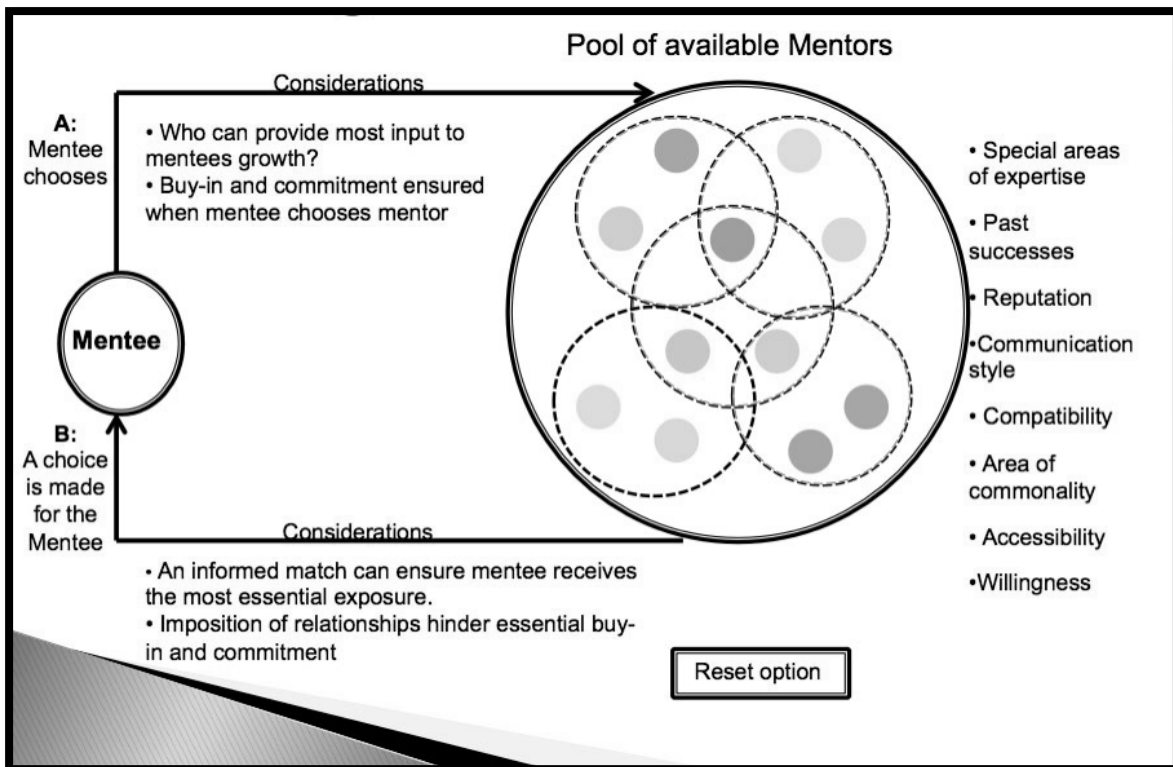
A productive mentoring relationship depends on a good match.

Matching is often one of the most challenging aspects of a program. Women entrepreneurs will bring various competencies, backgrounds, learning styles and needs. A great match for one person may be a bad match for another.

Matching starts by deciding which type of matching will be offered in the program: self-matching or admin-matching. Self-matching gives mentees a say in the matching process by allowing them to select a particular mentor or submit their top three choices. Self-matching is administrative light, which in larger programs can be a huge plus.

For more structured programs, admin-matching might be a better choice. It is advisable to evaluate various match combinations before finalizing as success of mentoring depends on various factors beyond skills and expertise of the mentor. Considering gender as a key factor while matching will help take into account finer nuances of mentoring women entrepreneurs and guarantee better results.

The following info graphic summarizes the above discussion.



