



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

REPORT TO CONGRESS
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GENDER INTEGRATION AND PROGRAMMING

This report is submitted in compliance with the following directive in the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009 (HR 1105; PL 111-8): the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) “is directed to report 180 days after enactment of this Act on the steps taken to better integrate gender considerations into its economic development portfolio, and describe current and future planned programming that promote women’s economic opportunities, including the outcomes associated with these programs disaggregated by gender.”

The report discusses relevant USAID actions in FY 2008 and FY 2009. It includes both a discussion of institutional changes within USAID to strengthen the integration of gender throughout the Agency’s programs and examples of the types of interventions in the field that promote women’s economic opportunities.

I. Gender in USAID’s economic development portfolio

Ensuring that gender is taken into consideration in all aspects of economic development has been a longstanding concern of USAID. In 1973, an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act offered by Senator Percy and enacted into law asked for “... particular attention to those programs, projects and activities which tend to integrate women into the national economies of foreign countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort.”

USAID’s recently adopted strategy for economic growth, *Securing the Future* (April 2008), recognizes that the drivers of economic growth, such as business regulation, property rights and the rule of law, and other aspects of economic governance relevant to entrepreneurial ability, shape the incentives for productive effort. Without supportive drivers in place, incentives to enable growth -- such as the availability of credit, assistance to micro, small and medium enterprises,

education and workforce development, or improved infrastructure – may fall short of their long-term potential.

The economic growth report, *Securing the Future*, consistently highlights the need to pay particular attention to women’s needs and rights. At the outset, the report states that, “Broad-based growth is growth that includes all major income groups, ethnic groups, and women.” The report goes on to highlight that USAID’s economic growth objectives are to “enhance access to productive opportunities for the poor, women and other disadvantaged groups to help ensure that they benefit from growth.” The report then examines challenges to growth from various perspectives, financial, legal, structural, etc. In each of these sections, the report identifies particular problems faced by women and actions USAID has taken to overcome these impediments. In the financial arena, the report identifies the particular challenges poor women face. “In many poor countries, poor households and poor women in particular lack safe places to keep their savings, lack access to credit due to their inability to offer collateral, and cannot obtain insurance to protect themselves or their businesses...Microfinance programs of USAID continue to address these problems, with a particular focus on women.” In terms of property rights, again the economic growth strategy specifically highlights the need to focus on women’s rights. It states, “Lack of secure tenure to land is a particularly large threat to the poor, and especially for women, who own less than 2 percent of all land in developing countries...Women often suffer an additional disadvantage, holding fewer legal rights than men in key economic areas such as land ownership and inheritance. USAID works to strengthen judicial systems and encourage equal rights for women.”

In addition to addressing the legal and structural impediments women confront, social and cultural factors also frequently limit the extent to which women are able to benefit from economic growth opportunities. USAID’s challenge is to ensure that its operating units around the world, working in diverse cultures, address the fundamental constraints affecting the ability of women and men to contribute fully to, and benefit fully from, opportunities for economic growth. Through its central and mission programs, USAID is advancing these efforts by building its own internal capacity, as well as the capacity of its partners, to meet this challenge.

Economic opportunity for women not only allows them to participate in the economic growth of their societies, but also renders them less vulnerable to

exploitation, abuse, poverty and even human traffickers. However, often, women do not encounter a level playing field. For example, lack of legal rights can preclude women from accessing capital and resources or circumscribes their mobility and in these cases, interventions must address women's specific needs. In other cases women are not prohibited from working or starting businesses, but cultural norms may prescribe other roles and responsibilities which may take precedence over their economic activities. These types of cultural changes require community buy-in and longer term efforts.

In addition, USAID supports policy-level changes that promote women's economic opportunities: in financial, business, and employment policies, particularly as they relate to trade, and in legal systems that ensure and protect women's ability to accumulate and hold on to assets in their own right. Women's title to land and livestock, as well as their control over financial assets, is the focus of several programs discussed below. Such systemic initiatives help enable longer term transformational change to occur.

