USAID's Girls' and Women's Education Activity

A Portfolio of Possibilities
for Girls' Education, No. 4

MENTORING PROGRAMS: AN APPROACH TO IMPROVING GIRLS' PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION

Shirley Burchfield

What Is Mentoring?

Recognizing the impact that female role models can have on girls' participation and persistence in education, a number of approaches have been developed to provide girls with positive role models. One approach is that of mentoring. The focus of this paper is on planned mentoring programs likely to have an impact on the persistence of girls in school. The goal is to provide decision makers inside the government, religious, or private sectors with insight into the ingredients of a successful mentoring program and examples of such programs.

Defining what is meant by mentoring is not easy since a range of activities are classified as mentoring programs. Almost anything that involves one person helping another can be considered mentoring. The concept originated in Greek mythology and was first documented in Homer's *Odyssey*, when the hero Ulysses asked a friend named Mentor to guide his son Telemachus.

Shirley Burchfield is the director of the Girls' and Women's Education Activity, Component III, at World Education in Boston, MA.

Mentors are often described as empathic individuals who remove barriers to opportunities, model positive behaviors (Flaxman 1993), and provide guidance to people in need (Smink 1990). A mentoring relationship can take place between two people the same age or between a youth and an adult. It can be a naturally occurring relationship or a planned program. It can take place between individuals or among groups of people. A mentoring relationship usually forms to help the mentee (the person receiving the advice or assistance) to navigate a transition, whether the shift is occurring from childhood to adolescence, primary to secondary school, or school to work. It is during transition that young people are most in need of bolstered self-esteem and experiential guidance.

What are the Benefits of Mentoring?

Relationships matter and bonds with caring adults can make an important difference in the lives of vulnerable youth. The strongest evidence comes from psychologists studying "resilient" young people who manage to overcome the challenges of poverty and to go on to become self-sufficient adults. Freedman (1993) identified a number of important benefits of mentoring programs, including: 1) supplying information and opportunities; 2) providing nurturance and support; 3) preparing youth for adulthood; and 4) helping youth cope with difficult circumstances.

Are Mentoring Programs Appropriate for the Public, Private and Religious Sectors?

Mentoring programs serve many goals and objectives and can be adapted to fit a variety of organizational settings. Government organizations in the law enforcement or judicial system can implement a mentoring program as a means of reducing juvenile delinquency. Schools can develop programs for the purpose of decreasing dropout and raising student achievement. Religious organizations often combine the goal of improving the social or academic skills of young people while providing them with role models that will inculcate moral and religious values. Mentoring programs have also gained popularity with corporations in recent years. According to Margo Murray, author of *Beyond the Myth and Magic of Mentoring*, mentoring is often seen as an inexpensive way to achieve a number of goals: create more future leaders in an institution; improve management and staff relationships; meet diversity goals; and replace an aging work force while developing a line of succession (Jossi 1997).

What Is the Evidence from the Field?

In recent years many formal mentoring programs have been initiated. The objectives of such programs range from assisting youth to improve self confidence and build a sense of responsibility to reducing school dropout or preparing students to make the transition from school to work. Many programs build on the master-apprentice relationship, in which "masters" pursue the dual goals of helping apprentices to build skills and to improve their personal circumstances (Flaxman and Ascher 1992). Most mentoring programs intended to improve the lives of young people can be grouped into three categories: 1) parent/child programs; 2) adult/child programs; and 3) peer mentoring.

Mentoring programs are abundant, but there is little documentation and analysis of these activities, and few agencies have recorded the gender of mentors and mentees. Formal mentoring is a relatively new concept and most mentoring programs are still in nascent stages. A review of 21 mentor

programs in New York City found that many organizations are reluctant to conduct evaluations for fear that results are not yet apparent and they may lose funding. Consequently, many mentor programs are predicated on anecdotes of mentoring relationships that reportedly change the lives of participants (Flaxman and Ascher 1992). The section that follows provides examples of the different types of mentoring programs noted above, as well as the evaluation results for each program.

EXAMPLE 1: MOTHER/DAUGHTER PROGRAM

Program Description

A collaboration between the University of Texas El Paso, the YWCA, and three El Paso school districts, the Mother-Daughter Program is a mentoring intervention that encourages Hispanic-American girls to seek higher education. The program, which began as a pilot in 1986, has served hundreds of mother and daughter pairs.

