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Bird & Bird, EF Education Foundation, H&M, Tetra  
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Empowering Youth Globally

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Empowering Youth Globally

# 2023

## ANNUAL REVIEW

### MENTOR INTERNATIONAL





## **Our Vision:**

**A world where young people are empowered to make healthy decisions and live drug-free.**

## What We Do

Mentor International works with our national member organizations to implement programs aimed at promoting the health and well-being of young people. We are represented in Europe, Middle East and North America, including Germany, Latvia, USA, Sweden with a satellite office in Lebanon serving the 22 Arab League countries.

## Mentor International's President & Founder H.M. The Queen of Sweden

In 2023, many young individuals worldwide faced significant challenges. The ongoing crisis in Israel and Palestine has deeply impacted countless children, subjecting them to violence, displacement, and trauma, thereby affecting their physical and mental well-being. Similarly, the youth of Ukraine continue to endure the harsh realities of war, coping with displacement and witnessing the devastation of their homeland. It is evident that the need for mentoring and support is more crucial than ever.

However, despite these challenges and others such as climate change, discrimination, unemployment, and mental health struggles, young individuals have demonstrated remarkable strength and perseverance.

I have personally witnessed how mentoring and support can make a substantial difference in helping young people overcome obstacles. Mentor International and its affiliates, including Mentor Arabia, Mentor Germany, Mentor Latvia, Mentor Sweden, and Mentor USA, have played a vital role in providing essential guidance and assistance. Through their programmes and initiatives, they have positively impacted the lives of numerous young individuals, offering invaluable support during tumultuous times.

I was especially pleased to visit Mentor Germany's Rose Celebration & Youth Competition Gala in October on the beautiful Mainau Island. The event showcased the positive impact of mentoring, reminding us of the importance of nurturing young talents like delicate roses.



Photo: Anna-Lena Ahlström, the Royal Court of Sweden

Furthermore, I had the privilege of meeting with a mentoring couple at the Mentor Sweden board meeting in November. It was heartwarming to witness the bond between them and hear how mentoring has positively influenced their lives.



**Recognizing the potential of young individuals is key to building a brighter and more hopeful future for all.**

I am optimistic that the future holds new opportunities and renewed hope for young people around the world. Moreover, I am confident that Mentor International and its member organisations will continue to play a vital role in supporting and empowering young individuals to realise their full potential. Together, we can shape a brighter tomorrow where every child can thrive. Thank you for your dedication to Mentor's crucial mission.

*Silvia*

# A word from our Secretary General

As we embark upon another year of dedicated service to our vision of a world where young people are empowered to make healthy decisions and live drug-free, it is with great pleasure and gratitude that I present to you our annual review. This past year has been filled with remarkable achievements, profound challenges, and invaluable lessons that have further fortified our commitment to our cause.

Reflecting on the past year, we can take pride in the impactful strides we have made in the lives of countless young individuals around the world. Through our mentorship programs, we have witnessed transformative growth, as mentors and mentees alike have forged enduring bonds built on trust, guidance, and mutual respect. The stories of personal and professional development that have emerged from these partnerships serve as a testament to the profound impact of mentorship in shaping the leaders of tomorrow.

In addition to our mentorship initiatives, our efforts to empower youth have continued to reach new heights. From skills development workshops to leadership seminars, we have provided young people with the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to thrive in an ever-changing world. Through our advocacy and outreach efforts, we have amplified the voices of youth on issues ranging from education and employment to social justice and environmental sustainability, ensuring that their perspectives are heard and valued on the global stage.

Of course, our journey has not been without its challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic presented

unforeseen obstacles, forcing us to adapt and innovate in the face of adversity and we are still living with the consequences of the pandemic. Mentor Arabia is operating under extremely challenging circumstances with an economic crises and war in neighbouring country.

**“Some of the most rewarding work you can do is share your experience with a young person who is trying to chart a course for the future.”**

Yet, it is during times of crisis that our resilience and determination shine brightest. Through virtual mentorship sessions, online forums, and digital campaigns, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to supporting young people and fostering meaningful connections in a socially distant world.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every member of our foundation for your unwavering dedication, passion, and tireless efforts. It is through your commitment and collaboration that we have achieved so much together, and it is with great anticipation that I look forward to the journey that lies ahead.