**Annexure 3:** Mentoring Styles Questionnaire

**Annexure 4:** Setting the ground rules



- **Mentoring contract**

Once the mentor – mentee matches have been finalized, it is important that each mentoring relationship is well documented. A mentoring contract enables the ESO to clearly communicate the boundaries of the mentoring relationship, set realistic expectations, define scope of engagement and timelines, lay down code of conduct and conflict resolution mechanisms. The mentoring contract also gives a formal tone to the mentoring relationship thus communicating its gravity and importance.

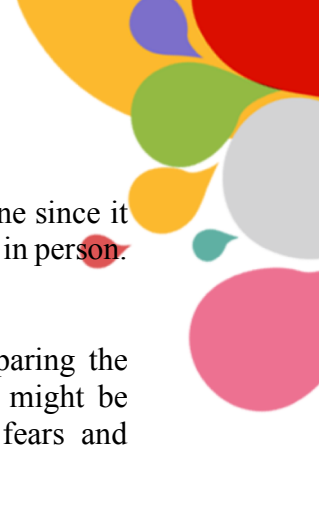
Following are the key elements that could be included in a mentorship agreement. Both mentor and mentee sign the agreement.

- a. **Role definition** – The respective roles of mentor, mentee, anchor/incubator representative and any other participants are clearly outlined in the agreement
- b. **Scope of engagement** – The agreement details out the scope of engagement, the mentoring needs, objectives and broad plan. A draft template is attached as an annexure.
- c. **Deliverables and timelines** – The key deliverables are specified along with the timelines for mentoring. This ensures that there is a sense of completion and achievement at the end of the mentoring period and evaluation is possible.
- d. **Personal boundaries** – While mentoring is a deeply engaging process, personal boundaries need to be respected at both ends. The same are specified in the agreement.
- e. **Extension of sexual harassment and other relevant organizational policies** – Policies such as POSH, workplace ethics, zero tolerance or any other relevant organizational policy that extends to the mentoring relationship is mentioned in the agreement.
- f. **Grievance redressal and feedback** – Mechanism for grievance redressal and feedback for both mentor and mentee is outlined in the agreement. This is to ensure that both mentor and mentee feel safe at all times during the mentoring relationship.

**Annexure 5:** Mentorship Goal Setting Template

- **Mentoring meetings (including kickoff)**

Once the above steps are completed, the interactions between the mentor and mentee can begin. Mentoring interactions can be done through face to face meetings if both mentor and mentee are in the same location. Telephonic and virtual meetings can be done if face to face is not possible. Ideally, a combination of the two formats gives a convenient mode for mentor-mentee to work with.



The first meeting – introductory or kick off meeting – is an important one since it sets the tone for all future meetings. As far as possible this should be done in person. A video-enabled virtual meeting should be used otherwise.

It is necessary that the incubator/ESO team spends some time in preparing the individual women entrepreneur for the first meeting. At this point, it might be necessary to address queries about the process or mentor, manage fears and apprehensions, instill confidence, prepare talking points if necessary.

Anchor plays a crucial role in organizing and facilitating a mentoring meeting. She/he helps resolve conflicts, document and follow up the conversation and also keep the meeting on agenda.

#### **Annexure 6:** Things to do- Introductory Call/Meeting

- **Monitoring and documentation**

As discussed above, anchor plays an important role in documenting every mentoring conversation. Effective documentation is useful in many ways –

One, it helps to record the proceedings of each meeting including questions asked, suggestions made, homework given etc. which the mentor and mentee could access later for ready reference.

Two, it helps to track the progress of each mentee as against the mentoring objectives set at the beginning, thus making timely course correction possible.

In the case of women entrepreneurs where self-doubt often becomes an obstacle for growth, such record of progress and growth might help in motivating them. Documentation and regular monitoring also leads to timely and more efficient conflict resolution.