The Mother-Daughter Program targets sixth-grade, Hispanic-American girls, whose family members have not attended college. This group is considered one of the most at-risk groups of American students for a variety of reasons, including: 1) lack of role models; 2) low teacher expectations; 3) mothers with low educational attainment and low expectations; and 4) limited educational support at home. The program is predicated on the notion that a girl's persistence in school is closely related to her mother's attitude toward education and her expectations for her daughter’s achievement. The program recognizes that parents of dropouts are rarely involved in their children’s education. To this end, mothers are taught to become effective role models for their daughters by raising expectations and providing encouragement for scholastic achievement.

Together, mothers and daughters learn that education and career goals are attainable. They participate in discussions about career options and attend seminars. Hispanic women attending the university serve as Big Sisters to girls in the program. Each Big Sister is assigned a group of 10 girls and is responsible for building relationships with their Little Sisters through regular visits. The goal of the Big Sisters is to help the sixth-grade girls to manage personal problems and to serve as models of academically successful women.

In the Mother-Daughter Program, school administrators, teachers, YWCA staff, and community leaders work together to expose girls to new opportunities and to demonstrate to the girls a firm expectation that they will attend the university and meet their desired career goals. Program coordinators say that the Mother-Daughter initiative has succeeded and expanded over the years due to the strength of the collaboration between partners (Tinajero 1991).

Evaluation Results

Evaluations have found that mothers and daughters have an increased awareness of career options, gain self-confidence, and raise educational aspirations.

EXAMPLE 2: BIG BROTHERS/BIG SISTERS OF AMERICA

Program Description

The Big Brother/Big Sisters of America (BB/BSA) programs assist in creating mentoring relationships between adults and disadvantaged youth who are age five to 18 and have no more than one active parent or guardian in their lives. BB/BSA is comprised of more than 500 agencies. Each agency follows national operating procedures for recruitment and training but adapts to meet the unique needs of the community in which it is situated.

Youth and parents indicate to agency officials the preferred gender, race, and age of the mentor with whom they would like to be matched. In some agencies, mentors can state preferences as well. In 1995, 75,000 active matches were made between youth and adults. The BB/BSA agencies monitor relationships through monthly telephone calls to mentors, parents, and youth.

Evaluation Results

Public/Private Ventures conducted an eight-year exploration of the mentoring process, which included an analysis of BB/BSA. Researchers wanted to determine whether one-on-one mentoring makes a difference in the lives of youth. They collected information on 959 youth between the ages of 10 and 16 who had signed up for the program at eight BB/BSA agencies. Of those, approximately half were participants and half (the control group) were on a waiting list. Almost 60 percent of participants in the sample were members of minority groups, and just under 40 percent were girls.

Evaluators tested for impact in six areas: antisocial activities; academic performance, attitudes and behaviors; relationships with families; relationships with friends; self-concept; and social and cultural enrichment. The study found that youth in BB/BSA: 1) are less likely to start using drugs and alcohol; 2) are less likely to hit someone; 3) improve school attendance, performance, and attitudes toward completing homework; and 4) improve peer and family relationships. Academic performance was measured by variables such as: grades, number of times student skipped class, number of books read, and weekly hours spent on homework.

Findings showed that Little Brothers and Little Sisters skipped half as many days of school as the control group, felt more competent about doing homework, and showed modest gains in grade point averages. However, there were no differences between treatment and control group for outcomes such as time spent on homework or number of books read.

Researchers concluded that nonacademic mentoring seems to show promise for academic outcomes, since improvements in the control group are seen in school-related behavior, performance, and attitudes. They speculate that while the effects of many youth-serving programs fade over time, the positive outcomes observed in BB/BSA might persist due to its holistic, developmental approach to improving the lives of youth (Tierney, Grossman, and Resch 1995).

The most substantial research pointing to the protective role for youth of unrelated adults is the work of Emmy E. Werner of the University of California, Davis. Werner's thirty-year longitudinal study of five- hundred children growing up on a sugar plantation in Hawaii found that, without exception, the young people who survived this environment, which was fraught with persistent poverty and high incidences of alcoholism and mental illness among parents, were able to draw on the support of neighborhood mentors, frequently unrelated adults (Freedman 1993).

