

# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A MENTOR MAKES

A Program Factsheet

February 2021

## The issue

Adolescence brings physical, emotional, and social changes and challenges that can be difficult, confusing, and life changing. Research has shown that for many girls, their world begins to shrink around puberty: the places in their community they're allowed to explore become smaller while their responsibilities around the house start to increase. Girls tend to have fewer opportunities, compared with boys, to socialize, meet same-sex friends or mentors (especially if they're out of school). Yet we know that having a mentor to turn to for advice often means a girl is able to make safer decisions and stay out of harmful situations. That is why Batonga's Mentor Program is central to everything we do for and with adolescent girls.

## The proven benefits of mentoring

It has been well-established that one-to-one mentoring increases positive outcomes for at-risk youth. Research also shows that group mentoring can be even more effective than 1-on-1 mentoring for improving adolescent girls sexual and reproductive health knowledge, school achievement, and social networks as well as helping them decrease risky sexual behaviors and exposure to violence.



## HOW WE'RE SOLVING THE PROBLEM



Batonga vets, recruits, and trains local women to serve as mentors of girls clubs and young women's business circles.

We currently work with:

**57** MENTORS

**42%** OF THEM ARE PAST PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Batonga mentors come from the same communities, the same neighborhoods, the same schools and in some cases the same extended families as the young women and girls in their programs. 42% of them are past program participants.

### What do Batonga mentors do?

- **Run the adolescent girls leadership clubs.**  
Mentors teach the curriculum to girls in the clubs, and support the income-generating activities in each club.
- **Conduct weekly home visits to adolescent girls and their families.**  
Mentors build trust with parents and caregivers by visiting them weekly and often mediate conflicts between girls and their families.
- **Run Batonga's Radio Program and record the radio lessons.**  
Mentors record weekly radio lessons aligned with the topics they teach in the clubs. Their program reaches over 200,000 people.
- **Organize and support the community projects led by girls as well as the song competitions.**



Batonga Mentors

Batonga's Mentors attend at least one training quarterly. Trainings cover everything from teaching strategies, to how to be an effective mentor, to recognizing and preventing gender-based violence or how to support emerging young entrepreneurs. Batonga mentors not only learn from us but from each other. Peer-to-peer-visits throughout the year allow Batonga Mentors to observe one another in action and co-lead their peers' clubs.

## OUR MENTORS' IMPACT

- **Negotiating safe outcomes for girls in their households and supporting intergenerational trust and dialogue between girls and their parents and caregivers**

**7,000+** HOME VISITS CONDUCTED IN 2020 FOR 3,600 GIRLS

Home visits keep mentors closely in contact with girls during a crisis, strengthen mentors' relationships with girls' families, and provide families with critical information during a time of need. Since the launch of Batonga's first girls clubs, many of Batonga's mentors chose to conduct home visits to check in on girls who had been absent from the clubs and girls they knew were going through a challenging time

- **Support girls in their daily lives and act as a trusted adviser throughout adolescence for program participants**

**92.9%** OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS SAY THEY NOW HAVE ACCESS TO A TRUSTED ADULT FOR ADVICE

- **Elevate women's leadership and build new norms in their communities around women's role in supporting community members, families, and girls.**

**200,000+** PEOPLE LISTEN TO BATONGA MENTOR RADIO PROGRAM

Mentors, in their roles as trusted community leaders, play a critical role in emergency response situations and are able to quickly and easily disseminate information to their communities in times of uncertainty and widespread mistrust. Batonga's Mentors have established themselves as trustworthy community leaders through years of work with Batonga. As such, we found that they were able to quickly and easily disseminate information in times of uncertainty and widespread mistrust, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, community leaders and members welcome mentors as trusted partners in educating their girls, as well as focal points for advancing safety and wellbeing in their communities. Mentors are part of Batonga's Gender-Based Violence (GBV) referral network alongside local leaders and government officials.