

Gender Equity



Women in an embroidery shop in Montenegro.



A mother prepares a nutritious meal in Cambodia.



Men and women learn cell phone repair in Iraq.



Participants in the Women First program in Mozambique.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are critical to all areas of international development. As an integral part of International Relief & Development's (IRD) community-based approach to addressing the cross-cutting concept of gender, IRD has included gender considerations in each of its programs during design and implementation by accounting for cultural norms, family structures, and gender roles. In addition to our commitment to incorporating gender through community-based program development, implementation and feedback, numerous IRD programs within different sectors have also incorporated a variety of strategies in their work, such as:

- Reducing gender-based violence;
- Addressing male behaviors;
- Increasing women's access to income and productive resources;
- Addressing women's health, specifically maternal health and HIV/AIDS;
- Promoting gender equality in education;
- Working with existing national and local women's groups.

By combining these strategies with IRD's gender-aware community-based approach, our programs make a firm commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality.



Multiple Countries

Food for Progress: Cashew Production in West Africa

- **Works with national women's programs to design projects that work within the community framework and are sensitive to cultural gender roles**
- **Involves both women and men in program implementation**

Donor USDA
Dates August 2008 – December 2011
Amount \$4 million

In order to improve food security, IRD is implementing Food for Progress in The Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. In The Gambia, Food for Progress works with the National Federation of Women Farmers (NFWF) to incorporate gender into the design of each sub-project. By cooperating with NFWF, the implementation of the Cashew Development Program increased its effectiveness by taking into account the fact that in Gambia, cashews have traditionally been grown by men while cashew processing has been a female-dominated endeavor. As a result, the Cashew Department Program was designed with the community roles of both men and women in mind and resource allocation to women and men followed in a similar manner.

Afghanistan

Strategic Provincial Roads in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan (SPR-SEA)

- **Employs local women in finance and administration in Kabul**
- **Works with national and local women's organizations**
- **Ensures male and female participation in program implementation and facilitates gender roundtables**
- **Provides safe transportation for women**

Donor USAID
Dates December 2007 – December 2010
Amount \$400 Million

In addition to rehabilitating 1,500 kilometers of gravel roads, SPR aims to increase stability and

security in Eastern and Southern Afghanistan through community involvement and training with a focus on involving women and men in culturally-appropriate ways. While men are hired as construction workers, 900 women are stationed in Kabul working in finance and administration. In addition, 12 kilometers of roads have been constructed by female-owned businesses, with a projection of 108 accumulative kilometers built in 2009. Female community development councils, community development groups and Shura community leader meetings ensure that women's needs are met, while gender roundtables guarantee that gender sensitivity within Afghani culture is constantly addressed by IRD.

Cambodia

McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program

- **Promotes gender equality in education through community incentives**
- **Provides safe transport for school girls through community oxcarts**
- **Ensures that both girls and boys have access to nutrition**

Donor USDA
Dates September 2008 – September 2011
Amount \$1.5 million

Through Food for Education in Cambodia, IRD has paired nutrition with narrowing the gender gap in education. In order to achieve this aim, IRD has given the following incentives to communities in Cambodia: school-feeding of students and take home rations for female students, rewarding of schools and teachers when female attendance increases and community education on the benefits of girls' education through informational booths that are set up at community festivals. In addition, oxcart drivers are given take-home rations in return for providing safe transport for girls traveling to and from school. The goal of this program is to ultimately reach about 31,100 students, 200 teachers and 1,300 families.



Indonesia

Collaborative Small Town and Rural Communities Water Restoration Program

- **Provided access to gender-specific health resources and training**
- **Worked with local women's groups during program implementation**

Donor UNICEF
 Dates September 2005 – June 2008
 Amount \$7.8 million

In the wake of the 2004 tsunami in Indonesia, IRD worked with UNICEF to implement the Collaborative Small Town and Rural Communities Water Restoration Program. By combining improved access to water and sanitation services with education regarding good health and hygiene practices, IRD and UNICEF improved the long-term health status of tsunami-affected communities, particularly women and children, in Aceh province. In order to maintain sustainable good health, awareness of proper hygiene was combined with improvements in infrastructure. IRD trained midwives, both at the community health clinics and at the village level, as well as women's groups and the village water sanitation committees in hygiene promotion.