#### **Annexure 7:** Mentoring Documentation & Monitoring Sheet

- **Grievance redressal & Feedback**

It is possible that during the course of mentoring, mentor and mentee develop disagreements that need to be resolved. These could stem from expectation gap, mismatched styles of mentoring & learning, evolving business needs or business environment, change in circumstances etc. These could also arise from more concerning causes like harassment or disrespect from either sides. It is important that such possibilities are considered and planned for. Formal documents including agreements, onboarding letters and organizational policy documents should outline the grievance redressal mechanism in place. The anchors should be well versed with such mechanism and should be able to activate the appropriate action when required. Care should be taken to draft gender sensitive redressal mechanisms that safeguard the interests of all genders. Where formal

complaints/redressal committees are created, adequate representation of women should be ensured.

Feedback from mentors and mentees can help incubators/ESOs improve the effectiveness of the program. Processes should be designed to allow feedback during as well as at the end of a mentoring relationship.

- **Closing the Mentorship relationship**

There will be a time when the relationship will begin to draw to an end. At this point mentor and mentee must both 'let go' so that the mentee can maintain their independence. It is the responsibility of the mentee to build on and put what they have learnt into practice. Although the mentor-mentee will probably continue to have some form of interaction, it should be on a more informal basis.

**Annexure 8:** Tips for Successfully Ending A Mentoring Relationship

## **6.2. Preparing Mentor Community**

As one of the nodal agencies to implement the startup policy for the state with a key focus on women entrepreneurship, Startup Nagaland can play a transformative role in preparing the mentor community to support more women entrepreneurs take their journey towards success. Following are some of the initiatives that could be taken up.

### **6.2.1. Spreading awareness about women entrepreneurship**

Celebrating the women entrepreneurs in the state of Nagaland, giving them a platform to share their successes and challenges would result in a sensitized ecosystem which is more likely to contribute to the growth of women entrepreneurs. Events, awards, media coverage etc. could be used towards this end.

### **6.2.2. Make mentoring attractive**

Experts from diverse fields who could contribute their time and expertise to support women-led enterprises exist within as well as outside the state. However, there needs to be an effort to attach a sense of pride in mentoring women entrepreneurs and becoming a part of these growth stories in Nagaland. A campaign that glorifies mentoring and invites more entrepreneurs/professionals/subject matter experts to join in towards the cause can result in a state wide effort to build successful women-led enterprises. This campaign would also need to challenge existing stereotypes that refrain women professionals and experts from taking up mentoring roles for other women.

### **6.2.3. Creating a common pool of Mentors (at Startup Nagaland)**

As a state level agency, Startup Nagaland can invest in creating a common pool of mentors who are willing to support women entrepreneurs. Through a common process of evaluation and screening, this panel of mentors could be formed and recognized by the state. The panel could be accessed by member incubators/ESOs from a common portal thereby leading to efficiency in mentor identification.

### **6.2.4. Conduct capacity building programs**

To ensure that state-recognized mentor pool is equipped with relevant skills as well sensitized to the mentee context, needs, aspirations and challenges; regular capacity building programs could be organized. These could include gender sensitive mentoring and other relevant topics. Knowledge exchange and experience sharing sessions could also be organized to leverage the collective expertise of the mentor pool.

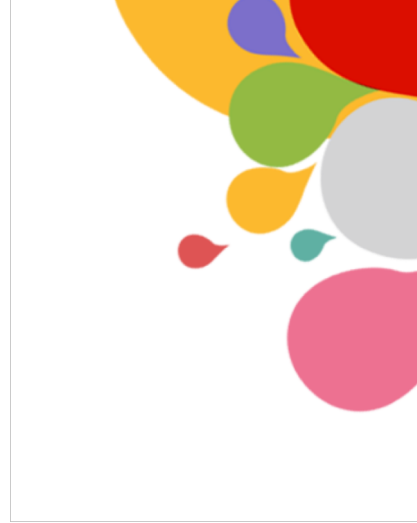
- **Levels and Certifications**

Startup Nagaland could also initiate professional certifications and courses in mentoring women entrepreneurs. This would ensure quality as well as attract professionals to the mentoring domain.

