



# USAID HUB GENDER AND YOUTH COMPENDIUM

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## GENDER AND YOUTH OVERVIEW

The USAID East Africa Trade and Investment Hub (the USAID Hub) is a regional mechanism for innovation that enables the private sector to increase trade, attract investment, create jobs and reduce food insecurity. To fully realize these objectives, the USAID Hub seeks to mobilize men, women and youth economic participation with a recognition of the differing opportunities and forms of engagement available to each population.

The Hub contributes to women and youth self-reliance and economic empowerment by increasing their access to productive economic resources, namely assets, credit, income and employment.

- Women represent 58 percent of participants in Hub-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources.
- Women have obtained 51 percent of the 46,481 jobs created with Hub support.
- Youth have obtained 52 percent of the 46,481 job created with Hub support

TABLE I. CUMULATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS BY GENDER AND AGE						
INDICATOR	MALE		FEMALE		TOTAL	
Person hours of training completed in trade and investment enabling environment supported by USG assistance (EATIH #25)	13,849.1 (64%)		7,643.3 (36%)		21,492.4	
Person hours of training completed in trade and investment capacity building supported by USG assistance (EATIH #31)	54,686.6 (25%)		162,306.7 (75%)		216,920.3	
Number of full-time equivalent jobs created with USG assistance (EATIH #26)	18-35yrs	>35yrs	18-35yrs	>35yrs	18-35yrs	>35yrs
	13,665	9,193	10,585	13,038	24,250	22,231
	22,858 (49%)		23,623 (51%)		46,481 (100%)	
Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment indicator) (EATIH #27)	58%					

## EMPOWERING CROSS-BORDER TRADERS

The USAID Hub has provided 391 women cross-border traders with training in business management and cross-border trade requirements to increase their participation in formal trade channels.

### BACKGROUND

Grain trade in the East African Community (EAC) is largely informal. Reports indicate that informal trade in staple foods in the EAC has grown by 400 percent (Cross Border Trade Bulletin, July 2016). Despite the impressive growth rate, informal traders face a range of oppressive conditions that continue to keep them small and informal. As women are estimated to comprise 80 percent of all informal traders (EASSI),<sup>1</sup> these barriers affect them acutely.

Traders' inability to transition into the formal sector limits their ability to access financing, their capacity to meet grain standards, their access to price information and their participation in structured markets. A number of cross-border traders' associations have been established in the recent past to tackle challenges facing their members. Unfortunately, these associations lack basic institutional capacity to effectively address the challenges faced by cross-border traders.

**Empowering women to use formal trade channels increases their earning potential and makes them less vulnerable to actors who prey upon unrepresented traders, improving women's livelihoods while strengthening the region's agricultural markets.**



*Two women head to Rwanda to purchase goods at the Rusumo border.*

### APPROACH

The USAID Hub built the capacity of rural cross-border traders to participate in formal trade channels through entrepreneurial skills building, market opportunity awareness, linkages to financial institutions and business-to-business linkages. The USAID Hub executed these activities through two grants which provided trainings to women cross-border traders and supported the creation and strengthening of a regional women traders' association.

### AGMARK: WESTERN EAC BORDERS

In FY2017, the USAID Hub provided a grant to Agricultural Market Development Trust (AGMARK) which built the capacity of 229 rural, women cross-border traders in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda at the borders of Busia, Malaba, Taveta, Isebania, Gatuna, and Mutukula. The grant also facilitated linkages to financial services and market opportunities for greater participation in the formal sector. The

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eassi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Women-Informal-Cross-Border-Traders-Opportunities-and-Challenges-in-the-EAC-Action-research-2012.pdf>

activity yielded 3,165 metric tons (MT) in commitments for staple foods, including beans, maize, sorghum, rice.

Watch Natimba Halima, a cross-border grain trader in Busia, share her story [here](#).



*Miria Akankwasa at the launch of the EACBTA.*

The USAID Hub and AGMARK also helped launch a regional cross-border trader association, the East Africa Cross Border Traders Association (EACBTA), which unites cross-border traders from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan to give them a stronger voice in the EAC and a platform to participate in the formulation of trade policies. The association leadership and membership maintain strong female representation, led by chairperson Miria Akankwasa, to ensure that concerns that apply exclusively or disproportionately to women reach the ears of policy decisionmakers.