SERASI

- **Raises awareness of gender-based violence through community workshops**
- **Supports civil society organizations focused on gender equality**
- **Actively involves and supports women in the peace building process**

Donor USAID
 Dates March 2008 – March 2011
 Amount \$44 million

IRD supports USAID's SERASI program to mitigate social conflict, encourage peace building initiatives and empower women in Indonesia. In October 2008, SERASI provided an established local civil society organization, The Group for the Struggle towards Women's Equality, with a \$49,197 grant to protect women's legal rights in the Central Sulawesi province. Because, in certain areas, gender-based violence is widespread and either largely ignored

or passively supported by community leaders, the Women's Development Centre campaign was set up by SERASI in December 2008 to organize workshops on raising community awareness of gender-based violence in Aceh province. Through \$53,844 in grant assistance, SERASI supports the Organization of Traditional Women of Ngata Toro in organizing village discussions, seminars and workshops in order to mitigate against internal conflicts, increase social cohesion, and help elevate the role of women in the decision making process. In Central Sulawesi, SERASI has also partnered with the Research Center for Women's Studies at the University of Tadulako to promote women's skills as a vehicle for conflict mitigation and has supported the Coalition for Women's Freedom through a \$29,905 grant to raise public awareness of the ongoing need for ending violence against women.

Iraq

Humanitarian Assistance for Iraq (HAI)

- **Provides shelter, water and sanitation for all IDPs with a focus on gender specific needs**
- **Improves access to maternal health care for pregnant and reproductive age women**
- **Provides emergency relief commodities with priority given to female-headed households**
- **Ensures male and female participation in program implementation**

Donor USAID/OFDA
 Date December 2003 - June 2009
 Amount \$34.4 million

HAI provides humanitarian assistance and relief services to internally displaced persons and returnees affected by the war. From 2005 to 2008, HAI provided more than 90,000 pregnant women and women of reproductive age with vaccinations and medications. Protection programs have provided shelter, water and sanitation for all IDPs with women in mind. Through the Shelter and Settlements sector, IRD has given priority to female-headed households (as well as households with disabled members) for the building of partition walls and bathing and latrine units in IDP camps. To ensure community participation and gender equality, a



committee of both men and women was formed to support and oversee shelter and settlement unit implementation.

Community Stabilization Program (CSP)

- **Provides gender-specific vocational training for women to help fill demand for culturally-acceptable female-run businesses**
- **Provides venues for women to support each other and build a sense of community**

Donor USAID
 Date May 2006 - September 2009
 Amount \$844 million

CSP works directly with community groups, local government officials, and provincial reconstruction teams to provide life skills training and employment assistance to both men and women. CSP focuses on helping war widows and mothers of insurgent-age youth to help gain or restore financial independence through vocational training courses in computer maintenance, cosmetology, sewing/tailoring and mobile phone repair. Entrepreneurial women are offered small and medium-size grants and business management training courses in accounting, management, human resources and marketing. With the help of IRD, women are able to fill the demand for Internet cafes, hair salons and kindergartens, among other culturally-accepted businesses for women.

Iraq Community Assistance Program (CAP) I-III

- **Encourages both women and men to join community action groups, giving each a voice to communicate with local government**
- **Provides women and men with grants and training for micro, small, and medium businesses**
- **Gives priority to widows and mothers of insurgent-age youth for income-generation projects that seek to aid financially vulnerable heads of household**

Donor USAID
 Date July 2003 - March 2010
 Amount \$186.2 million

CAP fosters democratic principles at the grassroots level, encompassing civil society, economic development, and community infrastructure strategies to

help create a more capable and sustainable Iraqi civil society. Under CAP, the Assistance to Civilians Victims Program (ACV) provides income-generation projects for widows and injured wage-earners. Community Action Groups (CAGs) initiated by CSP give small grants and provide vocational training for women to establish businesses. At least 46 percent of CAG members and 62 percent of ACV beneficiaries were women. To date, IRD has completed more than 2,600 projects benefiting more than 7 million women and men.