**Annexure 9:** Women Centric Mentoring Workshop



# Annexures



## Annexure 1

### Why be a mentor?

#### – Give Back

Obtain personal satisfaction by making a difference in the development of the new generation entrepreneurs, facilitate your own professional and personal growth by sharing the knowledge you learned through your years of experience, and give back to the industry that helped you gain your expertise and reach success. Mentoring is an empowering and rejuvenating experience that impacts both mentors and mentees and largely contributes to their development.

#### – Inspire with your leadership and managements skills

Through your obtained leadership and management skills and using effective communication techniques, you will be inspiring a new generation of leaders/entrepreneurs who are passionate about their fields of enterprise and who want to make a difference in the world. Those budding entrepreneurs who aspire to be highly successful and (look for)need our guidance to achieve success.

#### – Expand your professional network

In addition to sharing your wide network of professional connections in (your field) the industry, this experience allows you to tap into the emerging start-up world and reach out to the talents of the new economies and gain fresh new perspectives. A mentor-mentee relationship offers benefits in addition to acquaintance, networking, and support. Trust and respect are important factors that deepen this relationship and takes you into an ever evolving new space of fruitfulness.

#### – Be the change maker

Be one of the game changers by helping shape the future industry landscape and be one of the first insiders involved in impactful adventures and innovative projects that mold the future economy and impact lives and jobs in our communities. Mentors can be the change they want to see in the world through their efforts of instilling seeds of growth in the new generation.



## What are your fields of expertise?

A mentor affects the professional life of a protege by fostering insight, identifying needed knowledge, and expanding growth opportunities. This is why we are looking for mentors who are with 10+ years of experience in entrepreneurship, running their own businesses and professional services, with expertise in a variety of fields that may include and are not limited to the following. Whatever your skills are and your field of expertise is, we are wide open to emerging opportunities in this new era of constant change and knowledge flow. Feel free to add your own categories and customize your contribution to the program. This is our primary list of current and past mentorship spaces and needs.

- Branding
- Marketing and communication
- Market positioning
- Sales
- Legal practice
- Accounting in the creative field (Art & Craft)
- Business management and strategy
- Manufacturing and Distribution
- Start-ups and scaling a business
- Systems development, UX/UI, Programming
- How to attract funding and/or angel investors

## Annexure 2

### Top 5 pit falls in the mentoring relationship and how to resolve them

**Inadequate definition of roles and ground rules** – lack of clarity of ground rules will make it difficult for the relationship to develop and trust to build. It may also lead to false expectations and unreasonable demands by one party on the other. Set the ground rules and revisit them regularly

**Conflict of interest** – expanding the mentoring partnership into other areas like becoming a shareholder, a non-executive director, or engaging in a business partnership may create a conflict of interest. This will impede the independence of the mentoring relationship and potentially void your mentorship agreement

**Mentee wants to give up** - after the initial excitement of drawing up the business plan, it is not untypical that the mentee will face real challenges as the business progresses. When this happens, mentors can make a difference by helping the mentee through the uncertainty and giving them the drive to facing the challenges

**Conflicting values** – the mentor and mentee may have different ethical values on how to conduct business. Be open about your personal standards; if the gap is too wide the relationship may suffer. If this happens reach out to your mentoring team to discuss how to move forward

**Mentee not engaging** – the mentee doesn't respond to calls, emails or efforts to arrange meeting dates. The mentee should be reminded that mentoring is at its most effective when contact is constant. At times, the mentor's role is to help develop the mentee's professional ways of working. If these efforts are not successful, reach out to the mentoring team for assistance