Parent/Child Programs

Acknowledging that parents play a vital role in their children's education, parent/child programs attempt to involve parents in the schools and to help them provide a supportive environment at home. Some programs are designed to benefit both children and parents by providing career information, tutoring, and family counseling services to students and their parents. Such an approach can be particularly beneficial in countries where girls face severe constraints to completing their education and many parents fail to see the relevance of educating girls. The example that follows describes a program that seeks to improve the self-confidence, educational aspirations, and awareness of career options of both mothers and daughters. While the program was developed for a U. S. audience, many of the barriers to girls' education in the United States are the same as in developing countries: i.e., lack of female role models; inadequate information about career options; low educational aspirations; and low expectations from parents, particularly the mothers.

EXAMPLE 3: PEER MENTORING
3.1 UNICEF/BENIN–FILLE POUR FILLE PROGRAM

Program Description

The *Fille pour Fille* (Girl for Girl) program is one of several UNICEF activities in Benin aimed at increasing girls' participation in education. The program has three main objectives: 1) increasing girls' access to education; 2) increasing their retention in school; and 3) improving their academic performance. In this component older girls (sixth and seventh graders) act as tutors, confidantes, and mentors to younger girls (first through third graders). Beneficiaries of the mentoring relationships are girls deemed by a village committee to be the most vulnerable, i.e., girls from dysfunctional or severely economically disadvantaged families. Mentors visit the girls in their homes, help with homework, and talk to them about their difficulties at home and at school. When problems are identified, such as physical abuse or harassment from teachers, mentors report them to the village committee, which intercedes on the girl's behalf and tries to arrive at a workable solution.

Evaluation Results

This program is being implemented in 12 villages (two from each of six subprefectures). Little formal evaluation information is available, but school inspectors report that the program is effective. A formal evaluation will be completed in 1998.

3.2 CARE INTERNATIONAL/ TOGO AND CLUB DES ENFANTS DU MONDE—STAR PROGRAM

Description

The Students Tutoring for Achievement and Retention (STAR) program, begun in April 1996, is a peer tutoring program serving 890 girls in four primary schools and two high schools in the Ablogamé neighborhood of Lomé. The program is managed in partnership between the parents and the *Club des Enfants du Monde*. The main strategy is to improve retention and achievement through one-on-one tutoring, which takes place, under the supervision of teachers, for two hours on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings throughout the academic year. A team of 50 adult volunteers from the community also visits the girls' families once each month. Other components of the program provide teacher training on gender issues and activities to sensitize the community to the importance of girls' education.

Evaluation Results

After one year, the program was evaluated to determine its impact on girls' enrollment and dropout. The dropout rate for girls had declined from 15 percent to 1 percent, and 54 percent of the girls had moved to higher grades. About 80 percent of the girls attended the tutoring sessions twice each week. Teachers reported that participants showed increases in their willingness to raise their hand in class or participate in class discussions. The biggest problem identified was the difficulty of conducting home visits because of the lack of transportation or the resistance encountered from some parents.

Adult/Child Programs

Many children are raised in homes completely lacking in positive role models or by single parents who must work and thus have little time to provide necessary guidance. This lack of parent and child involvement often results in low aspirations, high levels of aggression, and an absence of self esteem. This problem is particularly acute in developing countries, where much of parents' energy is focused on providing the basic necessities for family survival, leaving little time for participation in their children's education. In countries where the mortality rate from HIV/AIDS is high, relatives other than parents raise a growing number of children.

A variety of programs in the United States provide youth with adult mentors who will give guidance and support and serve as positive role models. Activities modeled on mentoring programs, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, described below, may be relevant in Asia, Africa and Latin America as well.

Peer Mentoring

Peer mentoring programs involve matching a student who is disadvantaged, performing poorly in school, or at a high risk of dropping out with another, usually older student who can provide assistance and serve as a role model. Many researchers have found that both the mentor and the mentee benefit from the program. Programs of this type may be of particular interest in countries where resources are limited and adult mentors are unavailable.

What Are the Ingredients of a Successful Mentoring Program?

The success or failure of mentor programs hinges, in large part, on the programs' human resources, operating procedures, and other basic components. Mentoring programs offer a cost-effective means of assisting youth in need of adult nurturing and skills building. Despite these advantages, developing a quality mentoring program can be time-intensive, staff-intensive, and, in some cases, cost-intensive. At the core of most mentoring programs are the following components: objectives, methodology, standards, mentor recruitment, mentee recruitment, training, matching, orientation, program activities, monitoring, evaluation, and revision. The analysis that follows explores these infrastructure components in greater detail and examines implementation strategies.

