USAID'S
WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2024

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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MESSAGE FROM THE
USAID ADMINISTRATOR

USAID's newly updated implementation plan comes at a critical time. Over the last several years, the world has experienced a rise in humanitarian crises and a historic increase in conflict-related deaths and sexual violence. According to the UN, in 2023 alone, approximately 612 million women and girls lived within 50 kilometers of armed conflicts—50 percent more than a decade ago.

The evidence is clear: societies thrive when women participate fully and equally. Higher levels of gender equality correlate with increased prosperity, security, and democracy, while lower levels lead to instability, violence, and conflict. Indeed, women's meaningful involvement in peace processes results in more stable agreements, with a 64 percent lower likelihood of failure and a 35 percent higher chance of lasting at least 15 years. Yet, women continue to remain underrepresented in these processes. Investing in women's and girls' leadership and protection is crucial for successful conflict prevention, stabilization, peace, and sustainable development—and thus, crucial for our own national security as well.

USAID's WPS implementation plan incorporates the perspectives of women and girls across our development and humanitarian assistance efforts, emphasizing the importance of understanding their needs and priorities and supporting the solutions they are working on. The plan lays out concrete actions to increase women's leadership across a spectrum of peace and security processes, promoting their meaningful, equal contribution to their societies.

By investing in the leadership and protection of women and girls in peacebuilding, we are investing in the security and stability of communities and countries worldwide.

Sincerely,

Samantha Power
Administrator, USAID

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without women's equal access to opportunities and full participation in their societies. As the world is currently experiencing the largest number of violent conflicts since World War II[1], we know that each community's ability to prevent conflict, respond to violence, and build durable peace will lay the foundation for their long-term development. A quarter of the world's population lives in conflict-affected areas,[2] with 80 percent of USAID Missions residing in conflict-affected countries. As outlined in the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, women and girls are disproportionately impacted by conflict. The status of women and the stability of nations are inextricably linked - higher levels of gender equality make countries more prosperous, secure, and democratic;[3] and peace agreements are 35% more likely to last 15 years or more when women meaningfully participate[4] in peace processes. Thus, the WPS Agenda is critical to USAID's development efforts.

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1 Ayana Archie. "World is seeing the greatest number of conflicts since the end of WWII, U.N. says," https://www.npr.org/2022/03/31/1089884798/united-nations-conflict-covid-19-ukraine-myanmar-sudan-syria-yemen.
2 UN Press. "'War's Greatest Cost Is Its Human Toll', Secretary-General Reminds Peacebuilding Commission, Warning of 'Perilous Impunity' Taking Hold," https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21216.doc.htm.
3 Valerie Hudson, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, Mary Caprioli, and Chad F. Emmett, Sex and World Peace (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).
4 UN Women. "Women's Participation and a Better Understanding of the Political," https://wps.unwomen.org/participation/#:~:text=Women's%20participation%20increases%20the%20probability,peace%20agreement%20lasting%2015%20years.

Societies benefit when communities, institutions, and countries are more equal, and when women, girls, and all people are protected from gender-based violence. In such societies, the likelihood of conflict and violence decreases, and peace and security are more likely to endure. Since implementation of the WPS Act of 2017, more than 261,000 women participated in leadership, conflict mediation, legal, political, and peacebuilding processes. USAID has provided critical gender based violence (GBV) health care, psychosocial support, legal aid, and economic services to over 18.7 million individuals.

USAID continues to prioritize advancing gender equality, women's empowerment, and the implementation of the bipartisan Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017. The 2023 WPS Strategy and National Action Plan (2023 WPS Strategy) outlines five lines of effort (LOEs) that reflect the complexity and breadth of violence and conflicts today and represent USAID's leadership in several interagency peace, security, and women's empowerment efforts. These include, but are not limited to, the Global Fragility Act and the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (SPCPS); the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act and the U.S. Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities (SAPRA). The 2023 WPS Strategy also highlights the challenges that women and girls face in fragile, conflict, and crisis contexts, and the opportunities the U.S. can leverage to shift outcomes towards durable, inclusive peace.

