



Mentor-Protégé Report

Fiscal Year 2015

Mentor-Protégé Report to Congress for FY2015

The Small Business Act (the Act) requires the Small Business Administration (SBA) to submit a report on Mentor-Protégé programs to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate. Section 45 (c)(1) of the act, 15 U.S.C. § 657r(c), requires annual reporting:

“(1) In general. Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section [enacted Jan. 2, 2013], and annually thereafter, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate a report that--

- (A) identifies each Federal mentor-protégé program;
- (B) specifies the number of participants in each such program, including the number of participants that are--
 - (i) small business concerns;
 - (ii) small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans;
 - (iii) qualified HUBZone small business concerns;
 - (iv) small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals; or
 - (v) small business concerns owned and controlled by women;
- (C) describes the type of assistance provided to protégés under each such program;
- (D) describes the benefits provided to mentors under each such program; and
- (E) describes the progress of protégés under each such program with respect to competing for Federal prime contracts and subcontracts.

(2) Provision of information. The head of each Federal department or agency carrying out a mentor-protégé program shall provide to the Administrator, on an annual basis, the information necessary for the Administrator to submit a report required under paragraph (1).”

Mentor-Protégé Report for FY2015

This report identifies, by Agency, 13 Federal Mentor-Protégé programs, 10 of which were active in FY 2015. For the 10 active programs, this report specifies the number of program participants that are: Small Business Concerns (SBC), Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business Concerns (SDVOSB); Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) SBCs, Small Disadvantaged Businesses (SDB), and Woman Owned Small Business (WOSB) Concerns. It describes the type of assistance provided to protégés, the benefits provided to mentors, and the progress of protégés with respect to competing for Federal prime contracts and subcontracts. A summary of the 13 Federal Mentor-Protégé programs, and data on the 10 active programs, is provided below.

A. Federal Mentor-Protégé Programs (By Federal Activity)

Federal Activity	Program in Place	Program Active
Department of Defense (DoD)	Yes	Yes
Department of Energy (DOE)	Yes	Yes
Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	Yes	No
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	Yes	Yes
Department of State (DOS)	Yes	No
Department of Transportation (DOT)	Yes	Yes
Department of Treasury (Treasury)	Yes	Yes
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	Yes	Yes
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Yes	No
General Services Administration (GSA)	Yes	Yes
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	Yes	Yes
Small Business Administration (SBA)	Yes	Yes
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)	Yes	Yes

B. Number of Participants (By Federal Activity and Socio-Economic Category)

Federal Activity	SBC	SDVOSB	HUBZone	SDB	WOSB	Total Agreements
Department of Defense (DoD)	75	26	13	31	27	75
Department of Energy (DOE)	27	4	3	16	7	27
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)	98	31	15	60	26	98
Department of Transportation (DOT)	14	3	1	13	5	14
Department of Treasury (Treasury)	2	1	0	0	0	2
Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)	26	26	4	3	2	26
General Services Administration (GSA)	94	31	37	40	7	94
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	15	1	3	7	7	15
Small Business Administration (SBA)	360	63	36	360	90	360
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)	10	1	2	2	4	10
Summary:	721	187	114	519	175	721

C. Types of Assistance provided to Protégés (By Federal Activity)

Department of Defense (DoD)

- (1) Assistance by mentor firm personnel in:
 - (i) General business management, including organizational management, financial management, and personnel management, marketing, business development, and overall business planning;
 - (ii) Engineering and technical matters such as production inventory control and quality assurance; and
 - (iii) Any other assistance designed to develop the capabilities of the protégé firm under the developmental program.
- (2) Award of subcontracts under DoD contracts or other contracts on a noncompetitive basis.
- (3) Payment of progress payments for the performance of subcontracts by a protégé firm in amounts as provided for in the subcontract; but in no event may any such progress payment exceed 100 percent of the costs incurred by the protégé firm for the performance of the subcontract. Provision of progress payments by a mentor firm to a protégé firm at a rate other than the customary rate for the firm must be implemented in accordance with FAR 32.504(c).
- (4) Advance payments under such subcontracts. The mentor firm must administer advance payments in accordance with FAR Subpart 32.4.
- (5) Loans.
- (6) Investment(s) in the protégé firm in exchange for an ownership interest in the protégé firm, not to exceed 10 percent of the total ownership interest. Investments may include, but are not limited to, cash, stock, and contributions in kind.
- (7) Assistance that the mentor firm obtains for the protégé firm from one or more of the following:
 - (i) Small Business Development Centers established pursuant to Section 21 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 648).
 - (ii) Entities providing procurement technical assistance pursuant to 10 U.S.C. Chapter 142 (Procurement Technical Assistance Centers).
 - (iii) Historically Black colleges and universities.
 - (iv) Minority institutions of higher education.