**Cecilia Bernard**  
Secretary General



## Our Purpose

Mentor is an international non-profit development organization working to support young people to find a path towards a promising future. With the help of strong adult role models, Mentor International's programs focus on keeping young people engaged in education, preparing them for adulthood, promoting healthy lifestyles, and reducing risky behaviors including drug abuse.

We concentrate our efforts in three core areas:

**Individual mentoring:** a one-to-one relationship between an adult and a young person with the goal of empowering, inspiring, and motivating the young person and their outlook for the future.

**Group mentoring:** with career focus, these programs offer young people insight into working life, motivate studies and help set goals for the future.

**Parenting seminars:** this program provides effective tools and strategies to improve communication and deepen parents' and carers' connection with their children.



Mentor Sweden has been awarded SEK 7 million in non-earmarked funding from the Swedish Postcode Lottery, emphasizing its commitment to strengthening young people's confidence in the future, hereby supporting our efforts to provide mentors for young individuals.

In September, Mentor Latvia arranged a masterclass in healthy cooking with Chef Anne. Participants got useful cooking tips and advice for maintaining a balanced diet. The young people also gained insights into the culinary profession through Chef Anne's stories about her experiences and challenges.



In October 2023, Mentor Arabia introduced the "TUI FutureShapers" program in Tunisia in collaboration with TUI Care Foundation and the University of Monastir. 20 young females underwent an intensive 5-day Peer Mentors training.



Mentor Germany hosted the Mentor Rose Celebration & Youth Competition on Mainau Island, graced by the presence of H.M. Queen Silvia. This remarkable event showcased inspiring stories from youth, who shared heartfelt reflections on their role models.



Three young ladies became so inspired by Mentor Foundation USA and what mentoring can do, that they created a Mentoring Career Program themselves, pitched it to the SACC-LA Board of Directors and Mentor Foundation USA.

# 2023: Some Highlights

Supported tens of thousands of young people globally!



**I want to show a positive world, show that anything is possible, show that you can achieve anything**

– Sanda Sirsnina,  
Mentor of  
Riga, Latvia

# Inspiring Mentorship

## Building Bridges of Trust and Growth

Mentorship is a powerful journey of mutual growth, understanding, and inspiration. It's a bond that transcends age. To share insights on the transformative power of mentorship, we talked to Sanda Sirsnina, a mentor and her two youths Ksenija and Anastasija of Riga, Latvia.

### The Mentor's Perspective

For Sanda, the journey into mentorship began with a simple desire to make a positive difference. Hosting five children as a host family laid the foundation for a deeper commitment to mentorship.

Trust and rapport is the cornerstone of her mentorship philosophy. Transparency and vulnerability play key roles in building trust, as Sanda reveals her own imperfections and struggles. Through shared experiences, trust blossoms, creating a safe space for growth.

Sanda emphasizes the reciprocal benefits of mentorship. "I discover a different world every day through the eyes of the youth," she says.

Sanda's advice to aspiring mentors is candid yet empowering: "Think twice. You must be ready to invest your time. But if you are willing to embark on this journey, embrace your own unique style and approach, because in mentorship there are no fixed rules, only countless opportunities for connection and growth."

### Youth's Perspective

For Ksenija and Anastasija, mentorship has opened doors to new possibilities and friendships. Their connection with Sanda began with a chance encounter at an orphanage. "We realized that we have a lot in common. That's how it started", says Anastasija.

Navigating challenges is made easier with their mentor by their side. "When we have any difficulties, she sits down and talks to us". Their mentor's guidance and understanding help fostering resilience and self-confidence.

A testament to the impact of mentorship is evident in the lessons learned. From mastering traffic signs to cooking healthy meals and practicing English, each skill acquired is a testament to their mentor's unwavering support. "Our mentor helped us overcome all sorts of fears" says Ksenija.

### Conclusion: A Tapestry of Growth and Inspiration

In mentorship, threads of trust, empathy, and shared experiences weave together stories of resilience and growth. Through the mentor's guidance and the youths' determination, barriers are shattered, and dreams are realized. Mentorship transcends borders, bridging the gap between past and present, offering hope for a brighter future.



# Mentor Arabia

Throughout 2023, Mentor Arabia achieved several significant milestones.

