

# Mentoring in Africa for diversity and inclusion in the surveying profession

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## SUMMARY

One of the ways of sustaining any profession, and organization is, not just the intergenerational transfer of technical skills, but also soft skills, professional identity and institutional memory. It is also important to promote diversity and inclusion in the profession. A mentoring programme serves to facilitate these aims and inspires young professionals thus building a stronger future for individuals and the profession. The FIG Mentoring Programme for Africa followed the leadership of the Geospatial Council of Australia (GCA, formerly the SSSI) in the development of this continent-wide programme. Based on a structured set of six topics, each covered over two weeks, mentors and mentees learn and share together, often developing deep bonds and lasting relationships. Mentor volunteers benefit through personal growth, and through exposure to perspectives of those of a younger generation, while they have the intrinsic satisfaction of experiencing the advancement of young surveyors. Mentees gain the perspectives of those with more experience and share their insights through the lens of a younger generation. The FIG Mentoring Programme for Africa has now completed its third iteration – successes can be shared; lessons can be learned. We look forward to a new programme to be piloted in North America in 2025. The footprint of the FIG mentoring initiatives will thus straddle Australia (with some participants from the Pacific region), Africa and North America. The impact of structured mentoring is having a cumulative positive effect in developing and encouraging young surveyors in our profession. This paper reflects the development of the programme for Africa and assesses feedback from the 2024 cycle using the assessment framework of Treasure et al (2022) – “Ten simple rules for establishing a mentoring programme”. Although many aspects of the programme design and execution follow these ten rules, there are some aspects that could be strengthened.

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