

**Human Capital and Community Development:
A Case Study of an NGO-Sponsored Schooling Program in Mali**

Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Director, Women's Research Institute

Carol Ward Professor, Department of Sociology

Addie Fuhriman, Emeritus Professor of Psychology

Yodit Solomon, Research Associate, Women's Research Institute

Kacey Widdison-Jones, Research Assistant, Women's Research Institute

ABSTRACT

This research examines two separate but related issues, the role of communities in the development of human capital, and the impact of schooling in the context of community development. The focus is on the experiences of the Ouelessebougou-Utah Alliance (OUA) which has funded elementary schools in rural Mali. Case study data for three villages reveal a lack of resources, inadequate teacher training, insufficient support from program staff, irrelevant curriculum, poor teaching methods and greater benefits for boys than girls. Overall, the impact of OUA schools on human capital development, as indicated by school attainment, has been minimal. Nevertheless, an increase in community agency is shown by communities seeking new ways to improve schooling.