Department of Energy (DOE)

Technical, business and/or administrative assistance is provided to the protégé under the program. Examples of the type of assistance provided include, however are not to be limited to:

- (1) Program & Project Management
- (2) Design Basis Threat Analysis
- (3) Force Protection Planning
- (4) Protective Force Operations
- (5) Strategic Planning
- (6) Vulnerability Assessment
- (7) Operational Readiness Reviews

- (8) Sustainability Program Development
- (9) Logistics
- (10) Physical Security Programs
- (11) Computer Analysis And Planning
- (12) Integrated Safeguards & Security Management
- (13) Integrated Safety Management
- (14) Quality Assurance
- (15) Emergency Preparedness Planning,
- (16) 3-Dimensional System Development
- (17) Information Security
- (18) Personnel Security
- (19) Performance Assurance Planning

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

The DHS Mentor-Protégé Program:

- (1) Provides small businesses with mutually beneficial developmental assistance from mentors
- (2) Improves the performance of contracts and subcontracts
- (3) Fosters the establishment of long-term business relationships between large prime contractors and small business subcontractors
- (4) Strengthens subcontracting opportunities and accomplishments through pre and post incentives.

Department of State (DoS)

The DoS Mentor-Protégé program provides management guidance and assistance related to:

- (1) Financial management
- (2) Organizational management
- (3) Overall business management/planning
- (4) Business development
- (5) Technical assistance
- (6) Rent-free use of facilities and/or equipment property
- (7) Temporary assignment of personnel to the protégé firm for the purpose of training
- (8) Loans and any other mutually beneficial assistance

Department of Transportation (DOT)

The DOT Mentor-Protégé program provides the following assistance to protégés:

- (1) Review and analysis of DOT's Procurement Forecast
- (2) Establish a strategy to target those opportunities listed in the procurement forecast
- (3) Meetings with Small Business Specialists and Program Managers from DOT Operating Administrations
- (4) Cost analysis assistance to prepare Request for Proposals (RFP)
- (5) Develop marketing strategies as part of the protégé's business plan
- (6) Provided assistance in proposal writing and business presentations to prospective buyers
- (7) Assistance with contract administration for current contracts
- (8) Assistance developing a pricing strategy
- (9) Strengthen Protégé's accounting systems
- (10) Participants worked together with Protégé's processes and procedures to enhance the Protégé's capabilities
- (11) Established a strategic plan to identify potential buyers within DOT Operating Administrations and other federal agencies.
- (12) General guidance on how to do business with federal government.
- (13) Assistance in contract estimating, pricing and scheduling.
- (14) Assistance with business development with DOT Operating Administrations, state and local transportation agencies.
- (15) Monthly meetings to discuss potential opportunities and collaboration.
- (16) Marketing assistance
- (17) Project management training to protégé staff.

Department of Treasury (Treasury)

Under the Treasury Mentor-Protégé program, mentors provide mutually beneficial development assistance to participating protégés, in addition the program aims to:

- (1) Provide greater assurance that a protégé subcontractor will be able to perform under the contract than a similarly situated non-protégé subcontractor.
- (2) Increase the number and dollar value of contracts and subcontracts awarded to protégé firms by Treasury and other Federal agencies to the protégé firm.
- (3) Increase the technical, managerial, financial or other capabilities of the protégé firm.