II. USAID Leadership on Gender in All Sectors

In 2007, USAID's Office of Women in Development (WID) monitored compliance with Agency guidance on gender by reviewing the extent to which Country Strategic Plans and procurement solicitations incorporated gender concerns. This review provided a baseline for tracking progress on the integration of gender throughout all sectors and geographic regions. A significant finding of this review was that Missions improved their treatment of gender in Country Strategic Plans following explicit guidance issued in 2003. Specifically, the study showed that integration of gender into Strategic Objectives on economic growth increased from 24% in 1997-2002 to 37% in 2003-5. Gender integration into economic growth procurements from May, 2006 to February, 2007 also revealed higher levels of inclusion of gender in procurements related to agriculture and private sector competitiveness. As a result of this work, and with heightened Administration interest, USAID has recently taken additional actions that further strengthen the focus on gender in USAID economic development programs.

A. General guidance

- On May 4, 2009, the Acting Administrator issued a General Notice on Integrating Gender. The guidance from the Administrator states, “I want to remind all USAID staff of the critical importance of integrating gender considerations into all stages of planning, programming, and implementation of development assistance. This is not only a priority of the Administration, but also an essential part of effective and sustainable development.” The guidance further notes that gender issues must be addressed in procurement documents and evaluation criteria. The guidance states that, “the responsibility of linking gender equality to development results belongs to all of us. Without the integration of gender concerns, our development goals will not be fully achieved.” Finally, the guidance lists specific actions USAID is taking to strengthen gender sensitive development efforts, including incorporating gender into training programs for staff, including gender equity and gender-based violence in the key issues section of the Foreign Assistance Coordination and Tracking system to improve USAID’s reporting on gender issues, and continued support from the Women in Development Office to provide technical assistance to the field and to track USAID’s gender response.
- USAID is currently reviewing Agency policy toward addressing gender concerns throughout the portfolio, strengthening requirements for gender analysis at various stages of strategic planning and project design. Recommendations for policy improvements will also strengthen provisions covering the treatment of gender in the solicitation process.

B. Training

To improve understanding of gender issues among the surge of Foreign Service officers coming into USAID, the WID office developed a gender awareness training overview for all new officers as well as other interested staff. Between early June and August 31, 2009, 120 officers – 66 women and 54 men – received the training, which familiarizes participants with

basic gender concepts and USAID's approach to gender integration. An additional 120 officers are expected to receive this training by the end of the calendar year. Under USAID's current hiring authority for new Foreign Service officers (Development Leadership Initiative – DLI), up to 300 additional officers are expected to join the Agency by 2012. They will also receive mandatory gender training. Armed with this awareness and understanding of USAID's approach, new officers are expected to assist in promoting gender-based development at their new posts.

C. Technical leadership and assistance

Technical assistance offered through USAID's WID office has been instrumental in helping USAID Mission and Regional programs understand and address gender and women's issues. In 2008-9, technical assistance was provided to seven countries in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Central America. Services provided cover a broader technical spectrum than economic growth *per se*, often focusing on multi-sectoral integration of gender issues in a Mission portfolio. An evaluation report issued in September 2008 found that, on the whole, 95% of missions receiving assistance rated the WID services as "very good" or better.

This evaluation also noted that gender assessments and other WID-related technical assistance have had a broad impact in the Missions receiving this assistance. Some Missions reported that after receiving the technical assistance, they were able to provide expertise to the UN, implementing partners and groups such as community health workers on mainstreaming gender into their work. The Mission in Indonesia reported that following its 2009 gender analysis, they incorporated gender recommendations into their Mission Strategic Plan, their PMP, and project design documents,

USAID's Regional Bureaus also provide advice on integrating gender to their respective Missions. In addition to regular support on gender issues, the Africa Bureau is working intensively with three countries (Mali, Tanzania, and Zambia) to integrate gender throughout their portfolios. Given limited economic growth resources, identifying cross-sectoral synergies is critical to being able to focus on improving women's economic

opportunities. The Africa Bureau is also promoting the use of gender-related performance indicators adapted to each country's situation.

As part of the Administration's Global Engagement Initiative, the Asia and Middle East Bureau recently initiated an effort to identify programming gaps that affect women in Muslim-majority communities, focusing on Indonesia, Jordan, and Nigeria.

III. USAID Leadership on Gender and Economic Growth

A. Guidance

USAID is drafting guidance for Missions planning to design agriculture programs in 2010. Missions will be requested to document women's equitable access to agricultural and related economic opportunities in their countries.