Jordan

Community-Based Support Program (CBSP)

- **Provides culturally appropriate vocational training to Iraqi men and women living in Jordan as refugees**
- **Works with local organizations in Jordan to ensure that programs are gender-sensitive by taking into account the different needs of fathers, mothers and children.**

Donor BPRM
 Date September 2008 – September 2009
 Amount \$2 million

IRD addresses the wide-ranging mental health and livelihood needs of Iraqi men and women living in Jordan through the provision of social inclusion, income generation, and vocational training opportunities. Working with the Ein Al-Basha Vocational Training Center, under Entity Green, IRD is providing vocational training to over 600 Iraqi men in Computer Hardware, Computer Software, Electrical Installation, Plumbing, Automotive Maintenance, Cooking and Recycling classes, and over 100 women in catering, business home production and marketing. In addition, the CBSP program is supporting 15 community based day care organizations subsidizing the costs of child day care for vulnerable Iraqi families and linking mothers with the centers to provide day care services.



Community Services Project for Iraqi Refugees in Jordan (ICSP)

- **Addresses the particular challenges faced by Iraqi refugee women in Jordan**
- **Builds the capacities of partnering national and local counseling centers to provide gender, age and diversity-oriented programs for at-risk groups**

Donor UNHCR
 Date February 2008 – December 2008
 Amount \$2 million

Iraqi refugee heads of households in Jordan have spent what little savings they had, and are now finding it increasingly difficult to provide for their families, particularly as their legal status bars them from seeking and securing legal employment. With limited available options for economic livelihood, some Iraqi refugees are now resorting to begging and prostitution. Women who cannot provide for their families are particularly vulnerable to poverty, exploitation, and abuse. IRD provides gender, age and diversity-oriented programs to Iraqi women, children and youth through expanded capacity of partnering community centers, as well as NHF's Women's Counseling Center, with aggressive outreach services to Iraqis in Amman, Irbid, Zarqa, Azraq and Salt.

Montenegro

Community Revitalization through Democratic Action (CRDA)

- **Involved local women in program design and implementation**
- **Empowered women to speak to male and female Community Action Groups**
- **Addressed women's health needs, including maternal health**

Donor USAID
 Dates April 2002 – April 2007
 Amount \$23 million

Through the CRDA Program, IRD worked with community groups to renew civil society, rehabilitate the local infrastructure, and enhance economic development activities. In order to assess the specific needs of women in Montenegro, CRDA set up pub-

lic fairs at school gates, markets and other locations where women tend to gather. This was followed by a 500 Euro program that enabled the women to put into place the projects that they found necessary. This in turn built up the capacity of women and an assessment of the needs they had and what could be done about them. A series of these projects were funded. Ultimately, women presented these projects to both male and female Community Action Groups. Associations and cooperatives formed under CRDA are still operating, expanding, and earning income. Moreover, new medical equipment, maternity wards, and hospitals are now used to diagnose and treat women's health conditions.

Mozambique

Women First Program

- **Trains women in small business skills**
- **Provides HIV/AIDS education and resources for women**
- **Facilitates community discussion on male norms and behaviors and gender-based violence**
- **Works with established local women's groups**

Donor World Vision/ Canadian International Development Agency
 Dates June 2005 – present
 Amount \$433,000

The Women First program was initiated through established women's groups from the Women's Society of the United Methodist Church, in Inhambane Province. In partnership with household supply company Unilever, IRD uses an intensive small business training program, facilitates an in-kind micro-credit scheme, and establishes a sustainable product supply chain. In addition to the small business component, the Women First project is training peer educators to raise health and HIV/AIDS prevention issues with women in their groups, as well as bringing these messages home to their families and communities. Women First encourages dialogue on a range of social issues concerning gender and HIV/AIDS, including sexual coercion and gender-based violence. By collaborating with the local theater group Astros da Zambézia and



other community members, Women First ensures that husbands are also integrated into the process of understanding gender-based violence, which is often a domestic problem. Moreover, women have played a significant role in providing feedback through Monthly Monitoring evaluations and a Quantitative Behavior, Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices (KAP) Study in January 2007.

Nepal

Reintegration and Resettlement for Conflict Affected Populations in Mid- and Far-West Nepal

- **Partners with Nepali Women’s NGOs**
- **Addresses the increased vulnerability of female IDPs and works towards reducing gender-based violence**

Donor USAID/OFDA
 Date May 2008 – present
 Amount \$470,000

Since the May 2006 peace agreement, many internally displaced people (IDPs) have returned to their homes to find their houses and livelihoods destroyed. This program facilitates permanent settlement and stabilization by providing critically needed basic services and livelihood opportunities for over 11,000 IDPs and returnees and 24 conflict-affected villages in Kailali, Bardiya, and Surkhet Districts. Though working with conflict affected populations necessitates working with women who are often the worst off in the aftermath of internal conflicts, IRD has been able to focus specifically on reducing gender-based violence through its work with Nepali NGO, SAATHI, which has made addressing violence against women and children its main priority since the organization was founded in Nepal in 1992.