General Services Administration (GSA)

Assistance provided to protégés under the mentor-protégé agreements encompass:

(1) Business development:

- i. Assisted with cash flow management
- ii. Ensured marketing plans were directed towards federal agencies and federal prime contractors
- iii. Fostered protégé's understanding of Federal Acquisition Regulation, sources sought notices, proposal development and contract terms and conditions, contract close-out
- iv. Created ethics and compliance structure
- v. Fostered banking relationships, including sureties
- vi. Strengthened bonding capacity for construction contractors
- vii. Assisted with Government approval of financial and accounting systems such as DCAA approval of accounting system
- viii. Leveraged purchasing power through mentor's purchasing system
- ix. Provided rent-free use of mentor's equipment/facilities
- x. Assisted with preparation of paperwork for SBA programs, such as 8(a)
- xi. Developed business strategies to increase chance of prime awards

(2) Management/planning:

- i. Increased skills in project management, such as program delivery, including best practices
- ii. Assisted in obtaining ISO 9001 and CMMI certifications
- iii. Built timelines, checklists to respond to RFIs, RFQs, RFPs
- iv. Tracked sales for business analysis
- v. Assisted with estimating, field reporting and project management for construction projects
- vi. Created infrastructure and processes for subcontract management

(3) Organizational management:

- i. Assisted with human resource and organizational development, utilizing best practices for hiring and employee development
- ii. Assisted with recruitment and training of additional field personnel
- iii. Advised on team structure to accommodate protégé company growth
- iv. Updated contract management procedures
- v. Training:
- vi. Shared mentor company training and workshop sessions
- vii. Assisted with cloud computing and cyber security
- viii. Taught Six Sigma
- ix. Helped with HAZMat
- x. Trained in construction management and project schedule software
- xi. Helped with QA/QC
- xii. Worked with Design-build

- (4) Contract/subcontract support. GSA mentors subcontracted with protégés for GSA and other federal agency requirements. Mentors provided protégés with assistance in proposal preparation for the following GSA schedule contracts:
- i. GSA Schedule 70
 - ii. GSA MOBIS Schedule
 - iii. GSA 03FAC

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

- (1) Protégés must receive a minimum of 70% Technical Assistance and 30% Business Development in accordance with NASA's Mentor-Protégé Program policy.
- (2) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Agreements are subject to receiving 70% Business Development and 30% Technical Assistance. This agreement option has been tailored to Universities and Institutions who may not have the corporate resources to produce sizeable amounts of technology transfer. HBCUs/MSIs can benefit more from business development assistance and mentors can establish a qualified source for contract awards to assist them in achieving goals.
- (3) Mentor-Protégé Program development assistance includes, but is not limited to the following sectors:
 - i. Aerospace and lean manufacturing
 - ii. Telecommunication and satellite services
 - iii. Engineering and technical assistance
 - iv. General business management / development
 - v. Logistics Systems
 - vi. Contract Management
 - vii. Quality Management Certifications (e.g., CMM, ISO9000)
 - viii. Information assurance and information technology
 - ix. Environmental remediation

Small Business Administration (SBA)

- (1) Mentors may provide the following forms of assistance to protégés:
 - i. Technical and/or management assistance;
 - ii. Financial assistance, in the form of equity investments and/or loans;
 - iii. Subcontracts; and/or
 - iv. Assistance in performing prime contracts with the Government through joint venture arrangements.
- (2) Mentors are encouraged to provide assistance relating to the performance of non-8(a) contracts so that protégé firms may more fully develop their capabilities.
- (3) Capital assistance: to assist the Protégé to raise capital, the Mentor may own an equity interest of up to 40 percent in the Protégé despite the more limited, general ownership restrictions on eligibility in 13 CFR 124.105(g) and (h).

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

- (1) Mentors are required to conduct a needs assessment on the protégé firm.
- (2) Specific tasks are developed by the potential protégé and mentor firms that relate to the needs identified in the needs assessment. The purpose of the taskings is to assist the protégé firms in obtaining new or improved capabilities that will improve their ability to serve as prime contractors and subcontractors on USAID contracts. While each agreement is unique and based upon the needs identified during the needs assessment, some of the frequent tasking areas relate to:
 - i. Business Development
 - ii. Technical and Management Training
 - iii. Strategic Planning

D. Benefits provided to Mentors (By Federal Activity)

Department of Defense (DoD)

The Department of Defense (DoD) Pilot Mentor-Protégé Program seeks to encourage major DoD prime contractors (mentors) to develop the technical and business capabilities of small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs) and other eligible protégés. General business management, including organizational management, financial management, and personnel management, marketing, business development, and overall business planning.

