**Final Report of the Pilot Mentoring Program for young scholars of the African Section of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA)**

By

Saweda Onipede Liverpool-Tasie, Michigan State University

Chair, AAEA Africa Section 2017-2018

January 31, 2019

## Introduction and Background:

One of the goals of the Africa Section of the AAEA (since its inception in 2015) is to support young scholars on the African continent. During the 2016/17 tenure of Dr. Awudu Abdullai (Professor and Chair of Food Economics and Food Policy, Department of Food Economics and Consumption Studies, University of Kiel,), the section co-sponsored a session on mentoring at the 2016 triennial meeting of the African Association of Agricultural Economists held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The section also worked with the International section of the AAEA to organize a preconference workshop on Grant Writing for Early Career Professionals that took place during the 2017 AAEA meetings.

At the 2017 business meeting, the incoming president, Dr. Saweda Liverpool-Tasie (Associate Professor, Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, Michigan State University) presented a proposal (based on her reflection and interactions with various young and established scholars over the previous year) to build on the section's activities and improve its support to young African scholars.

Though there is increasing research being done in Africa and by Africans in the field of agricultural economics, the extent to which African scholars on the continent are leading research studies (about and on the continent) that get published in international peer reviewed journals is low. Two observations stand out. First, the methods being used by many scholars need to be updated and better linked to theory. Second, the writing skills of many African scholars need to be improved to get research outputs published. This presented several opportunities for the section to promote scholarship on the continent through training and mentoring:

1. **TRAINING – Possible areas discussed**
   i. Analytical Methods: This could be a short course or workshop on cross-section and panel data methods or other observational data analysis. It could also be courses on the design and implementation of social experiments as well as their analysis
   ii. Developing appropriate theoretic models and appropriately linking these to empirical analysis – e.g. Agricultural household models and Technology adoption models
   iii. Training and support for the development of soft skills e.g. article writing, research presentation skills and CV preparation

2. **MENTORING**
The second initiative involves mentoring generally but particularly for research (data collection and analysis as well as writing and publication): The question here is how could the Africa Section develop a strategy for mentoring young African scholars? Could matching young scholars with senior researchers in a commitment/goal to jointly publish articles within a specific

time frame be an option? While many in the Africa section are already doing this, could the section do some coordination and serve as a platform to link scholars with mentors and feature such joint work?  The possibility of doing so through a hosted session at AAEA and/or at meetings of regional, national or continental organizations was raised. Working towards getting outputs from such collaboration publicity (such as a selection of best papers into a special issue of a journal such as the. Journal of African Economies- JAFE) was another consideration.

   Following interactions with established agricultural economists to gauge the chances of securing a strong mentor pool for these activities, Saweda got confirmation of interest from 10 senior researchers at seven different universities / research institutes across the USA. She also got responses and CVs from 10 young scholars (who attended the mentoring session at Addis) indicating their interest in being mentored.

   There was general support for the proposals on training and mentoring.  With African universities increasingly giving higher priority to quality publications for promotion of faculty, this effort was considered strategic. It would be of mutual benefit to young scholars on the continent and their colleagues/partners across the world.

Another capacity building need highlighted at the meeting was that of communicating effectively with policy makers and other non-academic audiences (verbally and in writing). Some proposals for designing a mentoring effort to address this need were offered. There was encouragement to reach out to and learn from previous and current efforts of the AAEA on similar initiatives. There was also a suggestion to look and learn from efforts of organizations other than the AAEA (to learn what worked and what did not).

**The AAEA Africa Section Pilot-Mentoring Program for Young Scholars:**
   Following the business meeting the executive committee met and decided that the section would start off with a pilot mentoring program for the 2017/18 year. The pilot program would be structured based on the existing findings as well as findings from other mentoring efforts with a view to scale it up in the future. The committee agreed to start the pilot with 3 mentees. Given the desire to build on interactions started at the 2016 Africa meetings in Addis and indications of interest from it, as well as to avoid a very formal call for applications for only 3 spots, the committee agreed that the selection of mentees would be conducted as follows:

   A list of young scholars who had indicated interest in participating in a mentoring program was developed by Liverpool-Tasie and Dr. Nicole Mason-Wardell (the Section's secretary/treasurer). A list of PhD students/ recent PhD's among the section members based on the continent was produced. A request to all interested mentees for a CV and a short description of their research with reasons why they wanted to be mentored was made.