Serbia

Community Revitalization through Democratic Action (CRDA)

- **Contributed \$247,000 to 10 local and regional projects targeting domestic violence in Western Serbia communities**
- **Supported assistance, awareness, and training programs in addressing domestic violence for local professionals**
- **Worked with community networks and institutions in order to address domestic violence in a more holistic fashion**
- **Collaborated with local women’s groups and organized trainings to improve rural women’s access to markets**

Donor USAID
 Date July 2001 – July 2007
 Amount \$40 million

In response to the limited resources available for victims of domestic violence in Western Serbia, IRD supported the development of a network of community assistance, awareness, and training programs. In 2003, IRD established several local SOS Centers, which provided free counseling services for victims and conducted awareness and training seminars and workshops for volunteers and professionals. In 2004, IRD began working with local authorities, NGOs, SOS Centers, social welfare centers, judiciary, public prosecutors, police, health centers, schools, and media representatives to address domestic violence issues regionally. In June 2006, 90 representatives from these community networks and institutions attended IRD’s “Live without Violence” conference in order to exchange experiences and good practices for assisting victims of domestic violence. In addition to addressing domestic violence in Serbia, IRD has provided rural women’s handicraft groups with trainings on management and production capacity building, as well as in strategic marketing. The Western Serbia crafts produced by these women were also presented in Washington, D.C. to several companies that support craft groups internationally by selling their products in the United States.

South Sudan

Rapid Impact Emergency Project (RIEP)

- **Provides employment and builds skills for both women and men**
- **Addresses cultural norms and behaviors**
- **Works with local women's groups**

Donor UNDP
Date March 2008 – present
Amount \$2 million

RIEP focuses on generation of income, capacity building for local NGOs, and improvements in basic urban infrastructure in two state capitals in Southern Sudan: Malakal, Upper Nile State; and Kuajok, Warrap State. Community involvement is a key aspect of RIEP planning and implementation and sub-projects often utilize local women's groups to help encourage female participants. Though initially IRD faced difficulties with the Local Steering Committee (LSC) in promoting the Malakal Market Cleaning Campaign sub-project of RIEP, women members of the LSC intervened in order to get the sub-project passed. IRD staff gave female participants training on how to discuss their new jobs with their husbands, who often had difficulty coming to terms with their wives' new roles as economic providers. As the wages trickled back to the beneficiaries' households the idea of women receiving income has become more accepted and more women are joining RIEP sub-projects. This results in women becoming increasingly seen as actively involved in employment opportunities that had previously been assigned only to the male domain.

Radio Distribution and Civic Education project

- **Increases the social status of women as communal property custodians**
- **Addresses male norms and behaviors**

Donor NDI/USAID
Date April 2008 – present
Amount \$231,000

IRD, in partnership with the National Democratic Institute, is monitoring and tracking the 16,000 radios it has distributed in the 12 counties of Upper Nile State. An allocation of 9,600 radios for distribution to women led to an improvement in the

social status of women as custodians of common property—a domain previously dominated by men. Members of the community gather at the tea kiosks operated by these women, at hospitals with nurse “custodians,” and at adult education centers to listen to the radios. Listening groups set up by IRD and made up of both women and men, have lead communities to become better informed and better able to discuss the peace process and other issues relevant to Southern Sudan.

Ukraine

Reducing Stigma and Discrimination Associated with HIV Infection and AIDS (RSDA)

- **Addresses women's health**
- **Involves women in program implementation both as participants and leaders**

Donor USAID
Dates September 2004– September 2008
Amount \$2.4 million

In hosting public events and training a network of specialists on anti-stigma and discrimination issues regarding HIV/AIDS, IRD has involved both women and men in increasing awareness about health. Women, specifically, have played a significant role in this program as both participants and leaders. The IRD country director is also a local woman. In the Crimean region in particular, IRD has worked with women-based NGOs and Crimean activists at all levels of the program.

For more information, visit www.ird.org
