

Project Title: Mentorship Program for Laboratory Managers in Burundi

Background and Rationale

Effective laboratory management is critical for ensuring high-quality diagnostic services and patient safety. In Burundi, many laboratory managers lack formal mentorship and leadership development opportunities, which can limit their capacity to implement quality systems and lead teams. Establishing a structured mentorship program will pair experienced laboratory leaders with new or less-experienced managers, fostering knowledge transfer, leadership growth, and sustainable quality improvement. This aligns directly with FEN's mission to support educational and quality-focused initiatives in emerging nations¹.

Objectives

- **Develop and implement a mentorship program** for laboratory managers across Burundi.
- **Enhance leadership, management, and quality assurance skills** among participating managers.
- **Foster a network of laboratory leaders** committed to continuous improvement and professional development.
- **Create a sustainable model** for ongoing mentorship and peer support.

Project Activities

1. Selection of Mentors and Mentees

- Identify experienced laboratory managers (mentors) and early-career or rural lab managers (mentees) from public and private sectors.

2. Mentor Training Workshop

- Conduct a workshop to train mentors in effective coaching, communication, and leadership skills.

3. Mentorship Pairing and Program Launch

- Pair mentors and mentees based on interests, location, and needs; launch the program with a kickoff meeting.

4. Regular Mentorship Sessions

- Facilitate monthly virtual or in-person meetings between mentors and mentees, focusing on management challenges, quality improvement, and leadership topics.

5. **Monitoring and Support**

- Provide ongoing support, resources, and guidance to mentorship pairs; collect feedback and track progress.

6. **Evaluation and Reporting**

- Assess program outcomes, document success stories, and develop recommendations for scaling up.

Expected Outcomes

- Improved management and leadership skills among mentees.
- Enhanced implementation of quality systems in participating laboratories.
- Creation of a sustainable mentorship network within Burundi's laboratory community.
- Actionable insights for expanding the program nationally.

Timeline

- **Month 1:** Planning, participant selection, and mentor training workshop.
- **Month 2:** Pairing of mentors and mentees; program launch.
- **Months 3–5:** Regular mentorship sessions, ongoing support, and monitoring.
- **Month 6:** Evaluation, reporting, and recommendations for future cycles.

Budget Estimate

- Mentor training workshop (venue, materials, facilitators): 8400\$
- Communication and meeting support (internet, transport): 2800\$
- Program coordination and administration: 3000\$
- Monitoring and evaluation: 2400\$

- **Total estimated budget:** 16,600

Sustainability Plan

- Develop guidelines and resources for future mentorship cycles.
- Encourage participating organizations to institutionalize mentorship as part of professional development.
- Leverage program data to advocate for ongoing support from the Ministry of Health and partners.

Project Team

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