Utilizing Your PEER Partnership

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Air pollution in Mongolia’s capital city

From 2011 WHO Outdoor Air Pollution Database and Dec 2011 WB report: Air Quality Analysis of Ulaanbaatar
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Our Research Questions:

What is the pollution made of?
Where does the pollution come from?
How does concentration of pollution change with time?
How does UB PM affect regional climate?

Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER)
Our PEER Partnership timeline

Timeline:

2010
Fulbright Scouting trip

2011-2012
Fulbright

2012-2013
NSF PI + PEER

Collaboration with Prof. Lodoysamba

Russia
Mongolia
Ulaanbaatar
China
How we communicate:

My email network over the last 6 months:

- In person
- Last 6 months, in US, LOTS of emails, Skype
Two key items we learned from our partnership:

(1) Reach out to each other

....not just about your overlapping science – but the “Big Picture” of science in one another’s countries
Big Picture Questions:

• Funding? Typical funding sources? How much? How variable is funding year-to-year? What are “hot” science topics? Historical context?

• In Practice? How is science done? What are the norms? At the University? At research institutions? At ministries? Publishing? Data sharing expectations?

• Education? How does the university system work? What are typical expectations for a graduate student to obtain a PhD? What do people do/where do they go upon obtaining their degree?
Why understanding the “Big Picture” matters:

Gives contexts to your interactions with each other.

Prevents misunderstandings (and makes them easier to handle when they do)

Subsequent knowledge transfer outside of your partnership

Ex: Students increase their understanding of how science works in another country → More likely to go to that country do research.

Source: thegoodnessgrows.com/
How to have “Big Picture” conversations:

- Initiate these discussions during part of an existing conversation (email, Skype, during visits, etc.)

- Initiate them as a separate, scheduled conversations.

- Get your research group involved.

  *Ex: One-on-one Student “Skype” exchanges*
Two key items we learned from our partnership:

(1) Reach out to each other

(2) Reach out together

...as PEER PIs + Partners, we are generating scientific data on development issues that give us a unique voice within our communities. Our voices are stronger together.
Reach Out Together

UBAirPollution.org

Impact:
- Researchers and students locally and abroad contacted us
- Filled a gap between public desire for more information and the lack of it
Reach Out Together

**Impact:**

- Local and international media attention (UB Post, Huffington Post, TEDxUB blog)
- Contacted by embassies, Mongolian government officials
- Offers to fund us from local companies (~60,000 USD)
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Thank-you!
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This presentation is available at:
UBairpollution.org/Presentations/PEERPartnerships.ppt