



## FACT SHEET

May 2015

## Gender



A girl runs in a half-marathon race in Hawassa co-sponsored by USAID. Photo: USAID/Ethiopia.

“Supporting women and girls is not about treating a vulnerable group, but rather about finally tapping into the potential of half the population.” – Dr. Jill Biden, *Global Entrepreneurship Summit Women’s Day, November 19, 2014*

In Ethiopia, 80 percent of the population resides in rural areas and women provide the majority of the agriculture labor in these communities. However, women’s access to resources and community participation are usually mediated through men, either their fathers or husbands, and their agricultural contributions often go largely unrecognized. Additionally, when women have access to their own income, they are more likely than men to spend it on the betterment of their families and successfully participate in village savings or pay school fees for their children. USAID programs promote women’s decision-making power within households so they can better influence personal, family and community decisions.

## PROGRAM GOALS

Gender equality and women’s empowerment considerations cut across all of USAID’s programming in Ethiopia. By promoting gender equality in access to economic opportunities and education and supporting the health of women and their families, USAID is creating opportunities for more equitable participation in society. In addition, USAID is addressing the root causes of domestic violence, child marriage and female genital mutilation as well as taking steps to enforce and support legislation to protect women and their children from gender-based violence.

### Increasing Female Educational Opportunities

Although the primary school enrollment rate of girls in Ethiopia has almost doubled from 21 to 42 percent in the last decade, the majority are unable to transition to secondary and tertiary school due to distance, personal security and economic challenges. As girls grow older, academic participation becomes increasingly difficult as it takes time away from essential income generating activities. The percentage of female students enrolled in university is only 30 percent and five percent drop out in the first year. At the same time, female-led instruction at the university level is extremely low at only 10 percent. To tackle these challenges and better support the continued education of the next generation of female Ethiopian leaders, USAID provided support to more than 1,000 first year university women in the 2014/15 academic year by facilitating close mentoring from second- and third-year female university students and academic, English-language, and life skills training.

## ETHIOPIA SNAPSHOT

- **Households headed by women: 26 percent**
- **Girls aged 15-19 who are mothers or pregnant with their first child: 12 percent**
- **420 out of every 100,000 women die during pregnancy and child birth each year in Ethiopia**
- **Women who work in agriculture: 75 percent**
- **Adult literacy for women (aged 15 and over): 18 percent**
- **Seats held by women in national parliaments: 27.8 percent**
- **Ethiopia ranks 121 out of 187 countries in the Gender Inequality Index**
- **Over the last three years, USAID has invested an average of \$21.2 million per year for gender related activities**

Sources: *Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey, 2011*; *World Bank data, 2013, 2005*; *EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009*; *UN data, 2012*; *UNDP Human Development Report 2013*

## Expanding Economic Opportunities for Women

Women often face different and more basic economic constraints than men, linked to a lack of access to credit and lower demand for their products because of marketing inexperience. To support women's ability to create businesses and secure their own livelihoods, USAID is encouraging the financing of female-owned businesses through the [Development Credit Authority](#). To support women in agriculture under the [Feed the Future](#) initiative, USAID set a quota of 30 percent female participation in all activities and investments and also established the Women in Agribusiness Leadership Network to enhance the leadership role of women. USAID supports women in chronically food insecure households by boosting access to improved farming inputs and creating income earning agricultural activities.



Sahra poses in her new shop, which she financed with the help of USAID. Photo: Kelley Lynch.

## Promoting the Health and Safety of Women and Girls

According to the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey in 2011, almost a quarter of Ethiopian women do not make decisions on most individual and family issues. Instead, their husbands make decisions for them on choices including the option to use birth control methods and whether to give birth in a health facility or to seek the assistance of a trained provider. Additionally, harmful traditional practices—early marriage and childbearing, female genital mutilation and gender-based violence—all having huge adverse effects on Ethiopian women. Through the [President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief \(PEPFAR\)](#), USAID addresses the HIV risks associated with early marriage. USAID also provides medical assistance for women and girls suffering from fistula, a birth injury common in very young mothers, and educates communities about the health risks of female genital mutilation. To boost maternal and newborn health, USAID teaches women about nutrition through Feed the Future activities. Additionally, USAID supports the capacity of local Ethiopian law enforcement agencies to enforce laws banning gender-based violence.

## Increasing Women's Roles in Conflict Prevention and Peacemaking

Conflict prevention and mitigation activities provide women with conflict prevention training, conflict resolution practices, and an outlet for healing and forgiveness. Activities facilitate the formation of regional women's peace forums to ensure that women and men are contributing equally to peace building processes. Women who received leadership training are now participating with increased confidence within community peace structures.

## Key Projects and Implementing Partners

### **President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Initiative**

- **HIV Prevention for Vulnerable Adolescent Girls:** Population Council, 2007-2017

### **Global Health Initiative**

- **Integrated Family Health Project (IFHP):** Pathfinder International, John Snow, Inc., Consortium of Reproductive Health Association, 2008-2014

### **Feed the Future Initiative**

- **AGP-Livestock Market Development:** CNFA, and four local partners, 2012-2017
- **Agribusiness Market Development:** ACDI/VOCA, 2011-2016
- **Empowering New Generations in Improved Nutrition and Economic Opportunities (ENGINE):** Save the Children, 2011-2016
- **Graduation with Resilience to Achieve Sustainable Development (GRAD):** CARE International, Tufts University, Catholic Relief Services, and four local partners, 2011-2016

### **Grants to Civil Society Groups**

- Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (Global Health Initiative)
- Consortium of Reproductive Health Association (Global Health Initiative)
- Inter-Religious Council of Ethiopia (Governance)
- Kembata Women's Self-Help Center (Governance)
- Rohi Weddu Pastoral Women Development Organization (Global Health Initiative)