The USAID Hub introduced AGMARK to the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) who is interesting in facilitating incubation support to the EACBTA. This encompasses 1) helping

EACBTA establish an office location and finalize any regulatory compliance matters, 2) supporting the recruitment of an Executive Director and Board of Directors, 3) creating awareness about the association to relevant stakeholders, 4) conducting a membership drive and membership database, and 5) facilitating fundraising and donor support coordination. Once the association becomes fully operational, it will contribute to trade policy discussions and the enforcement of EAC trade documents, such as harmonized EAC grades and standards, and the use of the Simplified Trade Regime.

### **AGRIFOP: EASTERN EAC BORDERS**

Following the completion of the AGMARK grant in February 2018, the USAID Hub issued a new grant to the Agribusiness Focused Partnership Organization (AGRIFOP) to facilitate training for women cross-border traders in Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and Burundi at the Kagitumba, Mirima, Rusumo and Nemba borders. The trainings took place at remote border locations, often at one-stop border post facilities. These venues, while originally a solution to the lack of appropriate hotel facilities, ended up strengthening the trainings as the women were able to interact with border officials and address the perceived power gap between them. AGRIFOP also began providing childcare facilities at the trainings to assist women who brought their children and to encourage mothers to attend.

Through the grant, 162 women gained knowledge on enterprise management, structured trade, EAC grain standards, cross-border trade regulations, market information and access to finance. They also engaged with border officials, financial institutions and other service providers to learn more about services that can enhance their operations.

To reinforce lessons learned, AGRIFOP facilitated business-to-business (B2B) sessions among the women, encouraging them to establish trade relationships and coordinate with service providers to help them finalize commitments. In total, the women made commitments for 9,509 MT of staple foods valued at \$2,876,285 – a sizeable total for women who typically trade in small volumes.

More information on AGRIFOP activities is available in the USAID Hub's [photo story](#) and [video](#).

## OUTCOMES

The AGMARK and AGRIFOP grants reached 391 women cross-border traders, building their knowledge of trade regulations and support institutions' services to strengthen their ability to participate in formal trade. The events also served as platforms to develop relationships among the traders, which led to trade commitments for 12,674 MT of staple foods and laid a foundation for future trade.



*Traders at the Rusumo border.*



## ENHANCING WOMEN AND YOUTH'S SKILLS FOR EMPLOYMENT

This workforce development program has trained 954 women and secured 878 full-time jobs as sewing machine operators for graduates, providing a source of living for young women while also supporting the apparel industry's growth. Of the 1,236 people trained and 878 graduates placed, 100 percent were youth under 35 years.

### BACKGROUND



*Generation Kenya trainees.*

Kenya is a leading exporter in Eastern African to the U.S. under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the bulk of its exports are apparel products produced in the Export Promotion Zones where over 42,000 workers are employed. To support the textile and apparel industry's growth, the country will require an additional 10,000 to 15,000 skilled apparel workers over the next few years. Sewing machine operators constitute an estimated 60 percent of the labor gap.<sup>2</sup> While vocational training programs exist, they have not fully met employers' needs. In response, some companies have established in-house training units. Their trainees, however, are often unsuited to garment operations, leading companies to feel they are wasting resources and effort. As a result, Kenya's apparel sector continues to lack a skilled workforce that can maximize the industry's potential to drive growth and trade.

**With a proper training program, women and youth can acquire needed employment to boost their incomes, livelihoods and self-sufficiency while also driving growth in a critical economic sector.**

### APPROACH

The Generation Kenya Program, established by a USAID Hub grant to Careers Readiness Social Initiative Ltd, provides a convenient, affordable and appropriate training program that addresses technical skills, soft skills and worker attitudes and ensures job placement in the apparel industry for graduates. The program worked with IL&FS as a technical implementing partner and the National Industrial Training Authority and Kenya Industrial Training Institute as government implementing partners. There is also close coordination with various apparel factories – Dala EPZ, Soft Trace EPZ, the Mabati Technical Training Institute and Mega Couture EPZ Ltd – who all who provide training facilities.