## Annexure 3

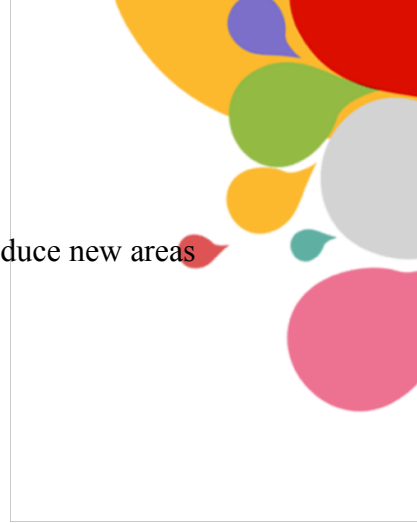
### Mentoring Styles Questionnaire

#### Agree/Disagree

**Sometimes it may be difficult to choose between agree/disagree. Don't think about it as a matter of conscience! Trust your most instinctive response!**

1. When I deeply go into the problems of the mentee, this often evokes new problems; I prefer to avoid that.
2. When I see that my mentee is worried about something I take a lot of time to go into this.
3. I give all kind of suggestions to my mentees with the expectation that they choose the best suggestion for themselves.
4. For complicated problems I give solutions to the mentee because the mentee does not have a good overview in those cases.
5. As a mentor I wait and see how the mentees see their problems.
6. I give my mentees space to talk about their problems; I do not give my opinion in principle.
7. I see myself as someone who in mentoring situations gives suggestions and mentees then can make a choice themselves.
8. From my experience I feel entitled to indicate how problems can be solved in the most efficient way.
9. In the mentoring relationship I abandon from any hierarchy between me and the mentee so that we can share our contributions equally.
10. If a mentee is functioning badly I stay calm: those problems often resolve themselves.
11. I am open minded to solutions coming from the mentee, even if on first sight I do not think much of them.
12. If a mentee really is in trouble, good thinking is impossible for him or her, so in these occasions it is better that I do the work of the problem solving.
13. Good solutions are hard to find so I often insist on that mentees follow my advice.
14. In the mentoring process I am constantly searching for solutions that can really be acceptable for me and the mentee.
15. I keep away from problems of my mentees because I think it is better that they solve their problems themselves or with the help of their friends and colleagues.
16. When listening to my mentee I in principle do not give my opinion.
17. A good mentor really is a good adviser who suggests all kinds of solutions.
18. Because of my position, experience and expertise I can analyse problems very quickly and then point at solutions in an effective way.
19. As a mentor I am open and clear about my points of view and I expect the mentee to be the same.

20. I often take the position of a 'sounding board'.
21. Often mentees do not know what to discuss so I need to be able introduce new areas of discussion



## Annexure 4

### Setting the ground rules

**Professional vs personal lives** – the relationship is predominantly about the mentee’s business. It is ok to talk about each other’s personal lives but it is up to the discretion of the mentor and mentee how much they wish to share

**Level of involvement** – mentor and mentee should decide on and abide by an agreed contact schedule. Be considerate of one another and avoid making excessive demands on each other’s time

**Achieving agreed objectives** – the mentor will assist the mentee in achieving the agreed objectives but will let the mentee run his/her business independently

**Regular reviews** – both parties should review their relationship and the mentee’s business progress on a regular basis, and check each other’s level of comfort at the end of each meeting

**Mentor’s authority/name** – the mentee will use the mentor’s authority/name only with the mentor’s consent

**Confidentiality** – the mentor will not communicate his/her knowledge of the mentee to other parties without the mentee’s consent

## Annexure 5

### Mentorship Goal Setting Template

The purpose of this template is to assist you in documenting mutually agreed upon goals and parameters that will serve as the foundation for your mentoring relationships. While mentors and mentees may find mentorship agreements to be useful, they are optional. This template is expected to be altered to meet individual needs.

- [1] *Goals* (what you hope to achieve as a result of this relationship; e.g., gain perspective relative to skills necessary for success in academia, explore new career opportunities/alternatives, obtain knowledge of organizational culture, networking, leadership skill development, etc.):

- [2] *Steps to achieving goals* as stated above (e.g., meeting regularly, manuscripts/grants, collaborating on research projects, steps to achieving independence, etc.):

- [3] *Meeting frequency* (frequency, duration, and location of meetings):

- [4] *Confidentiality*: Any sensitive issues that we discuss will be held in the strictest of confidence. Issues that are off limits for discussion include:

- [5] Plan for *evaluating relationship effectiveness* (e.g., bi-annual review of mentorship meeting minutes, goals, and outcomes/accomplishments):





[6] *Relationship termination clause:* In the event that either party finds the mentoring relationship unproductive and requests that it be terminated, we agree to honor that individual's decision without question or blame.