- (1) Mentors are able to use protégé firms as an integral part of their sourcing plans and develop a robust and diverse supplier base.
- (2) Mentors are able to invest in the protégé firm in exchange for an ownership interest in the protégé firm, not to exceed 10 percent of the total ownership interest. Investments may include, but are not limited to, cash, stock, and contributions in kind.
- (3) Mentors receive more favorable proposal evaluations when subcontracting utilization is an evaluation factor and when subcontracting plan past performance is considered.
- (4) Mentors receive subcontracting credit for subcontracts with protégé firms when subcontracting plans are required.
- (5) Mentors are able to seek reimbursement for allowable protégé developmental costs.

Department of Energy (DOE)

Benefits for the mentor under the program include, however are not limited to:

- (1) Award of subcontracts on a noncompetitive basis as a set-aside subcontract to its protégé,
- (2) Receipt of credit for subcontracts awarded pursuant to Mentor-Portege Agreement(s) toward subcontracting goals contained in mentor subcontracting plan
- (3) Opportunity to utilize the unique/specialized skills of the protégé
- (4) Equipping small businesses with the knowledge, skills and capabilities needed to

successfully compete for DOE prime contract.

(5) Recognition. The Fiscal Year 2015 DOE Mentor of the Year award is Los Alamos National Security, LLC. Los Alamos National Security, LLC manages and operates Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) with DOE's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). As part of the operating contract LANS participates in DOE's Mentor Protégé Program. The LANS Mentor Protégé Program Model is designed to provide developmental assistance to the protégé companies in an effort to enhance their capabilities in the fundamental aspects of building a solid, established, and successful business.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

The benefits provided to a mentor for their participation includes a pre-award incentive and post-award incentive. A pre-award incentive applies to acquisitions that require a subcontracting plan. Mentors are eligible to receive credit in the source selection/evaluation criteria process for their participation. Additionally, a post-award incentive is applied to the subcontracting plan credit, which is available by recognizing costs incurred by a mentor firm in providing assistance to a protégé firm. This credit is used for the purpose of determining whether the mentor firm attains a subcontracting plan participation goal applicable to the mentor firm under a Homeland Security contract.

Department of State (DoS)

Under the DoS Mentor-Protégé Program, mentors are provided the opportunity to foster the establishment of long-term business relationships with small businesses. In turn, the mutual business relationships through the Mentor-Protégé Program are designed to improve the performance of DoS contracts and subcontracts. The Department of State's Mentor-Protégé Program has contributed to the success of the Department achieving its small business contracting goals and to an increase in obligations to small business concerns over time.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Mentors receive multiple benefits under DOT's Mentor Protégé program:

- (1) Goodwill and corporate responsibility (mentors receive no financial incentive for participation)
- (2) Long-term relationship with a potential subcontractor
- (3) Develop innovative approaches and technology
- (4) Potential Joint Venture with small business

Department of Treasury (Treasury)

Mentors receive multiple benefits from participation. In addition to the mutual beneficial relationship with the protégé, mentors also receive:

- (1) Before awarding a contract that requires a subcontracting plan, the existence of a mentor-protégé arrangement, and performance (if any) under an existing arrangement, may be considered by the Contracting Officer in:
 - i. evaluating the quality of a proposed subcontracting plan;
 - ii. assessing the prime contractor's compliance with the subcontracting plans submitted in previous contracts as a factor in determining contractor responsibility.
- (2) Recognition: A non-monetary Mentor-Protégé Partnership Team award is presented annually to the mentor firm providing the most effective developmental support to a Protégé.