1. Objectives

Mentor programs have many goals and employ a wide range of methodologies. While some focus on the transfer of information or skills from mentor to mentee, others emphasize the mutuality of the bond, arguing that the best mentor relationships benefit both parties equally. Some programs aim to reduce the likelihood that mentees will become violent offenders, drug users, or perpetrators of social ills. Other programs try to increase the economic value of young people entering the market place by increasing their academic achievement and knowledge of career options (Flaxman and Ascher 1992).

2. Methodology

Whatever the objectives, mentor programs employ either a developmental or prescriptive methodology. The developmental approach creates trusting relationships, helps mentees through transitions, and provides holistic support. BB/BSA, the oldest and perhaps most renowned mentoring program in the United States, takes a developmental approach. Although prescriptive outcomes are not the primary focus, BB/BSA does succeed in helping young people to improve academic performance and decrease use of drugs and alcohol (Tierney, Grossman, and Resch 1995).

In contrast to the developmental approach, the prescriptive model specifies problem-oriented goals for the mentoring relationship. For example, the goal of a mentor might be to prevent dropout. In this relationship, the mentor would focus on providing the mentee with academic support and tutoring. The mentor might discuss effective management habits and provide help with homework (Smink 1990).

3. Standards

Standards must be created and enforced for all aspects of mentor programs. Standards form the basis for recruiting mentors and youth and provide a measure against which public officials decide whether to support a program. Standards are needed to impose a limit on the term of the mentee as well as to define whether mentoring means tutoring, sharing activities, or something else. Standards must be set to define the target population in concrete and specific terms. Programs must also determine what the commitment from mentors and mentees will be once pairs have been matched. While some programs require pairs to make contact by telephone twice a month for two years, others require a daily commitment for a short period of time. Still others require biweekly meetings for two years (Flaxman and Ascher 1992). Key questions must be answered prior to beginning the program,

including: What will the procedure be if a mentor or mentee fails to appear for a meeting? Is a mentor expelled from the program after a certain number of failed meetings? Answers to such questions should reflect the needs of the target population and the program's overarching objectives.

4. Recruitment of Mentors

Mentors can be teachers, peers, parents, siblings, school administrators, and religious or community leaders. They can be people who are experienced in a particular career or individuals who simply care about nurturing others. Program managers must define which types of mentors are needed to accomplish program objectives. Some researchers suggest that it is more efficient to ask churches, businesses, or other organizations to recruit mentors from within their ranks than to recruit them individually (Flaxman and Ascher 1992; Hamilton and Hamilton 1992). Whatever the criteria for mentors, program managers must be concerned with maintaining the physical safety and psychological well-being of the youth involved. To this end, most programs employ a screening process to eliminate mentors who may pose a threat to youth or who are unlikely to honor the time commitment. Screening can involve a written application, one or more interviews, and a reference check. While many mentor programs operate on a volunteer basis, some give students academic credit for participating either as mentors or mentees, and some pay mentors. Programs that do not pay mentors sometimes provide stipends for mentors and mentees (Smink 1990). Some researchers believe that incentives for mentors should be included in the program.

To address the problem of mentor dropout, some programs overrecruit mentors from the start (Flaxman and Ascher 1992). Others provide training before mentees are selected. Then, during mentor training, if some choose not to continue, the administrators can adjust the target number of mentees, rather than dealing with a mentee's disappointment in being abandoned by a mentor (Thompson 1991). From the outset, a program must set policy for how to replace mentors who leave after they are matched and how to work with children who may be emotionally scarred by such an event.

5. Recruitment of Mentees

Funding for mentoring programs is usually limited, so criteria must be established for selection of mentees. Some mentoring programs target youth in danger. These programs aim to replace the presence of an adult who is either missing from the child's life, or present, but causing the child harm. Other programs operate under the philosophy that all youth can benefit from the program, but almost all mentoring programs set some guidelines for participation. For example, youth in the BB/BSA programs must possess minimum social skills. Girls in the Mother-Daughter Program must show academic potential, as demonstrated by standardized tests. Evaluators recommend screening for participants who are receptive to new ideas, can make a commitment, and are enthusiastic, since these young people will be best able to benefit from mentor relationships (Smink 1990). It is also important to set the age range of the youth who will be served. In addition, because mentees are usually in the care of a parent or guardian, recruitment frequently involves interaction with the parent as well as the child.

