



## GENDER EQUALITY & FEMALE EMPOWERMENT

### USAID/MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique ranked 181<sup>st</sup> out of 188 countries in the 2015 UNDP Human Development Index, and 139<sup>th</sup> out of 159 countries in the UNDP Gender Inequality Index.<sup>1</sup> Extreme poverty and the HIV/AIDS epidemic have contributed to the precarious status of women and girls in the country. Low levels of education, high maternal health risks, pressure to marry at a young age, limited economic prospects, gender-based violence, and accepted cultural norms place women at a high disadvantage.

Few girls finish primary school (46%), even fewer finish secondary school (22%), and 56% of women are illiterate (upwards of 70% in rural areas).<sup>2,3</sup> Though women comprise the bulk of the unskilled workforce, especially in agriculture (63%), their work is largely unpaid, and they face many obstacles and discrimination because of strongly held beliefs about gender roles.<sup>4</sup> The media reinforces negative stereotypes by portraying women as deserving of violence, and overlooks gender issues by not providing in-depth coverage.<sup>5</sup> High HIV infection in young women and adolescent girls (11%)<sup>6</sup> when compared with men and boys of the same age, combined with maternal, newborn and child mortality lead to a grave health situation for a large portion of the country's growing population.

USAID/Mozambique works to achieve gender equality and female empowerment through cross-sectoral initiatives dedicated to improving educational opportunities for women and girls,

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<sup>1</sup> UNDP Human Development Reports, 2015, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>.

<sup>2</sup> PEPFAR Mozambique Gender Analysis Country Operational Planning 2016, pgs 8-9.

<sup>3</sup> Perfil de Género de Moçambique, 2016, pg 9.

<sup>4</sup> Perfil de Género de Moçambique, 2016, pg 17.

<sup>5</sup> PEPFAR Mozambique Gender Analysis Country Operational Planning 2016, pg 10.

<sup>6</sup> PEPFAR Mozambique Gender Analysis Country Operational Planning 2016, pg12.

encouraging the coverage of women's issues in the media, supporting women farmers, expanding economic opportunities for women, and improving the quality of healthcare for women and adolescent girls, including nutrition services, family planning, gynecological care, child health services, and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.

## IMPROVING LITERACY & EDUCATION FOR GIRLS

USAID's **Vamos Ler!** activity is improving reading outcomes in primary education by using a bilingual instructional approach. With the Ministry of Education, Vamos Ler! is developing gender responsive curricula, teaching materials, classroom management and instructional approaches. Teacher training emphasizes gender equality and the importance of positive female role models for girls. Social awareness campaigns with parents and communities underscore the importance of girls' learning and attending school.

The **Nikhalamo** activity reduces obstacles that impede the enrollment, retention, and transition to secondary school for girls. The construction of separate latrines for boys and girls, plus interventions that promote sanitation and hygiene practices, such as menstrual hygiene management, allow girls to stay in school during their menstrual cycle.

## COMMUNICATING GENDER ISSUES & VOICES IN THE MEDIA

Through the **Media Strengthening Program**, USAID promotes a diverse, independent, and effective media environment by building the capacity of media professionals and outlets. The activity helps Mozambican journalists amplify citizens' voices, increasing public understanding in key issues such as health, gender, education and economics. The activity emphasizes the importance of eliminating gender bias in news coverage and works to include female voices as sources and cover topics such as gender-based violence, early marriage, and women's health issues.

## EXPANDING WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURE

Agriculture and economic opportunity activities aim to improve the lives of women and their families improving nutrition, food security, access to markets, and smallholder farmer incomes. In Mozambique, cashew processing jobs are typically held by women, and women tend to have less secure land rights than men. USAID's **Supporting the Policy Environment for Economic Development Plus** activity works with the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Cashew Institute, and the Ministry of Land, Environment and Rural Economic Development to affect change in cashew law and regulations, and land rights in ways that will enhance women's opportunities.

The **Viable Sweet Potato Technologies in Africa** activity increases production and better utilization of higher yield varieties of orange-fleshed sweet potato, trains and links women farmers to the marketplace, and increases the awareness of women – particularly pregnant mothers – of the food's nutritional benefits, especially as a good source of vitamin A.

The **Feed the Future Mozambique Agricultural Innovations** activity supports women by helping them assume higher-value and more influential roles, and identifying entry points for women to participate in less traditional value chains that offer greater financial returns.

The **Feed the Future Mozambique Improved Seeds for Better Agriculture** activity strengthens the national seed system and makes improved seeds available to smallholder farmers, in particular to women, who make up a large portion of the agricultural workforce but who are often disadvantaged in accessing agricultural technologies. This activity, together with the two **Feed the Future Mozambique Resilient Agriculture Markets** activities, works to improve women's access to seeds and other agricultural inputs, improved crop management practices, and labor-saving technologies.

## PROMOTING HEALTH FOR WOMEN, GIRLS AND FAMILIES

A key aspect of the **Maternal and Child Survival Program** is to change the power dynamics between women and men, and empower men to be positive change agents for increased equity and improved family health. Promoting couple-centered services, joint HIV counseling and testing, healthy family decision-making, better nutrition during pregnancy, early recognition of childbirth complications are some of the ways the program works towards change.

The **Integrated Family Planning Program** increases the use of modern contraceptive methods through improved health services, and reaches women with a high unmet need for family planning – such as adolescents, women living with HIV, and postpartum women. The program purposefully engages men and boys in an effort to shift inequitable gender norms and behaviors around adolescent pregnancy, family size, and gender-based violence.

Through **Fistula Care Plus**, medical teams and staff expand access to care for women and girls who are in need of medical attention. Supporting fistula repair helps to break down stigma and gender-related barriers, and improve the status of affected women in their communities.

## HELPING WOMEN AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS AFFECTED BY HIV

Populations at high risk for HIV infection, and those living with HIV but who are currently underserved, receive tailored programs through the **President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)**. USAID's PEPFAR activities contribute to epidemic control by reducing the rate of new infections, and effectively treating individuals by providing better access to HIV testing and life-saving antiretroviral therapy. These activities help adolescent girls, pregnant women, young men, and key and priority populations, and seek to address stigma, discrimination, and social behaviors and beliefs that hinder access to quality HIV treatment and health services.

PEPFAR also provides youth-friendly services to decrease HIV incidence among adolescent girls and young men, and to prevent girls from leaving school because of early pregnancy. PEPFAR engages men and boys in health programs as agents of social and behavior change in efforts to promote safer sex practices and raise awareness of the risks of sexually transmitted infections. **Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored, and Safe (DREAMS)** activities in Mozambique implement a package of clinical and community-based services that invests in and empowers girls and young women, decreases their risk of contracting HIV, and mobilizes the community for change.

PEPFAR activities collaborate extensively with the Government of Mozambique's Ministry of Health and Ministry of Gender and Social Action. The activities support the host government's provision of quality preventive and clinical services, work to stabilize and consolidate health facility and community-based interventions, and improve access to life-saving resources for Mozambique's citizens.

## ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

USAID's PEPFAR-funded Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) activities adopt a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of OVC and their caregivers, including both children living with HIV and children of HIV-positive caregivers requiring home-based support. OVC activities identify families' needs based on household vulnerability assessments, which identify threats to physical, emotional, educational, and socio-economic well-being. Targeted support is provided through home visits, education subsidies, and referrals to health and social services. Special emphasis is placed on identifying indicators of abuse and violence, particularly GBV, and providing appropriate referrals and follow up.