B. Training

In addition to a robust entry-level training effort, USAID continues to offer workshops for USAID staff and partners on key gender-related topics that affect women's economic opportunities, for example: microfinance, microenterprise development, and value chain relationships; land tenure and property rights including the impact of HIV/AIDS on women's property rights; agriculture; and trade.

C. Technical leadership and assistance

Operational research sponsored by USAID in recent years has developed extremely useful analytical approaches and tools for analyzing gender issues that can be adapted to individual country situations. Of particular relevance to women's economic opportunities:

- The Greater Access to Trade Expansion (GATE) project produced a methodology and training materials on gender and pro-poor value chain analysis, as well as illustrative gender integration strategies for various aspects of trade development. GATE researchers also formulated

gender-sensitive indicators that Missions can use or adapt for their performance monitoring plans. Collaboration between GATE and USAID's ongoing Accelerated Microenterprise Assistance Project (AMAP) deepens the impact of AMAP's broad effort to promote economic growth by linking large numbers of low-income entrepreneurs – a majority of whom are women – into better markets and increasing their productivity and competitiveness.

- The WID office, in collaboration with USAID's Economic Growth office, is adapting USAID's Commercial Legal and Institutional Reform (CLIR) methodology in order to improve in-depth understanding of the impediments specific to women in a country's overall business environment. The CLIR methodology examines 15 areas of commercial law and trade that mirror the 10 areas included in the World Bank's "Doing Business" Reports. Each substantive area is looked at from two perspectives: the laws and regulations governing that area and the institutions implementing and supporting those laws and regulations. Finally, the examination considers the social dynamic, particularly the capacity of society to influence and adapt to change and to incorporate new concepts with respect to the institutions and laws associated with commercial law and trade.
- The Property Rights and Resource Governance (PRRG) project continues the thrust of previous work and looks specifically at the distinguishing characteristics of women's property rights and at the policy, administrative, judicial and institutional options that exist for strengthening women's rights to land and resources within the context of respect for local institutions and customs. These rights are fundamental to women's ability to take advantage of economic opportunities. The project is developing and refining an analytical framework to help additional countries address this complex issue.

Information on these tools and projects is posted on the USAID/EGAT/WID office website. Information about these programs is also disseminated in various other ways, both internal and external to USAID. For example, GATE held a successful videoconference in July, 2009 with USAID Missions in Peru, Albania and Kenya to allow them to share their GATE

experiences with each other and with USAID staff from various bureaus in Washington, DC. GATE also conducted a public information dissemination event in May, 2009 entitled "Women, Trade and the Global Financial Crisis. Past Perspectives, Future Directions - Lessons from the Greater Access to Trade Expansion (GATE) Project," which was attended by over 150 people. Information is also disseminated to and through other donors. For example, publications of the GATE project are referenced in the World Bank's *Gender and Agriculture* sourcebook.

IV. Illustrative Mission Programs That Link Gender and Economic Growth

In the latest (FY 2008) joint State and USAID Performance Planning Report, 55 Missions entered information in the optional section on gender equity and some noted that they address gender dimensions across the board in their portfolio. Entries include programming that bears on women's economic opportunities, in spite of often limited economic growth funding. This section covers a selection of relevant Mission programs that link gender and economic growth.

A. Legal rights of women, including property rights

Legal rights affect women's ability to own property – real or in kind, such as livestock, provide collateral, operate businesses, or generally receive recognition as independent economic actors. In the era of HIV/AIDS and in conflict and post-conflict situations, property and inheritance rights are particularly critical for widows, whose numbers are increasing. Missions reporting on the legal rights of women approach this topic from a variety of perspectives that correspond to the country's social and economic development. In many cases these rights are related to ensuring economic opportunity for women.

Land- and property-related issues are being addressed in over 20 Missions. In Tajikistan, women suffer from inequitable access to property and women-led households are denied the right to acquire land, despite the fact that women bear the largest burden in cotton farming. In response to this discrimination, USAID's Land Reform Project is supporting public education, legal aid, and rural activism to identify gender abuses and find solutions.

In Ethiopia and Rwanda USAID's work on land tenure issues is leading to policy changes that help women gain or retain title to land. In Ethiopia, an independent assessment of the land registration system found that women's land rights were strengthened through the joint registration of land in the name of the husband and wife. In Rwanda, USAID's pilot efforts on land rights have been used as models and replicated by other donors, among them the UK's Department for International Development (DfID).