Generation Kenya screens applications and selects trainees to reduce the number of trained graduates who fail to meet industry expectations. Across seven training centers, the selected students receive

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<sup>2</sup> Generation Kenya

eight weeks of training. The trainings mimic real life experience so that trainees develop the practical technical and soft skills needed to perform in the workplace. Following their completion of the program, graduates are assigned to available jobs in willing and committed companies.

Watch [here](#) to learn how the training is improving women and youth's lives in Kenya.

The activity forms an integral part of the USAID Hub's East Africa Textile and Apparel Expansion Initiative which addresses constraints facing potential apparel and textile investors and buyers who wish to expand into Eastern Africa. By building a stronger workforce, Kenya will have more efficient and productive factories that can meet buyers' needs and compete in the U.S. market.

## OUTCOMES

1,236 trainees have graduated from the program. Of this group, 77.2 percent are women and 100 percent are youth. 878 of the graduates were placed within various enterprises, with women representing 76 percent and youth 100 percent.

The pilot training program's success has turned it into a model for other workforce development initiatives. It can be duplicated in other countries where training is needed to provide industry with skilled, entry-level youth workers. For now, the success of the program has generated additional support, allowing the program to scale up in Kenya. The Swedish International Development Agency's \$4.5 million grant for five years and IKEA Foundation's \$2.38 million grant for three years will enable the program to reach 32,500 youth distributed across at least 50 percent of Kenya's counties and to improve program quality to achieve a goal of 90 percent placement.



Generation Kenya trainees.

## FACILITATING INVESTMENT

To date, the USAID Hub has supported transactions which closed \$169.2 million in new private sector investment, including deals for female-owned and female-led enterprises.

### BACKGROUND

Securing investment is a major constraint for micro, small, medium and even large female-owned and/or -led businesses in Eastern Africa. This can be attributed to the investment community's low level of awareness of high-potential, scalable and profitable female-owned and/or -led businesses that are ready for investment. Further, a number of promising female entrepreneurs and business leaders lack the opportunity to engage with the investor community.

**By reducing the time and cost of deal closure and raising investors' awareness of viable female-owned and/or female-led businesses, the USAID Hub can support the growth of female-owned and/or female-led businesses and demonstrate the benefits of female-focused investment.**

### APPROACH

The USAID Hub helps connect enterprises to investors who are looking for promising companies in East Africa. The USAID Hub provides assistance to both the capital seekers and capital providers, working with either the company or the funder during a particular transaction to catalyze investment. The USAID Hub also provides technical support to strengthen businesses' investment readiness.

When screening and identifying eligible companies for investment facilitation support, USAID Hub partner Open Capital Advisors and grantee GroFin actively sought companies that included women and youth in their management and/or operations.

The USAID Hub also improved businesses' awareness of capital raising opportunities, engaging partners like New Faces New Voices (NFNV) and Financial Access Commerce & Trade Services (FACTS) Africa to hold events for female entrepreneurs.



Salome Mauki of Dresa Modern Butchery (middle) took first prize at the competition. She hopes to scale up her butchery production and increase her market share from the current 32 percent to 55 percent by installing new modern machinery, hiring additional staff and purchasing two refrigerated distribution vans.

### NEW FACES, NEW VOICES

The USAID Hub dedicated two events to supporting female entrepreneurs in Tanzania. In partnership with the NFNV – Kenya Chapter, a member of the Graça Machel Trust, the USAID Hub organized a pitching competition using a “shark tank” format where women showcased their businesses to investors, financiers, development partners, advisory firms, accelerators and service providers. To prepare the women, the USAID Hub and NFNV collaborated on a one-day pitch ready workshop. The top three women at the competition received cash prizes to further their business ideas and received several invitations to participate in additional fundraising support programs. The Graça Machel Trust also included them in their pipeline and will offer them coaching, investment-readiness and capital raising support.