6. Human Resource Training

Many mentor programs try to help youth to develop effective communication skills and self-

esteem. Programs should include ongoing, structural support for mentors (Hamilton and Hamilton 1990), and agency staff should serve as guides for the volunteers (Flaxman and Ascher 1992). To this end, mentor programs might consider funding conflict management and communication training for staff (Blechman 1992). Once the internal staff have the requisite skills, they are ready to train mentors.

Many programs hold preservice training for mentors. During the training, staff review the required time commitment, describe how to manage expectations of youth, and explain the program's goals and philosophy. Some programs provide volunteers with additional training about how to build positive relationships with youth and how to recognize and report sexual abuse (Smink 1990; Flaxman and Ascher 1992; Tierney, Grossman, and Resch 1995).

7. Matching

Programs must make critical decisions about criteria for matching a mentor and mentee. The criteria for matching are not always readily apparent. For example, is shared religion a consideration? Should mentor and mentee come from the same ethnic background? Flaxman and Ascher (1992) suggest that differences between the two people in the relationship can enhance the bond and increase learning. However, the priority must be placed on identifying the needs of a particular youth and then finding a mentor who can fulfill those specific needs.

8. Orientation

The first meeting of mentor/mentee pairs is usually held in a group setting. This provides context for the meeting and helps facilitate initial relationship building. Programs may require pairs to set goals during the orientation and may provide an opportunity for youth to discuss what types of activities they would like to do with their mentors. Orientations can also include an opportunity for participants to provide input into the design of their program (Smink 1990).

9. Program Activities

One of the most difficult problems for mentors is deciding what to do once a mentee has been assigned. Mentoring needs context. The artificiality of the match provides an awkward arrangement, but youth matched with mentors in a work environment automatically have context. Activities flow naturally, and a relationship develops as the mentor teaches workplace skills (Hamilton and Hamilton 1992). Mentors need help from program staff regarding how to motivate mentees and which activities might best benefit youth (Flaxman and Ascher 1992). During activities, mentors model behavior, provide useful feedback, and demonstrate principles of decision making and organization (Flaxman 1993).

Many programs plan group activities for pairs that serve to: 1) help pairs choose something to do together; 2) allow staff to observe and monitor relationships; 3) provide a forum for staff to publicly recognize accomplishments; and 4) provide a peer support network for both mentors and youth. Group activities can involve trips, seminars, or games. Some programs bring mentors and youth together to develop academic skills or improve communication skills (Tinajero 1991). Many programs mark the end of the mentor relationships with an awards ceremony (Smink 1990).

ILLUSTRATIVE MOTHER/DAUGHTER MENTORING PROGRAM

Goal: The overall goal is to increase girls' persistence and achievement in school by providing girls and their mothers with positive role models who demonstrate the benefits of education.

Objectives:

1. To reduce girls' dropout in primary school.
2. To increase the number of girls advancing to secondary school.
3. To improve girls' academic performance.
4. To improve girls' educational and career aspirations.
5. To raise mothers' expectations for their daughters.

Implementing Organization: Local nongovernmental organization

Description: This program matches girls and their mothers with female mentors from the local community, including businesswomen, university faculty, church leaders, government/elected officials, and other community leaders. The aim is to provide female role models who demonstrate, through their own lives, the benefits of education. Mentors meet with girls and their mothers once a week to discuss girls' progress in school, help with homework, talk about future aspirations, and develop realistic strategies for achieving goals. Girls visit the workplace of the mentors who are employed, at least once, to gain insight into what is required of that profession and what happens on a daily basis. Girls and their mothers benefit by attending a monthly seminar, given by community leaders or other mentors, on topics that can inspire achievement. A seminar program can include presentations about careers, goal setting and achievement, microenterprise, health care, or family life. Mentors meet once a month to exchange information and discuss progress.

Incentives for mentors to participate include certificates of appreciation, publicity in a local newspaper, radio and television, and recognition at their workplace. As an additional incentive, some employers pay their employees for the time they work in a mentoring program.

Intended Results	Indicator
Decreased dropout among participants	Percent decrease in school dropout
Increased number of participants going school	Percent increase in secondary enrollment
Increased academic achievement	Percent increase in girls passing primary leaving exam
Increased participants' educational/career aspirations	Percent of girls who report higher levels of education or career aspirations compared to goals upon entering the program
Higher educational expectations of mothers for their daughters' education and career	Percent of mothers reporting higher levels of expectation for daughters' education and career compared to their expectations upon entering the program

Duration of Program: Four years; each cohort of girls and mothers participates for two years.

