

# Connecting researchers: capacity development through AuthorAID online approaches

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# Challenges faced by researchers

- **Gaps in research skills**
  - Literature review (access to research), data analysis and statistics, research ethics, proposal writing
- **Publishing / communication skills**
  - Targeting journals, navigating peer review, academic writing in English, publishing ethics
- **Connecting with mentors and collaborators**
  - Shortage of mentors at institutional and national level, researchers feel isolated, lack connections to networks and information
- **Career guidance**
  - Finding funding, promotion, personal development and confidence

# How AuthorAID is addressing these problems

## – Massive Open Online Courses

- Nearly 4,000 researchers have completed AuthorAID online courses in Research Writing in the last two years

## – Customised online courses

- Research Writing and Proposal Writing online courses for institutions
- ‘Intensive’ online courses (thematic)

## – Mentoring and collaboration

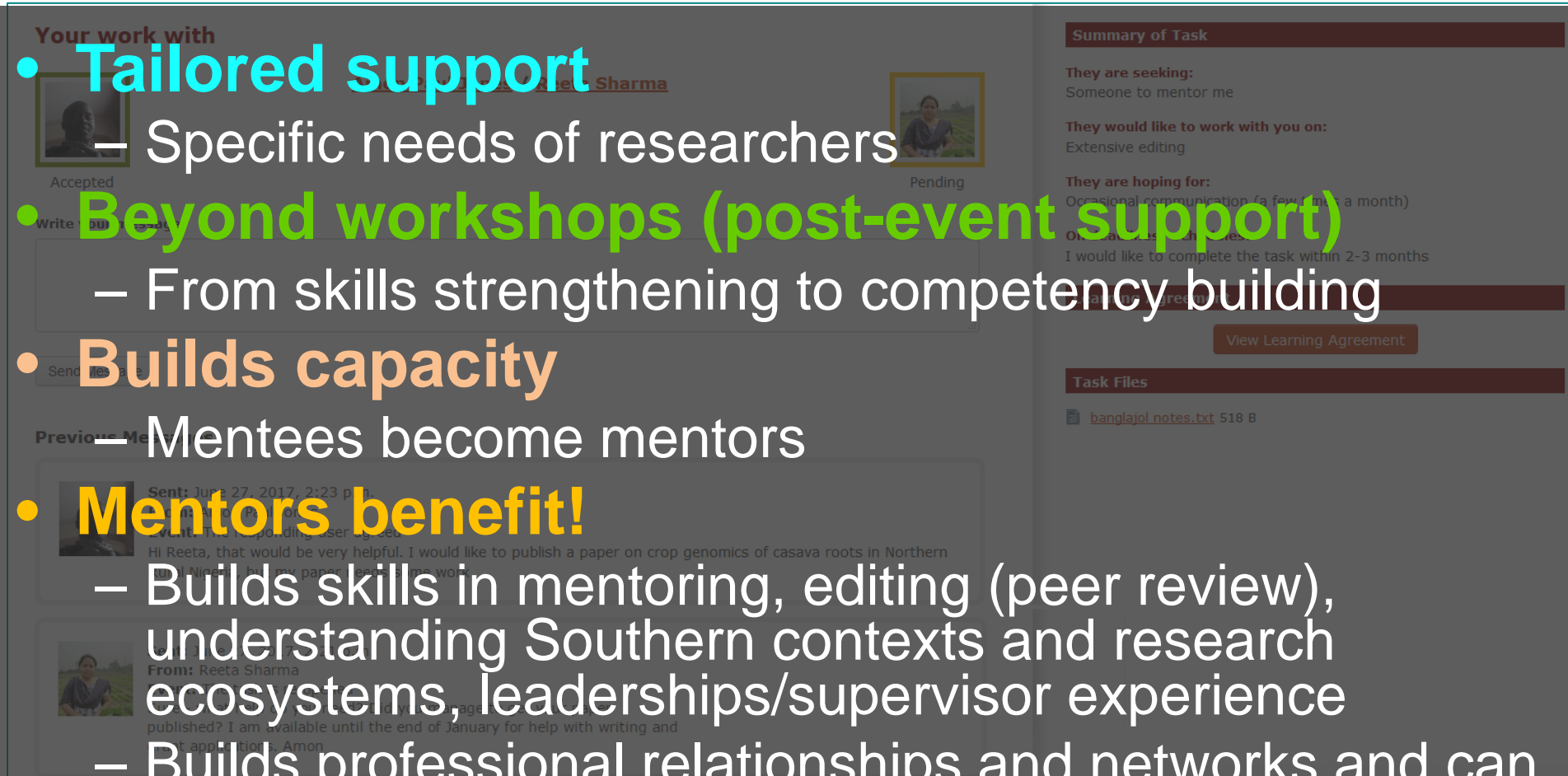
- 18,000 researchers (90% developing countries)
- ‘Find a researcher’ and automatic ‘suggested matches’
- Private messaging and document sharing

## – New Collaboration Platform (coming soon...)

- A new space for collaboration, based around thematic (SDGs) and multidisciplinary spaces
- Private ‘rooms’ and spaces for group mentoring or collaboration for organisations and institutions

## Why online mentoring and collaboration?

- **Tailored support**
  - Specific needs of researchers
- **Beyond workshops (post-event support)**
  - From skills strengthening to competency building
- **Builds capacity**
  - Mentees become mentors
- **Mentors benefit!**
  - Builds skills in mentoring, editing (peer review), understanding Southern contexts and research ecosystems, leaderships/supervisor experience
  - Builds professional relationships and networks and can lead to future collaborations





# What we've learned

- **Flexibility with tools and platforms**
  - Email, phone, Skype, WhatsApp
- **Equitable and sustainable collaboration**
  - Co-leaders and co-authors vs. data collectors
  - Capacity building for long-term and future collaboration
- **Trust and rapport**
  - Crucial to online communication
- **Expectations, roles and responsibilities, deadlines etc.**
  - Mentors: be clear on expectations, communication frequency and deadlines
  - Mentees: agree roles and responsibilities, aims and objectives, hierarchy

# Thanks for listening!

[www.authoraid.info](http://www.authoraid.info)