   The submissions were then vetted by members of the executive committee, and 3 young scholars who were concluding their doctoral studies/ early career PhD holders were selected to participate in the pilot program. The three scholars were matched with the senior researchers working on themes closest to their interests so that mentors could have a significant influence on the research and writing efforts of the mentees.  Four of the five mentors chosen were from the initial group indicating support for the mentoring program and willingness to serve. The fifth mentor was approached as a good fit for the mentee and agreed to so serve. In one case, the scholar and mentor already had prior interactions and thus it was agreed that they would continue to work together towards a particular output under the auspices of the AAEA Africa section-pilot mentoring program. In that case only one mentor was assigned to the mentee. For the other two mentees, we adopted a group mentoring approach.

The decision to use group mentoring (2 mentors and 1 mentee) was made for several reasons. First, if a mentee is paired with two senior researchers that could potentially reduce the load of any one mentor, given that most mid-level and senior researchers are very busy. Having multiple mentors potentially stimulates each mentor to focus on areas of strength while enriching the mentoring experience for the mentee. For example, some senior researchers are excellent writers with extraordinary communicating skills, while others are more technical with strong modelling, research design and econometric skills. Having such diversity therefore, not only reduces the work load but also exposes the mentee to several perspectives, enriching the mentoring experience for all.

Consequently, the three mentoring teams for the pilot AAEA Africa section mentoring program were composed as follows:

1. **Dr. Gilbert Adjimoti**, from the **Republic of Benin** with a PhD in Applied Agricultural Economics and Policy, from the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness at the **University of Ghana**, Legon (GHANA). Dr. Adjimoti received his PhD in 2016 and his research interests include agricultural policies with particular interests in market development for agricultural inputs and outputs in Africa; rural livelihood strategies; social capital and food security. Some of his particular issues of interest are: Participation into cashew value chain market and household food security in West Africa; the role of social capital in assessing and adopting agricultural technologies; and political economy of agricultural mechanization in Francophone West Africa

    Given his interest in mechanization in Africa alongside his interest in food security, value chains and input markets, he was matched with **Prof. Alex Winter-Nelson (University of Illinois)** with a long history of working in Africa on issues related to food security and input use and markets. He was also matched with **Dr. Hiroyuki Takeshima (IFPRI)** who has extensive research experience on mechanization in Africa   and on input use and markets

2. **Mr. Divan van der Westhuizen**, from **South Africa** is a PhD Student (Agricultural Economics) at the **University of Pretoria**. He is the project manager of the Bureau's Farm and Inputs Division, focusing on primary production in South Africa, but also in Southern- and Eastern Africa. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics with a focus on mechanization adoption in Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular with case studies in Tanzania. Mr. Divan has already had prior interaction with **Prof. Thomas Jayne (Michigan State University)** and thus it was agreed that the team would work on a particular project together under the auspices of the AAEA section.

3. **Dr. Kemi Obisesan** from **Nigeria** is a faculty in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, **Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria** She has a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from University of Ibadan, Nigeria awarded in 2014. Her research interests include impact assessment, welfare economics, agribusiness and farm management, agricultural marketing and agricultural finance.

Given these interests and her background, Dr. Obisesan was paired with **Professor Derek Byerlee (Georgetown University) and Dr. Tewodaj Mogues (IFPRI).** Professor Byerlee has a reputation of excellence in research, teaching, administration and policy advice in developing countries. He is also the editor in chief of the journal Global food security. Dr. Mogues's research interests are in social capital and public investments in rural areas alongside experience in Nigeria (as well as Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique and Uganda)

The objective of the pilot program was to mentor the young scholars in conducting research. One of the specified tangible outputs from the process is a manuscript that could eventually be submitted to a peer reviewed journal and subsequently published. However, there are numerous other tangible and intangible outputs expected, including the learning opportunity the program provides for the section.  For example, it is expected that in addition to learning with and from each other, the interaction between mentors and mentees might build some relationships that extend beyond a formal program of the section.