General Services Administration (GSA)

Mentor benefits include:

- (1) Evaluation credit during source selection process for subcontracts or teaming arrangements under the Mentor-Protégé Agreement.
- (2) If the mentor is other than a small business, favorable assessment under the mentor's subcontracting plan and as a factor in evaluating past performance.
- (3) Recognition: Eligible to receive the GSA OSBU annual Mentoring Award. The annual non-monetary award is presented to the mentor most effective in developing a protégé.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

- (1) A mentor and protégé may joint venture as a small business for any government prime contract or subcontract, including procurements with a dollar value less than half the size standard corresponding to the assigned NAICS code and 8(a) sole source contracts, provided the protégé qualifies as small for the procurement, and for purposes of 8(a) sole source requirements the protégé has not reached the dollar limit set for in 13 CFR 125.519.
- (2) The mentor may own an equity interest of up to 40 percent in the Protégé despite the more limited, general ownership restrictions on eligibility in 13 CFR 124.105(g) and (h). The amount of capital injection by the mentor will determine the percentage of ownership the mentor receives. The percentage of ownership the mentor receives will be commensurate with the value of the capital injection made by the mentor.
- (3) In the event the mentor/protégé relationship ends, the mentor may retain its ownership percentage in the Protégé existing at the time the relationship ends to avoid any detrimental impact on capital.
- (4) No determination of affiliation or control may be found between a protégé firm and its mentor based solely on the Mentor/Protégé Agreement or any assistance provided pursuant to the Agreement. However, a long-standing inter-relationship or contractual dependence between the same parties may lead to a finding of general affiliation between and among the parties.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

- (1) Recognition: Mentors are eligible to receive recognition from USAID annually based on nominations from protégé firms. Based upon the nominations, it is clear that some of the protégé firms felt that their mentor firms provided them with outstanding developmental assistance.
- (2) Mentors receive a benefit from a stronger business community. USAID provides a community benefit by strengthening emerging businesses and providing them with previously denied opportunities for growth, expansion and increased participation in USAID's acquisitions.

E. Progress of Protégés with Respect to Competing for Federal Prime Contracts and Subcontracts (By Federal Activity)

Department of Defense (DoD)

- (1) The DoD Mentor-Protégé program has a proven success record in enhancing protégé competitiveness for prime contract and subcontract awards. A GAO report, GAO-07-151, concluded that most former protégé firms valued their experience with:
 - (i) 93% of them reporting that their participation enhanced their firm's overall capabilities
 - (ii) 87% of them reporting that mentors helped with their business development
 - (iii) 84% reporting that mentor support helped their engineering or technical expertise
- (2) A review of reports compared competitiveness levels for FY14 Mentor-Protégé participants with FY13 levels and indicates that protégé progress is enhanced by their participation. Despite an 8% reduction in participation from 65 to 60 protégé Small Business Concerns from FY 13 levels, the award data for participating protégé firms indicates a positive trend:
 - (i) Prime contract awards increased 10% for a total of \$584,392,820.
 - (ii) Subcontract awards by mentors to protégé firms increased 28.6% to a total of \$120,274,776.
 - (iii) Other subcontract awards (non-mentor federal contracts) increased 30% to a total of \$300,564,500.
 - (iv) Total prime contract and subcontract awards increased 17% to a total of \$1,005,232,096.

Department of Energy (DOE)

DOE is currently in the process of developing a strategy to track prime awards to protégés while in the program and after completion of participation in the program. DOE Management and Operations Contractors award non-competitive subcontracts to their protégés while in the program. Of the 40 active agreements in place to date, protégés have been awarded in excess of \$3,000,000. in subcontracts. The program also conveys a potential

for increased competitiveness in the recognition it provides to participating protégé firms. For example, in FY14 Group14 Engineering, Inc. accepted the DOE Protégé of the Year Award at the DOE Annual Small Business Forum & Expo in Tampa, Florida. Group14, a small disadvantaged /woman-owned business, directly contributed to the accomplishments of core DOE mission objectives and requirements in 2013 by working as a catalyst to launch DOE's OpenStudio software in the marketplace, with clients that included a large, regional utility.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

The progress of the mentor-protégé team is evaluated by the submission of an 18th-month Mid-Progress Report (jointly), a 36th Month Lessons Learned Report (separately), and a Protégé Post Mentor-Protégé Program Report, which is submitted annually for two years after the protégé firm exits the mentor-protégé program (protégé only).