Target Audience: Twenty girls in grades four through six and their mothers (or female guardian) matched with 20 mentors.

Criteria for Selection: To be developed in conjunction with representatives of the school, parents, local leaders, and nongovernmental organizations.

Formative Evaluation: The project coordinator makes weekly visits to mentor/mentee meetings, attends all monthly seminars/mentor meetings, and provides feedback to mentors. Internal monitoring and formative evaluation of program administration is conducted quarterly. An external evaluation is completed annually.

Impact Evaluation: Baseline information is collected on girls and mothers entering the mentoring program. Data include girls' academic performance and their educational and career aspirations. In addition, interviews are conducted with mothers to ascertain their expectations for their daughters. Follow-up data are collected upon their completion of the program and again after two years to determine whether the program had an impact on the lives of girls or their mothers. Girls' academic performance is also tracked, final primary school exam scores are examined, and teachers are interviewed to assess whether performance has improved.

10. Monitoring

A monitoring process should be established to examine how well program objectives are met. Monitoring includes ensuring that commitments are kept and that daily outcomes contribute to the attainment of overall objectives. To this end, program administrators might ask mentors and mentees to complete evaluation forms at the end of each session. Program staff might engage in monitoring school attendance or other records or in conducting in-depth process interviews with mentors and youth (Smink 1990). To avoid the possibility of abuse, many programs require pairs to meet in public places (Flaxman and Ascher 1992). In some programs, both the mentor and the mentee's parent must confer with a social worker following every meeting for the first several months. BB/BSA requires that a staff member speak with the parent, youth, and volunteer within two weeks of the match. The volunteer is then required to maintain monthly telephone contact with program staff throughout the first year (Tierney Grossman, and Resch 1995). Process evaluations help to determine whether youth and mentors are, in fact, meeting specified time commitments (Hamilton and Hamilton 1990). Mentors can be involved with data collection by keeping journals about the relationship and activities and by monitoring mentee behavior, such as school attendance (Thompson 1991).

11. Evaluation

Flaxman and Ascher (1992) contend that surveys and interviews are not the best evaluation tools for mentor programs because a tendency exists for both mentors and mentees to give socially desirable responses. Instead they suggest that evaluators engage in systematic participant. Flaxman (1992) recommends the use of assessment tools, such as: (1) portfolios—open-ended, ongoing records of student work; (2) exhibitions —student artifacts, creations, performances; and (3) records—ongoing student assessments of their own progress and strengths and weaknesses. Impact evaluations can also be employed to measure outcomes, but it is important to distinguish between short-term results, such as higher test scores, and long-term results, such as sustained academic improvement.

The indicators chosen to assess whether mentor pro-

grams work must be based on the program's specified objectives and methodology. Developmental indicators measure whether mentors: expose youth to new educational, social, and cultural experiences; impact development of character and sense of self; encourage achievement of long-term goals; and teach youth to compare themselves to others in new ways. Prescriptive indicators measure behavioral changes in the mentee and include: increased academic success and persistence; less substance abuse; fewer teenage pregnancies; decreased physical and mental illness; less juvenile crime; and more workplace creativity (Flaxman and Ascher 1992).

12. Revision

To be useful, evaluation information needs to be incorporated into the program planning and revision process. Expected versus actual goals should be assessed and appropriate adjustments made.

What Factors Should be Considered in Developing a Mentoring Program?

The preceding section describes several mentoring programs and outlines the ingredients for a successful program. The discussion that follows highlights factors an organization should consider before developing a program or adapting an existing program to a local setting.

Community Needs, Resources, and Constraints

Before embarking on a mentoring program, a thorough needs assessment should be conducted. It is critical that local stakeholders be involved in all stages of the program, beginning with the needs assessment. Included in the analysis should be such questions as these: What are the most important community needs and to what extent will a mentoring program address these needs? Who is the target audience (e.g., disadvantaged youth, at-risk youth, low academic achievers)? What is the age of the target group?