To achieve the tangible output of having a manuscript developed through the program several additional activities were conducted by the section leadership

1. **The section created a space for presenting the research output of the mentoring program:** As was discussed during the business meeting in August 2017, creating opportunities for young scholars to present their work and get feedback is important. Thus to support the mentees in this regard, the section leadership did the following to support the mentees to present their work in a special session at the 2018 AAEA meetings:
   a. *Applied to the AAEA board for funding*: The funds were to support the participation of our 3 mentees at the 2018 AAEA annual meetings in DC. We presented the section's goal on capacity building and the progress made on matching researchers as well as the desire to use this pilot program to learn how best to do mentoring or at least how to do mentoring better. We also expressed clearly that the section understands that financial support for mentees on a yearly basis would be an expensive venture and thus while considered ideal for this first phase, the section would be thinking of sustainable ways to support mentees to present their work.  Our application was approved and the board agreed to provide up to $4,000 to each of the three mentees towards their travel and lodging expenses for the conference.
   b. *Applied to the AAEA for a venue for mentee presentations*. We asked for a room to hold a 1.5-hour session during the AAEA meetings where the mentees could present their work. Working with Mary Annen (AAEA) the section was able to get a room for the mentee presentations on  August 5, 2018, just before the business meeting of the section
   c. *Applied for registration waivers for mentees:* To facilitate the participation of the mentees at the 2018 AAEA meeting (beyond just their presentations) the section leadership applied to the AAEA for waivers for the conference and registration fees for the mentees. These had to be submitted to Sarah Kenner by March 7 2018, as per AAEA guidelines and were approved.

2. **The section provided exposure to international best practice in peer-review**:  As part of exposure to international best practices (and to also provide some tangible deadlines for the mentoring groups) the section leadership adopted the approach used for international peer review. Each mentee was asked to prepare a complete draft of a manuscript for submission by June 15, 2018. This draft was shared with senior researchers (other than their mentors) to provide them with written feedback, as one would receive from a peer reviewed journal.
   a. In this regard, the section chair reached out to some established and reputable scholars; many of whom had also indicated interest in the mentoring program to determine their willingness to review the manuscripts.  There was a very favorable response to this request. Chris Barrett (Cornell University), Travis Lybbert (University of California Davis), Harounan Kazianga (Oklahoma State University), Melinda Smale (Michigan State University), Ben Wood (3IE and Integra LLC) and Ume Lele (International Policy Expert) all agreed to be reviewers for our mentees.
   b. Mentee manuscripts were all received on time (June 15) and circulated to the reviewers. The section leadership coordinated the allocation of the 3 manuscripts to the 6 reviewers and then coordinated the return of these reviews to each mentee and their mentors.

3. **The section followed up with mentees throughout the year.** Through periodic emails (monthly for some mentees but at least every two months for others), the section chair checked in with the mentees to enquire on the status of their work and  also checked in/confirmed that there was some interaction going on with the mentors.  There were no serious challenges but this enabled the section chair keep abreast of the progress of the mentees and to know when additional deadlines or support was needed.

4. **The section worked with mentees during the visa application process as needed:** The section chair worked with Kristin McGuire (AAEA) to assist the scholars with their visa applications. Unfortunately, two of the scholars, Dr. Gilbert Adjimoti  and Dr. Kemi Obisesan were refused  visas and thus presented their papers  during the Africa section mentoring session via a prerecorded PowerPoint to forestall the consequences of connectivity challenges.


**Lessons learned:**

To learn from the pilot mentoring program several efforts have been made.

First to learn from the experiences of the mentees and mentors, the section chair designed and administered a short questionnaire (see appendix 1) to each participant.  Participants were informed that the responses were going to be anonymous and thus encouraged to freely express their opinions, so the section could learn from their experience. A summary of the findings from the survey is presented below:

Respondents indicated that mentees and mentors interacted on average 5 times over the year with the minimum interaction being 3 times. Overwhelmingly the main means of communication was

email (used by 100% of the participants). Skype was also used but successfully by only 1 mentee. Mentors were considered to be very responsive 100% of the time. While mentees were considered very responsive (rank of 1 out of 5 (option a-e of question 2 of the questionnaire in Appendix 1) with one being very responsive and 5 being unresponsive) and somewhat responsive in 2 and 3 out of 5 responses respectively. This indicates that contrary to the often perceived notion that mentors are too busy to respond to mentees, the mentees were quite pleased with the level of response they received. On the other hand the mentors were not as completely satisfied with the responsiveness of the mentees and future programs might want to emphasize this to mentees.