## IGNITE MY SME

The USAID Hub sponsored several Ignite My SME seminars in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda led by FACTS Africa. The seminars trained business owners, particularly agribusinesses, on how to access working capital. The USAID Hub sponsored the attendance of 27 female cross-border traders at these events so that they could gain and share knowledge on supply chain financing and business management skills. The USAID Hub also supported a seminar in Nairobi, Kenya, in November 2018 that focused on women entrepreneurs. Over 100 women participated, and some were added to FACTS' pipeline for working capital financing.

## OUTCOMES

To date, the USAID Hub has facilitated \$169.2 million in new private sector investment, including deals for female-owned and female-led enterprises.

For USAID Hub grantee GroFin, 48 percent of the 255 full-time jobs and 43 percent of the 91 part-time jobs created by supported firms were filled by women. Dejolisa Ltd. was one of the companies that contributed to these outcomes. Betty Wandabula, Dejolisa's managing director, was able to expand her chicken rearing business thanks to financing secured through the USAID Hub. She increased her business from 4,500 chickens to 15,000 chickens with a production capacity of 180 egg trays per day. To support the higher production, she hired nine staff members, bringing Dejolisa's staff to 17 people. Betty plans to continue expanding her business beyond the USAID Hub; she expects to further increase Dejolisa's chickens to 20,000 for a production capacity of 250 trays per day and to begin producing chicken feed to use and sell.

Of the 15 firms that received assistance from Open Capital Advisors, five had 50 percent female ownership and two were female-owned.



*Sophy Nantongo of African Queen.*

Female-owned businesses were also supported by CrossBoundary, another Hub partner. Sophy Nantongo incorporated African Queen in 1993 with \$3,000 in her pocket and a high school education. Her business concept is the same now as when she started: distribute consumer goods, such as foods and beverages, personal care (hair and skin), stationery and home care to an underserved but expansive consumer market. Now, in 2018, thanks to her ingenuity and hard work, and a \$4 million capital infusion supported by the Hub, Ms. Nantongo is delivering globally recognized brands using sales force

automation technology, a new fleet of trucks, and a 235-person logistics team. In 2017, African Queen distributed \$13.6 million worth of high-quality commodities to schools, restaurants, hotels and retailers.

## PROMOTING WOMEN'S INCLUSION IN LIVESTOCK TRADE

Two hundred and ninety-six women participated in four livestock B2B forums organized by the USAID Hub in northern Kenya, representing nearly a quarter of all participants in a male-dominated industry.

### BACKGROUND



*Zeinab Abraham looks after her goats as she waits buyers at the Isiolo B2B.*

Livestock remains a male-dominated activity with entrenched patriarchal beliefs and practices. In addition to these social and cultural barriers, most women lack the education and access to capital and resources needed to help them break into the livestock business or scale up their current activities.

Nala Abshir, a woman cattle trader in Garissa address explained, “Our own culture and environment are the biggest barriers to our advancement. Men dominate the sector and are the primary decision makers. Us women are not allowed to intermingle with them.” She added, “We are left behind because of our illiteracy.”

The opportunities that do arise for women in livestock often come in the face of hardship. Widows or women whose husbands are elderly will take on sole financial responsibility for their families. The bold and industrious women venture into trade, including the trade of higher value livestock (e.g. cattle and camels) which are not usually considered “acceptable” livestock (e.g. sheep and goats) for women to trade and own.

**If these structural and cultural barriers are addressed, more women can be empowered to participate in a significant regional industry, increasing their access to a sustainable source of income.**

### APPROACH

The USAID Hub partnered with International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and collaborated with Partnership for Resilience and Economic Growth (PREG) partners to hold B2B forums in four Kenyan counties: Marsabit, Wajir, Isiolo and Garissa.

The B2Bs created a safe space for women livestock traders to make connections with fellow traders, buyers and trade support institutions. Importantly, the forums attracted participants from other Kenyan counties and neighboring countries, allowing women to forge relationships with people they otherwise would not have met as women are often unable to travel long distances. This also expanded women’s profit opportunities as they could explore opportunities within a larger market.

## OUTCOMES

A total of 65 women participated in the B2Bs, representing 22 percent of all participants.