Criteria for Adopting Innovations

It is essential to determine whether a mentoring program is an appropriate fit with the organizational setting in which it will be implemented. One must ask: Is this approach consistent with organizational goals and objectives? Does the organization have the requisite skills, expertise, and commitment to see the proposed program to fruition? Who will have primary responsibility for implementing the program? Which employees will be involved? Will additional staff be required? Will time be allocated during working hours for participation, or will staff be expected to contribute their own time? Will incentives be provided for staff participation in the program?

Individuals outside the organization play a key role in mentoring programs. The implementing agency must determine: Whether the organization will be the primary sponsor or whether an outside sponsorship be sought. How long the program will continue. What role individuals and organizations outside the implementing agency will play. Whether the resources and expertise in the community are sufficient to support the activity. Whether mentors are available and willing to participate.

Finally, the nature of the program and the criteria for participation must be determined. Key considerations are: What are the program's long-term objectives? What will be the criteria for selection of mentees and mentors? Will mentors be provided with incentives? What training will they receive? How will the program be monitored?

Table 1 contains a description of an illustrative mentoring program. This is a hypothetical program

Table 1

Year 1 Timeline

Tasks	Timing	Total Person Days	Number of Staff
Formulate strategy for involvement of local stakeholders in program design; select advisory committee	Week 1	3 days	2
Conduct needs assessment	Weeks 1-3	12 days	2
Assess local resources	Weeks 2-3	12 days	2
In conjunction with advisory committee determine selection criteria for mentors and mentees	Week 4	3 days	2
Develop program strategy and work plan	Weeks 4-5	10 days	2
Develop participation guidelines and handbook	Weeks 6-9	13 days	2
Recruit and select mentors and mentees	Week 6-9	12 days	2
Collect and analyze baseline data	Week 9-12	15 days	1 consultant
Develop training materials for mentors	Week 13	6 days	2
Conduct training of mentors	Week 13	6 days	2
Conduct orientation for mentors and mentees	Week 13	3 days	2
Solicit participation from local employers of mentors and potential mentors	Week 14-End of Project (EOP)	Ongoing	2
Provide publicity to local media and employers of mentors	Week 14-EOP	Ongoing	2
Implement program	Week 14-EOP	Ongoing	2
Replace mentors and mentees who drop out	Week 14-EOP	Ongoing	2
Organize and monitor monthly seminars	Week 14-EOP		
Conduct formative evaluation	Quarterly	9 days	2
Make adjustments to program based on feedback from evaluation	Quarterly	Contingent on evaluation results	2
Conduct external evaluation	End of Year	10	1 consultant

intended to depict a typical mentoring activity. The example assumes that a local nongovernmental organization is the implementor. Specific details of such a program will vary from country to country, depending on the needs, resources, and circumstances.

The preceding table depicts a sample timeline. The number of person days reflects time required for the

project coordinator and administrative assistant.

Budget Considerations

The cost of implementing a local mentoring program is contingent on availability and cost of local resources, including staff, equipment, and facilities. In developing a mentoring program, one should consider the following line items:

1. **Personnel** - staff employed by the implementing organization (staff needed will vary according to size of program)
   - Mentoring coordinator (1 person full time)
   - Administrative assistant (1 person half time)
   - Fringe (percent is based on fringe benefits offered by the organization to employees)
2. **Consultants** - individuals hired to complete specific consultancies, such as collecting and analyzing baseline and follow-up information, developing a mentors' handbook, training mentoring staff. The extent to which consultants are needed depends on the mentoring coordinator's skills and expertise. The mix between international and local consultants will depend on the availability of local consultants with requisite skills.
   - International
   - Local
3. **Travel and per diem** - expenses required for staff and consultants to collect data, monitor mentors' meetings, arrange for and attend seminars, visit participants, etc.
   - In-country travel (cost of car rental, gasoline, maintenance, etc.)
   - International travel (cost of airline tickets to and from country; insurance; visa costs, incidentals)
   - Per diem (cost of food and lodging for international consultants)
4. **Equipment** - required to operate office, communicate with mentors, mentees, consultants and local community. The additional equipment that must be purchased will depend on what is available to the organization. For example, the office may already have photocopy and facsimile machines. It may be necessary to purchase an additional telephone, computer, printer, software, etc.
5. **Training/seminars/conferences** - training should be provided to all community members serving as mentors, as well as an orientation for mentees. It is also advisable to provide an orientation for employers of mentors, teachers, and school administrators. Items needed include:
   - Supplies
   - Room rental
   - Food/refreshments
   - Consultants' salaries (if needed)

6. **Operational costs** - expenses incurred in operating the program.
   - Communications
   - Printing
   - Art/graphics
   - Equipment maintenance
   - Rent
   - Supplies
7. **Overhead** - based on the organization's normal overhead rate.

