



USAID
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EAST AFRICA

GENDER EQUALITY & FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

Despite great strides in economic growth and increased women in leadership in the region, significant gender gaps remain. Women face systematic financial, educational, legal, structural, and cultural barriers. These barriers prevent women from reaching their full potential and fully contributing to their countries' economies. We design initiatives to help women access economic resources, such as, assets, credit, income, and employment. USAID also create spaces for women's voices to be heard.

The regional economies have shifted away from farming towards services and industry. However, 96% of women in Burundi, 76% in Kenya, 84% in Rwanda, 71% in Tanzania and 77% in Uganda still work in agriculture. Women's contribution to home and childcare, which is time-consuming, unpaid work, limits their ability to get paid work.

Women's land ownership remains low in many countries. Only 35% in Kenya and Uganda own their own land and 46% in Rwanda (UNCTAD, 2018). Few women have bank or mobile money accounts and even less borrow money. When women face sexual harassment and violence or they are denied their property rights, inadequate measures exist to protect them.

INVESTMENTS AND TRADE

According to a study by USAID's Trademark East Africa (TMEA), export tariff liberalization between East Africa partner states is positively impacting women's employment. However, access to finance for female-owned and female-led enterprises remains a major constraint on businesses' growth in East Africa. It is estimated that informal cross-border trade accounts for up to 60% of all intra-regional trade in East Africa and women are estimated to compose 80% of all informal traders.

To address this barrier, USAID trains females on how to pitch their businesses to investors and equips them with the news skills to better access capital to expand their businesses. USAID partnerships empower female cross-border traders in staple foods and horticulture value chains to participate more fully in formal trade by building entrepreneurial skills, raising awareness of market opportunities, increasing access to financial institutions and facilitating access to industry representation and reform.

USAID's East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (the Hub) and TMEA work to improve the policy environment on integration, trade, and investment, increase the competitiveness of select regional

agricultural value chains and bolster regional trade in staple foods, promotes intra-regional and export trade. Efforts are strengthening producers' abilities to secure export deals under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) with U.S. buyers while addressing the hurdles and eliminate barriers that both women and men face as they engage in regional trade and regional integration.

USAID supports women traders through a range of activities to build skills, knowledge, and business linkages, including helping women register for formal trade, training in business management and export processes and procedures, and providing market linkage support. USAID enabled women-owned export businesses to increase export revenue and reduce cross-border trade barriers. This resulted in a 70% reduction in harassment, a 50% reduction in the time spent crossing borders, and enhanced accountability and transparency of border officials.

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Until recently, women in East Africa were mostly excluded from participation in formal discussions and decisions on peace and conflict at all levels. The Kitale Women's Forum, which includes women from Ethiopia, South Sudan, Kenya, and Uganda, drafted the "Kitale Resolutions" and committed to work together to increase the representation of women in peace structures. They also aim to engage women in efforts to address natural resource based conflicts. They are actively involved in reviewing natural resource sharing agreements and cross-border meetings. USAID continues to convene these women to network, share experiences and lessons learned, discuss challenges, and develop advocacy messages.

ACHIEVEMENTS SNAPSHOT (FY 2019)

- 6,402 training hours to increase access to assets, credit, income, and employment for women.
- \$12.4 million of deals catalyzed in new investment for female-owned and led enterprises.
- 600 female entrepreneurs trained on how to pitch to investors and prepare for the export market.
- 3,354 individuals reached with gender-based violence messages, and health messages around cervical cancer screening and HIV/AIDS and FP services.

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