PHOTO: USAID / SOUTH SUDAN

LINE OF EFFORT 1
PARTICIPATION

Seek and support the preparation and meaningful participation of women and girls in civic and political leadership, in informal and formal decision-making processes, and in institutions related to peace and security.

LINE OF EFFORT 2
PROTECTION

Promote the protection of the human rights of women and girls, and prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence (GBV) across the continuum of peace, conflict, and crisis contexts, including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

LINE OF EFFORT 3
RELIEF, RESPONSE, AND RECOVERY

Prioritize gender-responsive policies and programs to support the safety, participation, and leadership of women and girls in U.S. government responses to conflict, crises, and disasters, and provide safe, equitable access to humanitarian assistance.

LINE OF EFFORT 4
INTEGRATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Integrate WPS principles across U.S. policies and programs to strengthen the institutionalization of comprehensive gender analyses and improve gender equality outcomes.

LINE OF EFFORT 5
PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage partners to mainstream WPS principles across policies and strategies, and strengthen capacity to improve gender equality in processes and institutions connected to peace and security decision-making.

This implementation plan will enable USAID to track our efforts and report on metrics to support women and girls affected by violence and conflict through concrete, effective, and coordinated action across our development and humanitarian assistance efforts. We will implement the 2023 Strategy along the five LOEs and following guiding principles.

PHOTO: PARALELO/FRONTIER CO-OP / USAID LATIN AMERICA

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Prioritizing women's leadership and protection in conflict and crisis contexts and integrating gender-responsive approaches in peace and security initiatives involves challenging entrenched roles, norms, and practices. In order to effectively and safely realize our WPS commitments, USAID will adhere to the following set of guiding principles in our implementation.

LOCALIZATION

At the core of the WPS agenda is the need to ensure we listen to, work with, amplify, and advocate for women and girls in conflict and crises. USAID's ambition is to partner with local leaders and organizations around the world. These efforts include a keen focus on building equitable partnerships with local women leaders and women-led organizations (WLOs) to inform and implement commitments in this plan. These efforts align with the Agency's broader locally-led development commitments which aim to shift funding and decision-making power to the people, organizations, and institutions that are driving change in their own countries and communities.

DO NO HARM

Commitment to implement WPS across development efforts requires USAID and partners to first and foremost "do no harm," by reducing the risk of gender-based violence (GBV), and beyond that to integrate thorough and effective safeguarding regimes in our operations and programming to protect the very people we intend to support. Central to our efforts are the Do No Harm principles of safety, respect, confidentiality, and nondiscrimination. All our work must take care not to put survivors, program participants, staff, and community members at any form of risk. Effective safeguarding is a necessary enabling factor for our mission—it is not just what we do but also how we do it. USAID is committed to working with stakeholders across the international development ecosystem to fulfill our collective responsibility to prevent and respond to critical safeguarding issues.[5]

OVERLAPPING EXPERIENCES AND MARGINALIZATION

Many aspects of a person's identity affect how they experience conflict, peace, and, in turn, the world. All people are shaped by their sex and gender identity as well as a range of other characteristics, including age, marital status, class, ethnicity, race, disability status, geographic location, and sexual orientation. This is particularly relevant for individuals who have overlapping marginalized characteristics and therefore experience overlapping inequalities and inequities. USAID recognizes that incorporating this lens improves development programming by identifying and strategically addressing the ways in which gender and other inequalities can limit people's access to, participation in, and benefit from assistance interventions. USAID's implementation of the 2023 WPS Strategy will address the overlapping and intersecting forms of discrimination to advance equity and equality in our efforts to prevent and respond to conflict and build peace.

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5 USAID. "Safeguarding," https://www.usaid.gov/safeguarding-and-compliance/safeguarding.