We saw a remarkable success story in Faten, a talented singer, who experienced a breakthrough after winning a competition. Her winning song, 'Dhak,' catapulted her to fame, becoming an instant hit in Lebanon and showcasing the profound impact of Mentor Arabia's initiatives.

In Jordan, Youth Social Entrepreneurship Award Winners led career inspiration sessions, empowering hundreds of young minds. In Tunisia, the 'TUI FutureShapers' program equipped aspiring females with entrepreneurship skills, paving the way for their personal and professional growth. Meanwhile, in Saudi Arabia, the expansion of the 'Unplugged Plus' program to Riyadh highlighted Mentor Arabia's commitment to reaching more communities.

**//** The program served as a golden key that opened up horizons and doors for us to serve the Saudi community and its children.

Perhaps the most heartening development was the launch of the 'Youth Academy' program across Lebanon, Kuwait, and Jordan. Touching the lives of thousands of students and parents, this initiative underscored Mentor Arabia's dedication to nurturing the potential of youth and fostering healthy, empowered communities.



**We will pass on the knowledge we have gained to our peers, which will enhance their preventive capabilities against risky behaviors.**

Participant in the Youth Academy Program, Kuwait.



# Mentor Germany

**//**

**Like roses, young people also need attention and care in order to grow and blossom.**

Silvia,  
H.M The Queen of Sweden

In Germany, the launch of the Mentor Academy in May marked a pivotal step, training 45 mentors over two years to better engage with youth.

Matthias Ehret's appointment as National Director in July further strengthened Mentor Germany's leadership.

In October, Mentor Germany experienced an extraordinary highlight—the Mentor Rose Celebration & Youth Competition on Mainau Island, graced by the presence of Her Majesty The Queen Silvia. This remarkable

event showcased inspiring stories from youth, who shared heartfelt reflections on their role models. It was a moment that resonated deeply with all attendees, including donors, supporters, mentors, and mentor staff.

This October event served as a crowning achievement, culminating in a successful and memorable year. As Mentor Germany looks ahead, it remains committed to moderate growth and expanding programs to provide crucial support for youth in the region.



**With the help and support  
of my mentor I now have  
goals to strive for.**

**Kristiāna, 18 years old**

# Mentor Latvia

In 2023, Mentor Latvia, celebrated significant achievements: We boosted our publicity and brand awareness through our participation in a nationwide donation campaign which led to media activities reaching over 200,000 people. This increased visibility was crucial for raising awareness about our mission and attracting support from the community. Moreover, we raised the largest amount of donations in our organization's history.

A key highlight of the year was the expansion of our individual mentoring program, which saw us doubling the number of teenagers we supported compared to previous years. This expansion allowed us to reach more youth in need of guidance and support, empowering them to overcome challenges and reach their full potential. Additionally, we experienced a surge in interest from adults wanting to become volunteers, reflecting the growing recognition of the importance of mentorship in empowering young people.

As we look ahead to 2024, our objectives include:

-Extending our individual mentoring program into more regions to reach even more vulnerable youth. By expanding our reach, we aim to ensure that no young person in Latvia is left without the support they need to thrive.

-Ensuring financial stability to sustain and expand our programs through strategic fundraising efforts and financial management. By diversifying our funding sources and implementing effective budgeting strategies, we aim to secure the resources needed to continue our mission.

-Attracting new members and messengers to join our cause and amplify our impact on the lives of youth across Latvia. By engaging with new supporters and advocates, we aim to raise awareness about the importance of mentorship and inspire others to join us in creating a brighter future for Latvia's youth.

# Mentor Sweden

2023 was a great year for Mentor Sweden. We focused on three main programs:

•**The Mentoring program.** This is when a teenager is matched with an adult for a period over 6-12 months. The purpose of the program is to strengthen the resilience of the youth through optimism, decisiveness, and an expanded network. This program has maintained its high quality and during 2023 we matched 380 youths.

•**The Mentor Boost program.** Here, volunteering coaches from our partner companies visit our focus schools to spend a morning with them discussing their identity, hopes and dreams based on the Ikigai model. During 2023, 49 Mentor Boost events were carried out at schools in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Växjö. They were made possible with the help of 299 coaches from the public and partner companies such as AstraZeneca, SEB, H&M, IKEA, Sigma and OKQ8. Our goal for the year was to reach 1,000 young people, and by the end of the year we had more than doubled our expectations with as many as 2,071 young people reached by the program.