How Can the Program be Made Sustainable?

This project is designed to be implemented over four years. However, the expectation is that the ministry of education or members of the private sector will continue the activity after donor funding has ended. Consequently, throughout the project, emphasis is placed on garnering community support for the program. This requires frequent interaction with the media, working with local employers, and developing a committed and active advisory committee comprised of community leaders that is involved in all phases of the program. The participation of local stakeholders is essential to the program's sustainability. Accurate assessment and documentation of the impact of the program on the lives of participants is also key to developing and maintaining community support.

Summary

While the costs of mentoring programs vary widely, many programs provide substantial benefits to girls for relatively little cost. A major advantage of the mentoring approach is that it allows the flexibility to tailor the program to the level of skills and resources available in the community. Mentoring programs provide an opportunity for adults and older students to contribute to the community by providing girls with positive role models who lend guidance and support. Many such programs give assistance to girls, their mothers, and other family members. Since mentoring programs are relatively new, additional data are needed to assess the programs' long-term impact. Initial research indicates that such programs can have a significant impact on girls' academic persistence and performance and on their personal and family's expectations for the future.

Information Sources[1]

Burg, S.. 1998. *Can Mentoring and Teacher Modeling Increase Girls' Participation in Benin, Africa* World Education, Girls' and Women's Education Activity, Component III, under contract with the U. S. Agency for International Development.

Freedman, Marc. 1993. *The Kindness of Strangers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publisher.

[1]Much of the background information on mentoring programs in this document was derived from Shana Burg's review of literature on mentoring and teacher modeling, written for World Education, as part of USAID's Girls' and Women's Education Activity, Component III.

Flaxman, E.. 1993. "Standards for Mentoring in Career Development," IEE Brief Number 10, New York: Institute on Education and the Economy.

Flaxman, E. and Ascher, C. 1992. "Mentoring in Action: The Efforts of Programs in New York City," Columbia University, New York, NY Institute for Urban and Minority Education.

Hamilton, S. F. and Hamilton, M. A. 1992. "Mentoring Programs: Promise and Paradox," *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Jossi, F. 1997. "Mentoring in Changing Times," *Training*.

Smink, J. 1990. "Mentoring Programs for At-Risk Youth: A Dropout Prevention Research Report," National Dropout Prevention Center, Clemson, South Carolina.

Thompson, J.T. 1991. "Establishing Locus of Control Among Ninth Graders: Using Peer Mentors to Reduce Student Disengagement, Absenteeism, and Failures," Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University.

Tierney, J. P., Grossman, J. B., and Resch, N. L. 1995. "Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters," Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Tinajero, J. V. et al. 1991. "Raising Career Aspirations of Hispanic Girls," Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

This document is one of a series in the Portfolio of Possibilities for Girls' Education. *The first six papers in the portfolio, coordinated by Archer Heinzen, Ph.D., are being published on the occasion of the International Conference on Girls' Education in May 1998. They are:*

- Enhancing Girls' Education through Community Schools
- Girls' Scholarship Programs
- A Media Intervention Model for Girls' Education
- Mentoring Programs: An Approach to Improving Girls' Participation in Education
- Improving the Physical Environment in Support of Girls' Education
- Using Incentives to Improve Girls' Participation in School

Documents in progress include:

- Girls' Clubs
- Programs for Out-of-school Girls
- Social Mobilization for Girls' Education
- Teacher Training in Support of Girls' Education

Anticipated future titles include:

- Enhancing Girls' Education through Multigrade Schools
- Child Care Programs in Support of Girls' Education

Produced by the Institute for International Research, a fully owned subsidiary of the American Institutes for Research, as part of the U.S. Agency for International Development's Girls' and Women's Education Activity. The Activity is funded through the Agency's Office of Women in Development, Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research, Contract #HNE-5848-C-00-6046-00.

The Institute for International Research implements the Activity in collaboration with Abt Associates, CARE, Management Systems International, Plan International, and World Learning.

For additional copies or further information, please contact the Institute at: 1815 N. Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209, USA. Tel: (703-527-5546, Fax: (703) 527-4661, E-mail: girls_education@air-dc.org.