SYSTEMIC APPROACH

USAID will engage with and across formal and informal local, regional, and international protection, humanitarian, peace, and security institutions and actors, enabling them to more holistically interact to advance WPS priorities and improve WPS alignment. USAID recognizes that addressing the complex challenges associated with WPS requires examining the relationships among all actors and institutions in a given context in order to achieve a holistic and systemic approach. In unstable contexts, the breakdown of systems can reduce access to services and justice and lead to violence against women. It can also exacerbate women's lack of meaningful opportunities to lead. To help ensure more coordinated adoption of WPS principles and practices, USAID will engage the diverse range of actors across humanitarian, security, and development sectors with consideration of how they affect one another to advance WPS.

CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

Conflict sensitivity builds on existing USAID harm mitigation practices to provide tools to improve planning and decision-making in support of peace. Conflict sensitivity seeks opportunities to promote peace by bringing communities together, addressing underlying grievances, and strengthening local capacities for peace. Integrating conflict sensitivity as a part of WPS implementation will mutually reinforce and further mitigate unintended negative effects of USAID initiatives.

OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

PARTICIPATION

Seek and support the preparation and meaningful participation of women and girls in civic and political leadership, in informal and formal decision-making processes, and in institutions related to peace and security.

AGENCY OUTCOME

Safe, meaningful participation and leadership of all women and girls in peace, security, political and civic decision-making processes and institutions strengthened.

BACKGROUND

The ability of women and girls to participate safely, freely, and equally in political and civic life is a prerequisite for democracy. Women's voices and leadership, and gender-responsive peace, security, and democratic processes are essential for conflict prevention, durable peace, democratic resilience, and long-term development. Women and girls' meaningful participation and leadership in peace and security processes allows their views and priorities to be integrated into subsequent democratic institutions and better predicts their participation and leadership in post-conflict governance[6]. The results are greater representation of women in positions of power, more political participation among women, and more gender-inclusive legislation.[7] Conversely, along with structural inequalities such as economic, political, social, educational, legal, and civic disparities, gender inequality is further reinforced and exacerbated in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Conflict and instability often lead to increases in other forms of violence and exclusion experienced by individuals of marginalized groups, particularly members of ethnic minorities and indigenous people, young people, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQI+ individuals. Similarly, gender inequality, state fragility, and environmental vulnerability are intertwined, and existing inequalities in communities are exacerbated by conflict and climate insecurity, with women disproportionately bearing the brunt of environmental and economic shocks.

Though women and girls are disproportionately affected by violence and conflict, and evidence demonstrates that women's inclusion in peace and security initiatives improves outcomes, they remain underrepresented in efforts to prevent conflict and support peacebuilding and recovery. At the same time, we are seeing a backlash against women's political leadership and women's rights across several different contexts, including in backsliding democracies. These simultaneous assaults on women's rights and democracy around the world threaten to roll back decades of progress. These attacks are visible in closing civic spaces as reversals in human rights and freedoms but also are manifesting through brutal violence, including online violence.

Emerging technologies have unlocked new opportunities and pathways to participation in political and public life. At the same time, state and nonstate actors, including violent extremist organizations (VEOs), are increasingly exploiting technology to lead campaigns using gendered information manipulation to prevent women from participating in public spheres. This includes technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), which has a

chilling effect on women's leadership and participation in civic life and democratic processes. This type of violence is a conscious tactic leveraged by autocratic actors seeking to halt democratic movements and by those who adapt their approach to stoke fear, engender mistrust, and potentially increase several forms of violence to further their own national and security interests. TFGBV is often part of broader patterns of violence against women and can lead to or exacerbate physical violence and CRSV. TFGBV can precede and carry over into physical settings and can follow women into their homes and communities. Women and girls, particularly those from marginalized communities, are disproportionately implicated in these new digital tactics, but also offer critical solutions to address them.