There was a 100% agreement (rank of 1 out of 5 (option a-e) of question 4 of the questionnaire in Appendix 1) among both mentors and mentees that the mentoring experience was useful. The reasons offered by participants for the value/strength of the mentoring program include:

a. The program provided an opportunity for a mentee to be exposed to a wider range of viewpoints, methods, and expertise than would otherwise be the case.
b. Connecting mentees with researchers based in US institutions was considered useful to make mentees aware of the nature of debate and communication in the global/international research arena and the required quality of output to publish in such spheres. Such exposure challenges the mentees but provides them some guidance to enable them get to that standard.
c. The program was perceived to benefit mentors as it brings more research active academics and local experts together, which can have important synergies that improve the quality of overall policy-research.
d. It was considered an excellent opportunity for building research partnerships and collaboration.
e. It provided the mentor with the opportunity to learn from working with other organizations and on new issues, and to co-publish along with the mentee and others in their network.
f. It provides the mentees an opportunity to focus on a concrete event at which they can present to an international audience (AAEA conference)

Many participants valued the opportunity provided for the mentees to have their work peer reviewed by others (outside their mentoring team) as well as the opportunity to present their work at the AAEA meeting. Mentees commented that having the opportunity to submit their paper to a wider range of audience for refining the output would help improve its quality. They felt that attending and presenting at the AAEA would create opportunities for further networking and collaboration. Having a time set for the presentation (at the conference) created a deadline that constrained mentees to set time aside to get their work done.

There was strong interest in continuing the mentoring relationship. Only 1 participant (one mentor) out of 8 indicated disinterest in continuing the mentoring relationship. (this is because the mentor was too busy). Other mentors and mentees indicated willingness to continue the relationship with one mentor indicating interest in working with the mentee on another project when the current project was concluded.

There was complete agreement amongst participants (100%) that a mentoring approach with two mentors for each mentee was preferred over a one-to-one match. The main reasons for this were first, it allowed for multiple perspectives and feedback (which improves research output quality). Second it was perceived that having two mentors makes the flow of guidance likely to be more continuous. For example, if at one time one mentor is really busy, the other may have more time. Third, it was expressed that having two mentors exposes the mentee to more relationships whose usefulness might extend beyond the particular research paper being worked on together.

While there was great satisfaction expressed by participants with the program, three main challenges were consistently observed. The first was poor network connectivity (mentioned in 4 out of 8 challenges offered by respondents) which made voice interaction difficult and reduced communication to email. The second challenge mentioned by participants was time constraint due to busy schedules and other commitments (also mentioned in 4 out of the 8 challenges offered). Two other challenges (mentioned by one mentee) are getting data and the inability to work with the mentor on one of the mentor's research projects. They only worked on the mentee's research project.

**Suggestions for continuing and scaling up the mentoring program**

Continuing and scaling up the mentoring program was consistently suggested. Several suggestions were offered by current participants for scaling up the program and can be grouped under three main themes:

1. **Mentoring Teams:** Several suggestions were offered related to the use of mentoring teams or groups. They include
    a. Encouraging multiple young African scholars to work in teams with one mentor. This would expand the reach of the program with a reduced work load on a mentor having to only comment on one paper worked on together by several mentees
    b. Creating an opportunity for more interaction among young scholars while not assigning one mentor to too many young scholars. One example would be to have a platform where students can engage with one another in terms of challenges and/or questions regarding their research and for which they could be assisted by their peers.
    c. Matching young scholars in the US (MSc students) with researchers in Africa with a similar goal of preparing both sets of young scholars to publish in reputable journals.

2. **Structure:** Some participants requested for the program to set additional specific deadlines for participants during the course of the year in addition to the final manuscript preparation and presentation. This would help both mentees and mentors to appropriately prioritize the mentoring activity and feedback requirements.

    Some participants suggested organizing a meeting of the mentoring teams early in the program/mentoring relationship. This could include physical meetings recognized to have high cost implications but appealing, given the network connectivity challenges. Where one mentor is interacting with multiple mentees, such a trip to visit multiple mentees was

suggested to be potentially valuable. Other suggestions include meetings via teleconferencing for which connectivity challenges need to be considered.

A third issue on structure related more to the focus/orientation of scholar exposure. One mentor pointed out the importance of exposing African scholars to trends outside Africa, to provide additional exposure for them on how other regions have developed by resolving (or not resolving) various problems. This will give them more ideas about the more fundamental challenges that constrain African development.

**Mentee selection and pre-program preparation:**

There was some feeling among a minority of mentors (1) that there is a need to coach mentees on efficient and effective interaction. This includes guiding mentees ahead of matching to familiarize themselves with typical features/structure of journal articles and using online references. Because the contribution of mentors, i.e. the bang for the hour/time, was perceived to be higher for African mentees in the upper percentile of pre-existing capacity it was felt that mentors need to know more about the mentees, their qualifications and how they were chosen

One participant felt that focusing on young scholars currently on their last year of their PhD thesis might help to strengthen the quality of their thesis.