•**Mentor Inspo program.** This is our career inspirational program. Adult role models give an informal speech about their career and life choices in front of a group of youths. The Mentor Inspo program had great success with two successful Mentor Inspo Mega. These major broadcasts with two different themes - Entrepreneurship and Adventurous Leadership - have been an effective way to reach many young people at the same time and this means that in 2023 we will have reached more young people than ever in our business. The programs reached a total of 35,480 youths.

A new management team was formed. The marketing department worked towards doubling brand awareness and the fundraising department tied four partners to the organization.

The Postcode Lottery's grant of the Dream Project "Outdoor Life for the Role Models of the Future" meant a total income of 8M SEK which will be distributed over the years 2023 to 2027.



**My mentor has been the best. He listens and is there for me like no other person in this world**

Individual Mentoring  
Program Participant





# Mentor USA



**My sister and I have both received summer job offers...thanks for mentoring me.**

**Anonymous mentee**

Mentor Fountatin USA cherished numerous memorable moments during 2023. One standout highlight was working closely with our Youth Advisory Committee, whose insights shaped our initiatives. We kicked off the Mentor Inspo. Series, hosting engaging discussions with influential figures like Dr. Robert L. DuPont and our Youth Advisory Committee members. Grace Boudris, from our Youth Advisory Committee, shared her thoughts on celebrating relationships and gratitude during the holiday season, resonating deeply with our team. Throughout the year, we remained committed to community outreach and service, participating in events like Take-Back Day and Red Ribbon Week to empower youth.

We were excited about the progress of our Youth Ambassador Network® and plans

to expand our Youth Advisory Committee. One of the most rewarding aspects was witnessing the power of mentoring firsthand.

We were also inspired by the initiative shown by three young ladies who created a Mentoring Career Program in collaboration with SACC-LA and Mentor Foundation USA. And it wasn't just success stories we heard – we also received heartfelt thank-you notes from mentees who secured summer jobs thanks to our support. Overall, 2023 was a year filled with meaningful experiences and milestones for us at Mentor Foundation USA. We're grateful for the opportunity to serve and support youth, and we look forward to continuing our mission in the years to come.



# Agenda 2030

Sustainable Development Goals are the United Nations' blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. UNSDGs help guide and support the work of development operations addressing global challenges related to poverty, inequality, climate, environment, education, health, prosperity, peace and social justice. To ensure that we leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each our goals. The target for the UNSDGs is 2030.

Mentor is aligned with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Our programs help create a sustainable society. Through trainings and seminars, we create socially competent natural mentors and more resilient young people. Adults learn life skills to better support young people in their everyday lives. Young people become more resilient and able to reach their full potential, as well as to look to the future with hope.



**Goal 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing**  
Our programs empower youth and provide opportunities for healthy development away from risky behavior, for both young people and adult mentors.



**Goal 4 – Quality Education**  
Mentor works closely with schools. Our programs inspire school motivation, as well as encourage young people to continue with education.



**Goal 5 – Gender Equality**  
We work to promote balance and challenge stereotypes. Gender is a key component of our projects, and our life skills training workshops.



**Goal 10 – Reduced Inequalities**  
At Mentor, all young people aged 13-18 have access to our programs. We work actively with particularly marginalized youth to reduce inequalities through integration efforts.



**Goal 16 – Peace Justice and Strong Institutions**  
Working within the third sector in partnership with the private sector, we bridge the gap, engaging all parts of society to work towards better outcomes for youth.

**“We don’t talk a lot about being a role model, but my mentor shows what a role model is just by being themselves.”**



# Financial Information

	2023	2022
<b>INCOME (EUR)</b>		
Donations	130 075	94 074
Services & Materials	19 607	14111
Other Income	11 763	72 176
Financial Income	164 405	188 881
<b>Total</b>	<b>325 850</b>	<b>369 242</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES (EUR)</b>		
Charitable Activities	- 238 789	-261 186
Fundraising	- 15 578	-22 394
Governance	- 78 404	-93 599
Other Expenditure & Bad Debts	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>- 332 771</b>	<b>- 377 179</b>