GOAL

USAID works to support and amplify the safe, meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls in all aspects of peace, security, and civic life. We recognize that women and girls face significant barriers to their full civic and political participation and leadership, and will identify and address those barriers in our efforts. Direct support to and investments in women leaders, civil society groups, women's organizations, and broader social movements will be provided based on consultation and partnership with them, so that development approaches reflect specific and intersecting needs and leverage evidence and learning. Creating the enabling environment that guarantees women's voices and gender perspectives are truly inclusive, heard, and leveraged is critical to preventing and resolving conflict and strengthening long term development. USAID will enhance access to peace and democratic processes through interventions that include development diplomacy, crisis response efforts, and governance and democratic institutional strengthening initiatives.

Long-term efforts to support social cohesion[8] and equitable societies are essential to USAID's approach to advance WPS, including engaging men and boys. Leaders, predominantly men, in formal and informal social and political institutions have power and influence in their communities, particularly with how norms are set and maintained. USAID will work with men and boys to understand social norms and expectations, the roles they play in shaping power dynamics to enable increased opportunities for women and girls leadership, and the importance of working together to lead and meaningfully participate in civic life.

As critical global events and new trends in the peace, security, and democratic landscape shift, USAID will adapt and update our approach to be responsive to differentiated needs and ensure women's leadership and meaningful participation are central to our efforts. With advancements in technology and the increased prevalence of TFGBV, USAID will develop new initiatives and resources to support women's participation in politics and public life that specifically address TFGBV as a form of violence against women, and identify opportunities to further drive collective action. These efforts will be done in alignment with the Agency's efforts on Information Integrity and Resilience and Digital Development.[9] USAID will also elevate women and girls as leaders in climate security and resilience, recognizing the disproportionate effects of environmental shifts and conflict dynamics on women and girls.

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6 Marie O'Reilly, Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, and Thania Paffenholz. "Reimagining Peacemaking: Women's Roles in Peace Processes," https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IPI-E-pub-Reimagining-Peacemaking.pdf.
7 Agathe Christien et al. "Advancing Women's Participation in Post-Conflict Reconstruction," https://giwps.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Advancing-Women%E2%80%99s-Participation-in-Post-conflict-Reconstruction.pdf.
8 The USAID Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) Policy notes that social cohesion is, at a minimum, "The willingness of members of society to cooperate with each other in order to survive and prosper." (Dick Stanley. "What Do We Know about Social Cohesion: The Research Perspective of the Federal Government's Social Cohesion Research Network," The Canadian Journal of Sociology.
9 The USAID Digital Policy provides the vision for the Agency to work towards a future where digital technology promotes inclusive growth, fosters resilient and democratic societies, advances human rights, and empowers all, including the most vulnerable. USAID. "USAID Digital Policy 2024-2034: Development in a Digital Age," https://www.usaid.gov/policy/digital-policy.

PRIORITIES AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Priority 1.1: Mitigate barriers and increase enabling environments for women's and girls' meaningful participation in peace and security decision-making processes related to the cycle of preventing, resolving, and rebuilding after conflict, crisis, and violent extremism.

- Identify and address barriers to women's leadership and participation in peace, security, and democratic processes utilizing gender analyses inclusive of different demographics.

- Invest in initiatives that address the backlash and targeted violence women and girls encounter when taking on public and/or leadership roles.

- Increase understanding of and address opportunities, barriers, and risks associated with advances in technology for women and girls; including but not limited to increased accessibility of digital technology and media, the gender digital divide, artificial intelligence, gendered information manipulation, and technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV).

Priority 1.3: The U.S. government and partner governments are responsive to women and girls' needs and recommendations in peace and security processes.

- Invest in programs that support women's leadership skills and programming that advances women and girls' civic and political leadership.

- Invest in programming that facilitates women's leadership and meaningful participation in formal and informal peace and security processes, including those related to climate security.

- Support men and boys' partnership to facilitate and create the enabling environment for women's and girls' access to formal and informal peace and security-related institutions.

Priority 1.4: Women and girls have increased opportunity to access and influence decision-making bodies, networks, and processes.

- Invest in programming that advances women's political participation and civic engagement, including in, but not limited to, elections and political process strengthening, rule of law, and human rights initiatives.

- Invest in programming that advances peace, security, and democratic institutional reforms that prioritize equity, thereby creating an environment conducive to women's leadership and meaningful action to address gender issues.