**Other suggestions for mentoring young African scholars.**

Finally, respondents were asked for their suggestions on ways the section could support young African scholars. Five of the seven responses restated the value of the mentoring program and the appreciation of the organizers of the program. Suggestions offered on how else young African scholars could be supported include:

- The extension of the program to include writing competitive research proposals, exchange of information on call for application and papers, as well as collaboration on projects.
- A call for the mentoring relationship to continue beyond the completion of the program or specific paper
- A call for the creation of a common database which members of the section may use for their research. This database contains different datasets that people could explore

**Experimenting with digital presentations**

As mentioned earlier, creating opportunities for young scholars to present their work and get feedback is an important part of the mentoring process. To support the mentees in this regard, the section leadership organized a mentoring session at the 2018 AAEA annual meetings in DC for mentees to present the work they had been doing over the year and get feedback. The 1.5 hour session took place on Sunday, August 5 2018; just before the section's business meeting. Each

mentee had about 20 minutes to present their work, followed by a 10 minute session of questions and answers.

While funding was secured from the AAEA board for the three mentees to attend the 2018 meetings, two of the three mentees were unable to secure visas to attend. Rather than cancel the Session the section arranged with the two mentees to prerecord their presentations

To forestall the consequences of connectivity challenges the two prerecorded PowerPoints were digitally forwarded to the section chair ahead of time and then played at the designated time during Africa section mentoring session. Attendees viewed the prerecorded presentations and the two mentees in Africa joined the mentoring session in the US via WhatsApp to take questions and give responses. This adjustment served as a useful learning tool to the section as prerecorded power point presentations became a cost-efficient consideration for the presentation and review of mentees' work in a scaled-up arrangement.

To explore this amenability a post session questionnaire was developed and by the section chair (Appendix 2). The survey was administered to 10 randomly selected attendees at the session. These 10 attendees were selected from a total of about 25 attendees.

Of the 10 randomly selected individuals to participate in an evaluation of the session, 8 responded. There was a unanimous agreement that the session was well organized. All respondents felt that the session was useful to those who attended and majority (7/8) thought it was very useful to those who presented.

There was also a very strong support for the pre-recorded presentations by respondents. While one of the eight respondents mentioned that the use of ICT was OK, with a preference for actual presence, 7 out of 8 expressed strong support for the use of ICT with several respondents indicating that they were surprised at how well it worked. There was one suggestion to have the Q&A discussion via video (if possible) rather than just audio and another about the possibility of having the pre-recorded presentation not only have the slides but also a video of the presenters. This finding was encouraging as it was a concern that participants might find the audio presentation hard to follow or distracting. Below are the comments from respondents to our question "**What did you think about the use of Information technology for the presentations (of scholars who could not attend the meeting) followed by direct interaction with scholars"**:

1. *"I was surprised at how well it worked. Glad to know this option is available"*


2. *"It was helpful and gave mentees opportunity to present their work and get valuable feedback*

3. *"I thought it worked really well! At least from the perspective of those of us in the room. I liked the combination of a pre-recorded presentation and a Q&A by phone"*

4. *"I think it was an innovation, but a video session could be better depending on the network quality"*

5. *This tool was innovative and I really appreciated. It was amazing to find a new way to join the audience and present their project as if they were in the section room.*

6. *The use of technology was Somewhat Ok, but I feel the actual presence of the presenters makes a difference.*

7. *It was a clever way to ensure inclusiveness. I commend the effort.*

8. *The use of IT was quite neat, and worked out very well. I think it provides an opportunity to participate for those who may not be able to travel due to various reasons.*

There was also a general appreciation for the idea of having the mentoring session at the AAEA and having it just before the section meeting

**Updates on mentees**

As at January 2019, all mentees had successfully incorporated the comments and feedback from the reviewers of their paper and the participants in the mentoring sessions. Mentees indicated in a short update review that they were still interacting with their mentors and had subsequently shared copies of the updated manuscripts with them. Two of the three mentees mentioned that they are about to submit their papers for possible publication in international peer review Journals and one indicated expecting one more round of feedback from their mentors prior to submission

**Conclusion**

The 2017/18 pilot mentoring program of the Africa Section of the AAEA was an extremely informative and positive experience. It revealed that within the section, there is significant support for this mentoring effort in terms of willing mentors and significant interest among young scholars to be mentored. There was also extensive support for the scaling up of the program building on this experience.