**TABLE 1. PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN LIVESTOCK B2BS**

LOCATION	WOMEN	MEN	TOTAL	% OF FEMALE PARTICIPANTS
Marsabit, Kenya	11	49	60	18%
Wajir, Kenya	16	47	63	25%
Isiolo, Kenya	29	54	83	35%
Garissa, Kenya	9	81	90	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>22%</b>

By partnering with ILRI, the USAID Hub strengthened their ability to conduct B2Bs. Going forward, ILRI will be better positioned to sustain the USAID Hub's progress by continuing to hold B2Bs and providing opportunities for women livestock traders.

## ENCOURAGING YOUNG INNOVATORS

The East Africa Postharvest Technologies Competition 2017 supported 25 young innovators, four of whom were women, to raise awareness of their technologies and connect with potential partners to address food loss and waste in Africa.

### BACKGROUND

There is a need for technological innovations that reduce food loss and waste in Africa. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that one third (1.3 billion MT) of the food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted along global supply chains. This accounts for a 15 percent income reduction for over 470 million participants in the agricultural value chain, including smallholder farmers, manufacturers and retailers. This provides an opportunity for young innovators to design solutions for improved nutrition and food security.

**By encouraging home-grown technology developers and assisting them to cost their products, make manufacturing arrangements, produce comprehensive business plans and present them to private investors, young innovators can make their technologies commercially available to East African farmers and agribusinesses, providing durable solutions to combatting food insecurity.**

Their innovations will sustainably contribute to reduced postharvest losses, increased farming operations efficiency, lower transaction costs and greater efficiency in agricultural markets.

### APPROACH

The USAID Hub, Syngenta and the Inter Region Economic Network (IREN) launched the East Africa Postharvest Technologies Competition 2017 to spur the development of innovative technologies to postharvest handling challenges, namely shelling, drying, storage, transport and logistics and information and communication technology. The top 25 participants received an accelerated training on packaging and pitching their ideas before the competition where they showcased their ideas to potential partners, including development partners, donors, governments, farmer and trader associations and investors. The top three contestants split a seed fund of \$30,000.

The USAID Hub also provided business development support to 10 of the 25 finalists after a post-competition analysis revealed that seed money was insufficient to achieve the intended transformative effects. Intellectap carried out an in-depth analysis of the finalists' business development needs to design individualized mentoring programs. The training and mentoring provided by Intellectap enabled the innovators to scale up their businesses for greater impact across East Africa.



Grace Akumu with her Bench-Type Manual Maize Sheller at the East Africa Postharvest Technologies Competition 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya.



Lorine Nanjala at the East Africa Postharvest Technologies Competition 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya.

## OUTCOMES

Grace Akumu took first place and \$15,000 in seed funding at the competition with her Bench-Type Manual Maize Sheller. This is a manual maize sheller made up of a serrated mouth/cylinder into which a single maize ear is fed at a time. With the manual rotation of the cylinder using the handle, the grains are detached from the cob at a rate of 50-200 kg per hour. The technology reduces the time and energy used during shelling and lowers the revenue lost through quantitative and qualitative losses after postharvest.

Lorine Nanjala was another finalist. She designed an easy-to-use, effective, biodegradable and environmentally-friendly biological insecticide that targets maize-destroying insects in granaries and silos without harm to the end-user. It consists of artificial pellets that lure and kill insects.

“With my background mainly in the Life Sciences, Intellectap is helping to bring into perspective some areas that will require the company's keen attention. This is to mainly deal with complementary skills required in the team, making sure that our innovation addresses the market needs and tracking our finances. At the end of the training, I aim to understand exactly

what we need as a company to get from prototype to production while avoiding major pitfalls. I am excited to try out the things I'm learning with my team,” said Lorine.

Lorine also attended the Sankalp Africa 2018 Forum where the USAID Hub was a key partner. There she met investors and learned more about impact financing, and how to become even more investor ready.

“Attending the Summit was very enlightening. It was where I first heard about impact financing for businesses that solve social problems while making reasonable returns. This is definitely something that I would like to secure for the business since we are at start-up level. I am looking to get out business to the point where it will be considered investor-ready.”

By coordinating with the Hub, IREN's competitions gained wider recognition and its staff built its capacity to organize effective events. As a result, IREN is in a stronger position to continue holding competitions that inspire and encourage young innovators across East Africa.