Department of State (DoS)

Since the Department of State (DoS) had to renew its MPP application with OMB in FY 14, it was decided to place the Department's MPP on hold to review and revitalize the program. With respect to tracking and monitoring the progress of protégés to compete for contracts, the DoS MPP is currently undergoing revision. Under this revision, new procedures and policies will be instituted during the application and reporting process that will assist in understanding and tracking the progress of protégés to compete for Federal prime contracts and subcontracts.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Protégés are showing increased competitiveness under DOT's program:

- (1) Protégés were able to strengthen their accounting systems to comply with government requirements
- (2) Protégé staff has been able to enhance their proposal writing skills
- (3) Protégés have been able to increase the number and quality of proposals submitted
- (4) Protégés were able to develop strategic plans to increase their competitiveness and target specific DOT Operating Administrations based on the protégé's core competencies
- (5) Protégé staff has better understanding of the procurement process within DOT and federal government
- (6) Protégé staff improved the understanding and use of government systems, such as FPDS, FedBizOps, SAM , procurement forecasts and subcontracting directories, to help them in the marketing process
- (7) Protégé staff strengthens cost analysis, contract pricing, and contract management skillsets.
- (8) Protégés were able to get contracts as a prime and a subcontractor.

Department of Treasury (Treasury)

Progress of protégés participating in the Treasury Mentor-Protégé program is assessed through submission of an annual evaluation, a close-out evaluation, and most recently, through the use of a 24 Month Post Completion Report for protégés that have completed the agreement term.

General Services Administration (GSA)

Protégés have shown enhanced competitiveness for both prime and subcontract awards. GSA mentors are existing GSA Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) contract-holders or GSA construction contracts. Mentors have assisted protégés in successfully competing for GSA prime FSS contracts, partnered with their protégés in teaming arrangements and subcontracted with protégés for GSA and other federal agency opportunities.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Through NASA's Mentor-Protégé Program, protégés have strengthened and increased their core competencies, hired additional personnel and demonstrated increased competitiveness. Protégés have increased revenues with some receiving direct subcontracting opportunities from the mentor. The protégés have also teamed with the mentors on proposals for future contracting opportunities. Every six months, protégés are required to submit their own individually developed semi-annual reports, which outline the progress made in employment growth, contract opportunities awarded and revenue. In addition, protégés are required to submit data on employment and revenue for each of the two years following the end of the Mentor-Protégé Agreement.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

SBA is working to develop a methodology to accurately capture the value of prime contract and subcontract awards to protégé firms. As all the Mentor-Protégé agreements are currently restricted to 8(a) firms, SBA is able to measure Mentor-Protégé progress towards competing for prime contracts by reference to 8(a) firms that participated in Joint Ventures by comparing prime contract awards in FY13 with FY14 prime contract awards. In FY13, 8(a) firms received prime contract awards totaling \$1,264,927,882.25 as Joint Ventures. In FY14, 8(a) firms received prime contract awards totaling \$1,771,513,334.73 as Joint Ventures, a 40% increase.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

The goal of the USAID Mentor-Protégé program is to provide development assistance to protégé firms and improve their capabilities to perform on USAID contracts (either as a prime contractor or as a subcontractor). The USAID Mentor-Protégé program provides protégé firms with the support and potential for enhanced competitiveness for federal prime contract and subcontract awards that they would not otherwise receive. USAID provides protégé firms with previously denied opportunities for growth and increased participation in

USAID's acquisitions. However, each Mentor-Protégé relationship is different with respect to the needs of the protégé firms differ and the taskings to be accomplished under the agreements. There is anecdotal evidence of increased competitiveness for awards. USAID gives an award to a mentor firm each year based upon nominations from the protégé firms. Based upon the nominations, it is clear that some of the protégé firms feel that their mentor firms provided them with outstanding developmental assistance. As some protégé firms do express appreciation for mentor efforts by nominating them for recognition within the USAID Mentor-Protégé program, it is considered a positive indicator of increased competitiveness for prime and subcontract awards.