Four key findings emanated from this mentoring experience. First, the pilot program revealed that managing a mentoring program requires a significant investment of time for coordinating the program as well as for mentoring. As documented, frequent interaction with participants

(mentors and mentees) throughout the year and efforts to organize the mentoring session were non-trivial, labor intensive and time-consuming commitments. Similarly effective mentoring requires frequent interaction often made more challenging when mentees had limited internet access and low connectivity speeds. However, even though these two activities are time intensive, the value of a quality output and support for the next generation of African scholars is immeasurable.

Second, the multiple mentor model ( i.e. two mentors for each mentee) worked well, increasing the quality and quantity of feedback mentees received and reduced the time commitments for each individual mentor. This was a unanimous finding from the participants in the mentoring program.

Third, the mentoring program benefits extend beyond the mentees and has the potential to support capacity strengthening across generations. In addition to building the capacity of the young African scholars through the technical feedback and writing support received, the program also enabled the development of professional relationships among participants and broadens the networks of mentors in the countries and institutions of their mentees. Working with mentors at different levels of their academic career provides a sustainable way of passing across important skills to all members of the research teams. Experience in writing and publishing meets cutting edge technical skills; enriching the experience of the young African scholar as well as the mid-level and senior scholar.

Fourth, creating a space for mentees to present the work they carry out with their mentors is extremely valuable. While having mentees present their work in person is ideal, the potential to use ICT was identified to be an attractive alternative. In the event that physical presence is not possible for visa or other cost related constraints, the use of pre-recorded video and/or audio presentations with opportunities for live interaction through Skype or WhatsApp video was identified to be a workable alternative

With the strength and weaknesses of the pilot mentoring project identified and the support for the program by both potential mentor and mentees, the mentoring program is being scaled up in 2018/19 under the leadership of the current section president Dr. Thomas Jayne (Professor of International Development, Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, Michigan State University). With more mentees (13 in 2018/19) the possibility of a special issue of a journal, featuring some of the best work is possible. We look forward to the possibility of continued development and improvement of the program by future leaders of the section with the support of section members and our extended network.

## Appendix 1

## FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS IN THE FIRST AAEA AFRICA SECTION PILOT MENTORING PROGRAM

1. How many interactions did you have with your mentor/mentee?

   i.    Mentor 1

   ii.    Mentor 2

   iii.    Mentee

2. How responsive was your mentor/mentee?
   a. Very responsive b. Somewhat responsive  c neutral d somewhat unresponsive Very unresponsive

   i.    Mentor 1

   ii.    Mentor 2

   iii.    Mentee

3. What was the main form of communication you had with your mentor/mentee?
   a. A. phone    B. Email.   C. Skype   D. WhatsApp    e. other, specify _____

   i.    Mentor 1

   ii.    Mentor 2

   iii.    Mentee

4. The mentoring experience has been useful.

a. Strongly disagree b. Somewhat disagree  c neutral d somewhat agree  strongly agree

5. Would you be willing/interested to continue the mentoring relationship?
   a. Yes  b. No

6. Do you think the model of having two mentors is preferable to having just one?
   a. Yes b. No,  Why?

7. What were the strengths of this opportunity?

8. What challenges did you face during the mentoring process?

9. How can the mentoring program be strengthened?

10. What suggestions do you have for the organizers/Africa section if we want to scale up the program?

11. What other suggestions do you have for the organizers/ Africa section as we work to strengthen support to other young scholars in Africa?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME!

**Appendix 2**

**FEEDBACK ON THE AAEA AFRICA SECTION MENTORING SESSION IN DC**

1. What is your official designation?
   a. Graduate Student Faculty
   b. Researcher (Non Academic
   c. Other, please indicate

2. I think the Africa section mentoring session was well organized?
   a. Highly agree          b. Somewhat agree

   c. neutral               d. Somewhat disagree          e. Disagree

3. I think having the mentoring session was useful to the presenters?
   a. Highly agree          b. Somewhat agree

   c. neutral               d. Somewhat disagree          e. Disagree

4. I think having the mentoring session was useful to those who attended?
   a. Highly agree          b. Somewhat agree

   c. neutral          d. Somewhat disagree     e. Disagree

5. What did you think about the use of Information technology for the presentations (of scholars who could not attend the meeting) followed by direct interaction with scholars?

6. Any other comments/suggestions for the section about this session? Highly appreciated!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME!