

# Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

## Results

USAID has a long history of support for women and gender equality issues. In 2012 the Agency adopted a suite of new gender equality policies and strategies; reformed budgeting and reporting requirements to capture gender equality results; created incentive funds to promote women's leadership, reduce gender-based violence, and accelerate investments in women peace-builders, parliamentarians, agricultural producers, and owners of small and medium enterprises. Together, we expect these efforts to lead to powerful changes within societies. Some examples of these efforts include:



- Over \$30 million in funding was directed to support **women's leadership** in a range of sectors. Funds are supporting women's direct participation in peace negotiations, humanitarian and post-conflict donor conferences, and government and political transitions. They also are being used to expand women's leadership in the mobile phone industry, increase women's leadership of small and medium-sized enterprises, and increase the extent to which higher education programs cultivate women leaders in business, academe, research and other fields. Funds will also be used to help strengthen the skills and capacity of women members of legislatures, support the creation of a South Asian female parliamentarian network, and assist the Inter-Parliamentary Union to track the impact of women in governments around the world.
- USAID's **Feed the Future** Initiative's (FTF) monitoring and evaluation system now comprehensively tracks the impact of its programs on women and girls in 19 countries using the *Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index* created in collaboration with the International Food Policy and Research Institute and Oxford's Poverty and Human Development Initiative.
- Over \$10 million in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** to expand efforts to support gender-based violence survivors, granting them increased access to medical and psycho-social care, legal assistance, and income generating activities.

## USAID Strategy and Program Focus

Under its Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, USAID makes investments to achieve three overarching outcomes:

1. Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over, and benefits from resources, wealth, opportunities, and services—economic, social, political, and cultural.
2. Reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals.
3. Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies.

These outcomes are especially important for males and females who are marginalized or excluded due to ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, lack of income, disability, or other factors.



## Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GenDev)'s Role

Situated in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3), the GenDev Office provides strategic leadership and technical assistance for USAID's work on gender. GenDev...

- Manages centrally funded technical assistance and gender training contracts.
- Pilots innovative programs aimed at gender equality and female empowerment.
- Advances and scales up successes through the regular program cycle.
- Coordinates working groups for cross sector issues.
- Coordinates knowledge management on gender integration through the Agency's webpage on gender equality and female empowerment.
- Maintains a repository of best practices on gender integration, and coordinates knowledge management on gender integration through the Agency's webpage on gender equality and female empowerment.

The GenDev Office provides technical leadership for training on gender equality and female empowerment. In FY2012 in cooperation with Regional Gender Advisors, 501 staff in Washington and the field were trained. The GenDev office is developing on-line training modules for all USAID staff to increase understanding of the role of gender in development and in the workplace.

## GenDev's Partners

In order to operationalize the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, the GenDev Office works closely with Missions, Regional Bureaus, and Country Offices; Pillar Bureaus; The Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA); The Office of the General Counsel and Regional Legal Advisors; The Office of Human Resources (HR); Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL); and The Office of the Administrator. In addition, we seek to build partnerships across a wide range of external stakeholders and key actors. This includes host governments; international and host country civil society; women's organizations; the donor community, foundations; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocates; and the private sector, including women led businesses. For example:

- Through a landmark **Global Development Alliance** with GSMA, AusAID, and Visa, we are working to close the mobile phone gender gap and accelerate women's empowerment. In September 2012, mobile operators Asiacell (Iraq) and Indosat (Indonesia) announced increased economic opportunities through new mobile products and services for women. In a few short months, over one million women signed up for their services in each country.
- We are launching a three-year public-private partnership with Chevron **South Africa** and Anglo-American to support a gender-based microfinance program called Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS and Gender Equity (IMAGE). The program, combining microfinance with a gender and HIV training curriculum, aims to improve women's financial independence, reduce vulnerability to HIV and gender-based violence, and foster wider community mobilization.

## For More Information

- Contact our GenDev Office Director, Kay Freeman at [kafreeman@usaid.gov](mailto:kafreeman@usaid.gov)
- Visit our website: <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment>.
- To access the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, please visit: [http://transition.usaid.gov/our\\_work/policy\\_planning\\_and\\_learning/documents/GenderEqualityPolicy.pdf](http://transition.usaid.gov/our_work/policy_planning_and_learning/documents/GenderEqualityPolicy.pdf).