

# CARE on Capitol Hill

SHE LEADS THE WORLD



## Supporting Women and Girls Around the World

### FY25 Funding for Foreign Assistance

*Congress must provide at least \$61.7 billion in the FY25 International Affairs Budget to continue the progress made towards improving the lives of women and girls around the world.*

Too many people around the world are faced with the indignity of poverty and the devastating impacts of multiple crises. COVID-19, the global economic recession, and other shocks have interrupted the decades-long gains made towards eradicating poverty worldwide. We need robust international development and humanitarian funding to respond to these global challenges and enhance stability worldwide.

Women and girls face disproportionate impacts of crises because their lower status in society fuels their food insecurity, financial instability, basic safety, and exclusion from life-saving services and opportunities. We cannot end poverty if we do not support the needs and potential of half the population.

Supporting women and girls leads to stronger economic growth, better governance, and greater food security. U.S. leadership must step up and provide foreign assistance to meet the needs of women and girls around the world.

#### What is Gender Programming?

Gender programming aims to close gaps in access to resources, information, and technologies for women and girls. These programs include helping girls access education, providing business loans for women entrepreneurs, and improving maternal health. Gender programs also engage men and boys in supporting women's advancement. For example, a gender-based violence program is more effective if it includes educating men and community leaders on why domestic violence is harmful.



#### EXAMPLES OF GENDER PROGRAMMING

- Village and Loan Savings Associations
- Girl's education initiatives
- Entrepreneurship training for women
- Income-generating programs for women small-scale farmers



**U.S. foreign assistance funding comprises roughly 1% of the federal budget yet delivers immeasurable benefits around the world.**

Current funding levels are simply not enough to meet global needs.

## FY25 Funding for Women's Economic Security Through the Gender Equity and Equality Action (GEEA) Fund

*To continue making advances in women's economic security around the world, Congress must provide at least \$400 million for the GEEA Fund in the FY25 Budget.*

Without access to programs that improve women's livelihoods, families and communities cannot become financially self-sufficient. Supporting women's economic security is a critical part of alleviating poverty, achieving gender equality, and promoting economic growth around the world. The World Economic Forum predicts that, at the current rate of progress, **it will take 169 years to close the economic participation and opportunity gap between men and women.**

Some of the reasons for this include:

- Women earn less than men on average within the formal, paid workforce.
- Women are overrepresented in the informal economic sector, making them more vulnerable to exploitation and unable to access employment-provided protections and benefits (e.g., retirement).
- Women are less likely to be able to open bank accounts or access regulated loan services.
- Women spend more time than men on unpaid care work, which inhibits their ability to engage in the paid workforce.
- Women are less likely to own their own businesses.

## What is the GEEA Fund?



The GEEA Fund provides dedicated funding through USAID and the State Department for women's economic security programs around the world. The GEEA Fund works to achieve women's economic security in a holistic way, by prioritizing activities like making well-paying jobs accessible for women, supporting caregiving, and investing in women's digital and financial inclusion. The GEEA Fund currently includes initiatives that were started under the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Fund, which was launched in 2019.

LEARN ABOUT

## CARE's Women for Change Program



CARE's Women for Change program works with women to help cocoa-growing communities in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire thrive. Through this program, CARE collaborates with Mars Wrigley to increase cocoa farmers' access to financial skills and tools and by providing entrepreneurship and farming support.

Additionally, the program helps women and men make decisions together for their families. The Women for Change program has led to increased incomes, improved nutrition, more decision-making power for women within their households, and lower rates of gender-based violence.