

Women's Economic Security at FHI 360

ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND ENVIRONMENT

FHI 360's Economic Participation and the Environment department supports inclusive economic development based in environmentally sustainable livelihoods. Our approach is led by technical and programmatic experts in **three practice areas: environment, inclusion and work.**

FHI 360 WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY (WES) PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- Intersectional gender equity and social inclusion analysis
- Gender-sensitive labor market assessment
- Promoting women-owned micro-, small, and medium enterprises
- Supporting women's cooperatives, savings and lending groups, and networks
- Private sector engagement
- Systems approaches to link women and girls to employment
- Digital financial services
- Research and analysis
- Improving policy and regulatory environments
- Gender norms transformation using social behavior change approaches
- Meaningful engagement with women's organizations, social enterprises, networks and business associations around the world



Jack Gordon/DDC

When women and girls thrive, so do their families, communities and countries. FHI 360's programs improve women's economic security and leadership opportunities through integrated solutions that engage women, men and young people in shifting gender norms, reducing gender-related stigma, and addressing systemic barriers to enable women to reach their full economic potential. We support women in all their diversity to improve their capacities, earnings and work experiences by creating career pathways; strengthening cooperatives and women-owned businesses; building skills; increasing digital and financial inclusion; and supporting an enabling environment through norms change, private sector engagement and policy reform.

FHI 360'S WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS

FHI 360's **Collaborative Action for Handicraft Exports (ACEA)** project, funded by the U.S. Department of State, uses a value chain approach to improve the competitiveness of **Tunisian** handicrafts and create employment opportunities for rural women and cooperatives. Through ACEA, women are entering the traditionally male-dominated commercial distillery industry with unprecedented support from male relatives. Women are now able to leave the house without a male guardian and attend trainings and business trips in Tunis and as far away as Germany.

Through the **Inclusive Socioeconomic Development in Beni Mellal-Khénifra** project in Morocco, FHI 360 enhances the participation and empowerment of women, young people, and people with disabilities in governance and business; increases business and job growth in the agriculture and tourism sectors via improved market access, business development services, finance and small grants; and improves workforce development by better aligning training to market needs.

For the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) **Jordan Business Growth Activity (BGA)**, FHI 360 supports interventions to increase the economic participation of women, young people, people with disabilities, and marginalized populations as entrepreneurs, leaders and employees of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Based on the activity's Gender and Social Inclusion Assessment, FHI 360 will lead interventions to improve competitiveness, access to capital, and export support for women-owned and



women-led SMEs and will help those SMEs break into e-commerce markets. Further, BGA will act as a networking forum for women entrepreneurs and business leaders, connecting them to mentorship opportunities; linking them to domestic and foreign market opportunities; and building skills on pitching, valuation and negotiations.

Under **Feed the Future Catalyzing Partnerships for Scale** project, FHI 360 worked with USAID to perform an assessment of 50 projects and held a series of consultations and three regional Whole-System-in-a-Room workshops to develop a framework for promoting women's economic empowerment and equality (WE3), including key principles and domains, indicators, USAID program cycle guidelines, implementation tools, and resources to strengthen collaboration among global partners. In collaboration with Banyan Global, FHI 360 also helped the agency advance its WE3 public-private partnerships by designing and co-leading a consultative and strategic planning process between USAID and Mastercard to create a joint vision, approach and initial action plan that aligned with the USG Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative.

In **Jordan**, FHI 360's USAID **Local Enterprise Support Project (LENS)** supported the formalization of home-based businesses (HBB) and improved women-owned businesses' access to finance. LENS championed policy change allowing primarily women-owned HBBs to formally register, supported 15,000 women-owned businesses to access finance through loans and grants, and helped hundreds of women increase their savings through informal savings groups. Additionally, through small grants, the project supported women-owned startups in nontraditional sectors such as tourism, auto maintenance, and transport.

Through the **USAID Morocco Career Centers Project**, FHI 360 improved youth employability using a systems approach that fostered stronger connections between public and private sector actors, including educators, employers, governmental institutions, and women's rights organizations. The project worked with the private sector to promote gender equality in the workplace and encourage women to enter male-dominated careers. Over 125,000 young people used career center services and 27,000 young people completed project-sponsored training courses, most of whom were women.

Mobile Solutions Technical Assistance and Research project worked in **Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Mali, Liberia, Bangladesh** and **Peru** to build digital ecosystems that facilitate financial inclusion, livelihoods and enterprise. Activities included developing USAID's Gender and Information and Communication Technology Strategy and digitizing female salary payments to enable women to have greater control over their finances, improve safety and promote financial inclusion.

Accelerating Strategies for Practical Innovation and Research in Economic Strengthening (ASPIRES) worked in **Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe** and **Nigeria** to support gender-sensitive programming, research and learning to improve the economic security of vulnerable women, families and children. In Zimbabwe, ASPIRES conducted a labor market assessment and used findings to fund and evaluate the pilot of the Siyakha Girls model for promoting employment and self-employment among adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) at risk for HIV. This approach is one of five evidence-based models approved by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe) programs supporting AGYW.

Through the USAID/PEPFAR **South Africa Capacity Development and Support (CDS)** project, FHI 360 implements DREAMS programming to support 8,100 AGYW to gain waged employment or self-employment and to address social and structural factors that increase their likelihood of exposure to HIV, such as harmful gender norms and gender-based violence. Using a "Siyakha-inspired" approach that actively engages the private sector, CDS's economic strengthening work is anchored a foundational labor market assessment, gender-sensitive marketable skills trainings, startup support or linkages to waged employment, savings support, and mentorship.

Under the **Zimbabwe Reignite, Innovate, Sustain, and Empower (RISE)**, FHI 360 is strengthening the capacity of local prime ZHI in subaward management, systems, sustainability governance, financial management and compliance and providing technical assistance in economic strengthening, AGYW mentoring, gender equality, safeguarding and social inclusion. FHI 360 developed a youth-led labor market assessment curriculum to help participants use data to understand local labor market opportunities and develop transferable skills.