

Empowering Women and Girls



Evidence shows the profound extent to which gender norms affect health outcomes in family planning, HIV, and maternal and child health. The private sector is uniquely positioned to advance gender equality while tackling deeply rooted barriers to improved health for women and girls. Sustaining Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) Plus, USAID’s flagship initiative in private sector health, is committed to gender equality. SHOPS Plus upholds the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment policy and recognizes that its results will be stronger and more sustainable by strategically addressing gender throughout the project.

The project will use its country programs as opportunities to view health challenges through a gender lens. SHOPS Plus will also empower women and girls by addressing issues such as gender-based violence and constructive male engagement. The latter is particularly important in countries where men pose a significant veto power over women’s use of contraceptives, or HIV and maternal and child health services. Engaging men is a necessary step to expand access.

Approach

SHOPS Plus makes gender equality a priority by:

- Instilling in staff and partners the means to assess where and how gender can best be integrated into project activities
- Conducting thorough in-country gender analysis
- Integrating gender questions in private sector assessments to better understand barriers to health care and address them
- Creating a business case for corporate partners that provides evidence of the advantages of gender integration
- Taking into account gender issues in research studies and integrating gender into monitoring and evaluation



Breaking Barriers

SHOPS Plus will promote gender equality throughout its activities, systematically dismantling gender barriers. Here's how:

Expanding access – examining barriers and gender gaps to ensure equitable access to services for all groups, including youth and adolescents, and reducing obstacles female health care providers face in the workplace

Corporate engagement – encouraging workplace health promotion initiatives to advance gender equality and adding constructive male engagement programs in the workplace

Health financing – developing messaging for health insurance companies to speak directly to women and conducting provider training on respectful care as part of results-based financing and voucher schemes

Policy and stewardship – advocating for women to participate in the health care policy process and for full coverage of all of the reproductive health needs for women and girls

Provider access to finance – designing gender-integrated strategies to help financial institutions meet the specific needs of female health care providers

Networks and franchising – analyzing data to better understand the impact of social franchising on gender equality, and ensuring that quality improvements and integrated care are maintained as a franchise expands

Social marketing – using market research to ensure that campaigns are well targeted and empowering; making health products widely available in traditional and non-traditional outlets to improve access among women and girls

SHOPS Plus work in gender issues is led by Iris Group.



Find Us

SHOPSPlusProject.org/Gender   



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Sustaining Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) Plus is a five-year cooperative agreement (AID-OAA-A-15-00067) funded by the United States Agency for International Development. The project strategically engages the private sector to improve health outcomes in family planning, HIV, child health, and other health areas. Abt Associates implements SHOPS Plus in collaboration with the American College of Nurse-Midwives, Avenir Health, Broad Branch Associates, Banyan Global, Insight Health Advisors, Iris Group, Marie Stopes International, Population Services International, Prækelt.org, and William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan.

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