*Duration:* This mentorship relationship will continue as long as both parties feel comfortable with its productivity or until



*Mentor's Signature*

*Mentee's Signature*

*Incubator team Representative*


## Annexure 6

### Things to do- Introductory Call/Meeting

#### **Before your call / meeting:**

Make contact with your mentee by email, phone or your preferred choice of communication to:

- Exchange contact details (in case of last minute changes)
- Get to know one another
- Provide additional background information (e.g. business plans or professional experience)
- Agree on communication channel and time
- Be aware of any special needs or circumstances



Incubator Team  
to take the  
responsibility

#### **During your meeting:**

- Focus on getting the relationship off to a good start (build rapport)
- Acknowledge that the relationship is two-way and voluntary
- Share expectations you have of the mentoring relationship
- Establish ground rules
- Decide on type of meetings (in person, phone, online)
- Discuss the preferred way of communication (phone, email, in person)
- Discuss how to keep track of progress
- Complete any admin work required by your mentoring team



## Annexure 8

### Tips for Successfully Ending A Mentoring Relationship

**Fixing a date for your last meeting** - have a chat with your mentee beforehand and decide on a date. Remind each other of the date of the last session in the meeting before this so that you can prepare for it.

**Other ways to support** – you might like to encourage your mentee to look at ways that they can continue their learning; for example by attending other workshops or professional events

**Celebrating your success** - have a look back at the goals you set when you first met – remember success is measured by the mentee and their goals and development

**Saying goodbye** - imagine how you can end the session on a celebratory note. You could have a chat about what you enjoyed most, the most important things you've learned or if you'd stay in contact informally

**Evaluating & Administration** – check with your mentoring team on any administrative work which needs to be done before the official end. You may be asked to complete a Mentoring Relationship Outcome (MRO) form. It doesn't take too long and it's really helpful to see how you got on. It also helps the mentoring team to identify any improvements they can make to the mentoring journey

## Annexure 9

### Women Centric Mentoring Workshop

The proposed workshop has been developed basis the following structure and design:

**Participant Group:** Mentors supporting women entrepreneurs in various stages of their entrepreneurship journey.

**Duration:** 4 hours

Sub Modules	Elements to be covered
Understanding Women Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Motivations &amp; aspirations</i></li><li>- <i>Fears and apprehensions</i></li><li>- <i>Internal &amp; external barriers</i></li><li>- <i>Presence in sectors and value chains</i></li><li>- <i>Entrepreneurial behaviour</i></li></ul>
Expectation of WE's from a mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Support system</i></li><li>- <i>Financial preparation</i></li><li>- <i>Increase networks</i></li><li>- <i>Calculated risks</i></li><li>- <i>Personal vs. Business priorities</i></li></ul>
Mentoring women entrepreneurs	<p>Mentoring approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Proactive mentoring and open-door</i></li><li>- <i>Feedback – content &amp; channels</i></li><li>- <i>Formalization of mentoring relationship</i></li><li>- <i>Empathy</i></li></ul> <p>Barriers in establishing mentoring relationships by WE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>Knowledge</i></li><li>- <i>Trust</i></li><li>- <i>Comfort zone vs. growth zone</i></li><li>- <i>Women as mentees</i></li><li>- <i>Choosing a mentor</i></li><li>- <i>Fear of assertion</i></li></ul>

**Methodology:** The workshop will follow a combination of knowledge sharing and collaborative inquiry methods to discuss a robust mentoring approach to support women entrepreneurs.