In September, 2008, USAID commissioned an assessment of women's property and inheritance rights in Kenya and Tanzania to determine the impact of several small one-year grants that were given to local organizations in 2001. (The original project provided grants to 20 organizations in 8 countries in Africa and Asia.) The study showed that organizations in Kenya and Tanzania were perceived by multiple stakeholders as having contributed to increased awareness about women's legal property rights among communities, local authorities, policymakers and judges; increased capacity of women to defend their property rights -- including bringing their claims to courts; and more respect for women's rights at local levels. Kenyan organizations faced the greatest challenges when it came to advocating for changes in national law. Tanzania, by contrast, has more progressive laws on women's property rights. The study also noted behavioral and cultural changes. For example, community paralegals trained by one grantee in Kenya initially confronted resistance from local authorities when they tried to raise local awareness on property rights and assist women in claiming their rights. However, once the center began training local chiefs, paralegals and their clients found chiefs more supportive, with some even allying themselves with paralegals to help women.

In Jordan's economic growth portfolio, the fiscal reform project's gender analysis is resulting in initiating the revision of many tax policies to make them more gender equitable. At the same time, the democracy portfolio supports women's civil society organizations' campaigns to amend the Personal Status and Labor laws to ensure fair and equitable treatment of women.

Montenegro and Serbia, as part of their preparation for accession to the European Union, are working on National Plans for Gender Equality. USAID/Serbia's economic growth portfolio includes public awareness of the implications of pension reform for women as well as support to women entrepreneurs. USAID-provided key training, technical assistance and awareness to the Government of Serbia which helped the country move forward on mandatory and voluntary pension systems and our assistance resulted in a partnership between USAID and the Ministry of Labor to conduct research regarding the Serbian pension system and the status of women.

USAID also participates with other donors in the Serbian government led Gender Equality Synergy Group to help create conditions that will enable implementation of equal opportunity policies and respect for human rights.

B. Micro, small, and medium enterprise support

Microenterprise programs have long been central to USAID's approach to poverty reduction and women's advancement. They have progressed from an initial emphasis on micro-credit and limited business development skills and have now expanded to include backward and forward linkages through the value chain approach that links large numbers of low-income entrepreneurs into better markets and increases their productivity and competitiveness. This approach stimulates development of many different kinds of production and service-based businesses. Forestry, agribusiness and tourism, as well as textiles and handicrafts manufacturing and marketing, can generate substantial income-earning opportunities for women – as long as the economic, social, political, and cultural conditions exist in the community and society permit women to devote the time necessary to develop their skills and pursue those opportunities.

In Peru, USAID expanded financial services and access to credit to more than 345,000 impoverished clients, 64% of them women. In Haiti's micro-finance programs, more than 75% of the borrowers are women.

Business services, entrepreneurship training, market information, access to improved technologies, simplified investment procedures, and access to

credit are among the enabling factors that help firms grow and move up the enterprise continuum. But to “graduate” from micro-financing to commercial banks, access to collateral is essential. In Ethiopia, limitations on women’s property rights curtail women’s ability to put up collateral for larger loans and thus the lack of collateral acts as a barrier to expansion of women’s enterprises. In order to facilitate commercial bank financing for women entrepreneurs, USAID/Ethiopia plans to establish a loan portfolio guarantee in partnership with Bank of Abyssinia. This will enable the bank to reduce collateral requirements for women borrowers and will promote lending exclusively to women-owned Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). In time, USAID hopes to demonstrate that women-owned SMEs are a viable and profitable sector.

C. International Trade

Facilitating the access of small-scale producers with export potential to international markets can make a significant contribution to economic growth and poverty reduction for women as well as men. The development record indicates that rapid growth in exports is typically associated with increased demand for labor, higher wages, and more and better employment opportunities. However women, especially poor women, are often in a weak position to take advantage of these opportunities because of inadequate education and skills. In addition to efforts to improve education and workforce development (as well as promoting competitive enterprises that generate employment), USAID actively promotes well-functioning labor markets that recognize and address gender concerns.

The gender and economic growth training materials designed by the Greater Access to Trade Expansion (GATE) project equip USAID and partner development practitioners and analysts with tools that can be adapted to an individual country’s circumstances. These tools assist in identifying gender challenges – structural as well as socio-cultural, asking gender-related questions, finding the necessary data and assistance to answer the questions, and developing appropriate program interventions. For example, research in Bangladesh identified the fact that a large proportion of women working in shrimp cultivation and export tended to have temporary or casual (and lower-paid) jobs, rather than more secure employment – just one example of

the complex, often unanticipated and unintended, effects of trade liberalization. In Peru, where USAID focuses on trade-led growth as a means to achieve poverty reduction, GATE has identified specific gender constraints to market access and suggested solutions. One of these recommendations is to train government staff on how reforms can be implemented to benefit the poor and women. USAID/Peru designed and conducted an intensive training program for new inspectors from the Ministry of Labor, many of whom are women, to enable them to enforce the new, more equitable, labor law adopted in the context of U.S.-Peru free trade agreement negotiations. The majority of inspectors will serve in the provinces, where enforcement of labor regulations has been historically low.

D. Association building and cooperatives

Independent associations and worker/farmer cooperatives can help their members access inputs and technologies, increase bargaining power, and also serve as platforms to advocate for improved policies and regulations. In Guatemala, USAID program partners actively encourage and work with women so that they can assume leadership positions, for example, on the boards of directors of the community associations and producer cooperatives that have traditionally been roles exclusively for men. Support for rural cooperatives in Russia also promotes women's leadership and helps women compete more effectively and actively in business life. Similarly, in Timor Leste, in order to promote women-owned businesses and encourage greater involvement of women in business, USAID assisted in the establishment of a business association that is well on its way to financial sustainability. In Jordan, USAID supports the two major businesswomen's associations and strengthened their capacity to establish women-friendly work environments and establish a network of women power-brokers to support rising women leaders. With the Jordan Nursing Council, USAID carried out a public awareness campaign to highlight the employment opportunities that exist in the nursing field for young women. In Afghanistan, the US supported the establishment of 10 women's business associations, provided 13 of them with grants for equipment, capacity building, and improving member services, and continued support for the Afghan Women's Business Federation, now serving 69 associations and 28,000 members.

V. Program outcomes and sex disaggregation

With such a variety of program approaches implemented in diverse countries, it is a challenge to identify indicators that lend themselves to meaningful aggregated reporting across countries on outcomes related to women's economic opportunities. Unlike child immunization, for health, or school enrollment, for education, gender issues are not easily rolled up into a representative indicator of economic growth. One exception is in the microenterprise area, where the recently-issued FY 2008 Report to Congress shows that the percentages of women microfinance clients and business development clients exceeded planned performance targets. The target for women microfinance clients of 60% was exceeded by 2% and the target for women business development clients of 30% was exceeded by 6%.

Sex-disaggregated reporting is necessary, but not sufficient to understand the type of progress being made in any particular country situation. Knowing the numbers of women and men alone, without additional information to provide context and permit analysis, is of limited use. For example, sex-disaggregated information on numbers of loans provided through the formal banking system is interesting, but not sufficient in and of itself to fully understand the underlying economic and social dynamics at work and whether or not the statistics represent developmental change.

The following illustrative information is gleaned from reports on gender equity contained in the FY 2008 Performance Planning Report (expanded, for Afghanistan, with information from the August, 2009 Assessment of USAID's Programs and Policies to Improve the Lives of Women and Girls.)

- **Afghanistan:** In the agriculture and alternative development program, the US has created income generating and marketing opportunities for women who must work from home. In FY 2008 and 2009, over 23,100 women received agriculture training; over 5,500 women received marketing/business training; and almost 1,100 women participated in a poultry-raising program. USAID also helped establish 27 women business associations and supports the Afghan Women Business Federation, an umbrella organization for approximately 87 women's associations. Among the newly established business associations was the

first women's shopkeepers association which is working to build the capacity of its members through business training. In 2008 and 2009, 31,282 of the Agriculture, Rural Investment and Enterprise Strengthening program's 70,000 active microfinance borrowers are women.

- Belarus: Job skills and job search training benefited 980 women and 181 men. Entrepreneurship training benefited 103 women and 39 men – of which 23 women and 1 man received further support for business plan development.
- Burkina Faso: Women represented 39% of the beneficiaries of the Catholic Relief Services agriculture program in 2008 (2,168 women and 5,591 men). Of the 740 market garden farmers, 42% were women, and at a new market garden site, 50% of the farmers will be women.
- Guatemala: Women's participation increased by 18% in the perishable products supply chain sector – most work in the area of quality control. Seven of the 114 producers certified by EureGAP (Good agricultural Practices) are women. Of 260 producers, 34 women (or 13 %) are in line to be certified in FY 2009 by an independent third party.
- Nepal: Vocational training provided 462 women with skills in non-traditional trades such as masonry, plumbing, and wiring in an effort to maximize high-value job training. This vocational training also provided literacy classes that led some back into the formal schooling system.
- Sierra Leone: Women comprised 53% of the farmers in the US-supported farmer field schools; women account for about 75% of the business training participants and recipients of small enterprise start up grants.
- Timor Leste: Two-thirds of nearly 1,600 microenterprise clients receiving business development services in FY 2008 were women while nearly 80% of the almost 900 economically active adults enrolled in USG-supported literacy and numeracy program were women. The women served in these programs are overwhelmingly poor women from interior areas of the country.

VI. Future planned programming

Greater integration of gender issues by USAID Missions into their economic growth portfolios is occurring on a more holistic basis – not just from the microenterprise perspective which has served the cause of women’s empowerment so well over recent years. Issues such as property rights are being analyzed through a gender lens, demonstrating the importance of designing different approaches for women and men in order to achieve the changes desired. This has also been the case in the health sector, where helping men to understand their role as supporters and facilitators of improved health for women (in addition to being direct beneficiaries themselves of improved health systems) plays an important part in ensuring positive women’s health outcomes.

In its FY 2008 Performance Planning Report, USAID/Pakistan recognized that women have not been equal beneficiaries of USG assistance in the areas of agriculture, private sector competitiveness, and economic opportunity. The Mission intends to increase targets for women’s participation in its programs as well as to introduce women-specific activities in order to improve women’s position as entrepreneurs and in the workforce, at all educational levels.

USAID intends to take advantage of opportunities such as the Administration’s new emphasis on global engagement and women’s equality, following President Obama’s speech in Cairo on June 6, 2009. Selected programs are being reviewed in order to improve gender-sensitive programming and to serve as models for an effort to increase outreach to women in Muslim-majority communities.

In continuing work on gender-based violence, USAID will increase its attention to forging linkages with economic and social programs that mitigate women’s vulnerability by providing women with the knowledge and skills to compete in the workplace and reduce their dependence.

The Food Security Response initiative and the renewed interest in support for agriculture programs are leading to a transformation in the way USAID does business: addressing gender inequality and valuing both men’s and women’s full participation will be an integral part of USAID’s Food Security Response.

Supporting women and families in agriculture will be a specific focus of the administration's re-engagement in agriculture development.

Women and men act and are affected differently by issues related to climate change, energy, and the environment because of their societal roles and expectations, livelihoods, status and economic power. USAID is working to ensure that program design in these areas takes account of gender-differentiated impacts in order to design and target more effective interventions. In the Peru *From Glaciers to the Coast* project, improved gender approaches will result in better conservation strategies and actions that are grounded in the interests, the social conditions and the cultural identity of the men and women involved in the project.

Unfortunately, while advances favoring economic opportunities for women have taken place recently in many countries, the consequences of the current global financial and economic crisis are likely to take a severe toll, particularly in those countries that rely on export-led growth. Textile and agriculture or natural resource-based exports are particularly vulnerable to changes in external demand, exchange rate fluctuations, and increased input costs. They are also sectors that attract a high proportion of women who are often concentrated in less secure and lower-paid positions. A drop in demand for exports and/or tightened markets for small-scale credit can be expected to have a disproportionately large effect on reducing women's and household income. Combined with an expected drop in remittances, this increases the risk of a resurgence in poverty.

Research has also shown that women's incomes have an intergenerational effect because women save more than men and also spend more of their savings on children's nutrition and education. For the most vulnerable households, a decrease in women's incomes could mean an increased risk of poverty and lower human capital for the next generation. USAID will continue to monitor this situation and work to improve women's equitable engagement in the labor market and their returns from economic growth and development.