- Invest in programming that supports democratic institutional strengthening and norm-building that enables equitable participation and women's leadership.

- Invest in programming that builds upon social cohesion initiatives and reinforces equitable shifts in gender norms before, during, and after conflicts and crises.

LINE OF EFFORT 2
PROTECTION

Promote the protection of the human rights of women and girls, and prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence (GBV) across the continuum of peace, conflict, and crisis contexts, including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

AGENCY OUTCOME

High-quality GBV prevention and response throughout the cycles of peace, conflict, and crisis are integrated in USAID initiatives.

BACKGROUND

GBV is fundamentally rooted in gender inequality, which is linked to an increased risk of instability, violence, and conflict.[10] Conflict and instability exacerbate pre-existing and emerging human rights concerns for all people, but with particular impact on women and girls. Global crises, including health stressors and the impacts of environmental disasters, frequently force marginalized populations into precarious conditions and exacerbate rates of GBV. People living in fragile, crises and conflict-affected settings experience an increase in all forms of GBV, including intimate partner violence (IPV); sexual violence; human trafficking; sexual exploitation and abuse; and CRSV, which may continue beyond the end of hostilities with long-term impacts on communities. GBV, including CRSV, can be an early warning sign for the onset of atrocities and may constitute an atrocity crime in itself where it is widespread and systematic. Additionally, natural resource scarcity is also often followed by increased rates of GBV. Women, girls, and other diverse communities face disproportionate levels of GBV due to their unequal status in society. This is especially true for underserved and historically marginalized communities with unequal access to services and justice mechanisms. Men and boys forced into armed groups or detained during conflict are also at high risk of sexual violence, often used for humiliation, control, or extreme forms of punishment such as torture.

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10 Council on Foreign Relations. "Women's Participation in Peace Processes: Why It Matters," https://www.cfr.org/womens-participation-in-peace-processes/why-it-matters.

PHOTO: ALEX KAMWERU/USAID

GOAL

Protection from gender-based violence before, during, and after conflict and crises is critical. In line with the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, USAID will employ a locally-led, trauma-informed, and survivor-centered approach to prevent and address GBV, and will strengthen response services along with justice and accountability mechanisms for survivors. Alignment with the GBV strategy enables USAID to address GBV in fragile and conflict contexts across different development sectors. Our long-term development efforts aim to ensure survivors have access to response services addressing health, psychosocial, shelter, economic, and legal needs. It aims to ensure survivors have access to judicial and other justice services, as defined by survivors themselves, and are able to participate in or lead restorative justice models. And it aims to strengthen systems to reduce rates of impunity. USAID will advance social cohesion and address drivers of inequality because the best long-term protection from all forms of GBV, including CRSV in particular, is to support societies that advance respect for human life and rights; promote full access to education, economic opportunities, and health care; and treat women and girls—and all individuals—with the dignity they deserve.

PRIORITIES AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Priority 2.1: The development of U.S. government policies and programs includes a survivor- and trauma-informed approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, including integrating localized and survivor-determined definitions of justice and accountability.

- Improve USAID's understanding of how people experience GBV across a range of conflict and post-conflict settings, including CRSV, by conducting relevant analyses and assessments, including but not limited to Violence and Conflict Assessments (VCAs), Atrocity Risk Assessments, Gender and GBV Analyses, and Inclusive Development Analyses.

- Invest in programming that prevents and responds to gender-based violence across a range of fragile and conflict affected settings.

- Invest in programming that promotes survivor-centered justice and accountability within formal and informal systems and fosters locally-led processes.

- Prevent and mitigate violence against women in political and public life (VWPPL), including manifestations of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) such as gendered information manipulation and artificial intelligence to promote women's and girls' civic and political leadership.

- Invest in programming that promotes survivor-centered justice and accountability within formal and informal systems and fosters locally-led processes.

- Increase investments in TFGBV research, including gathering data and evidence on the prevalence and manifestations of TFGBV.

- Improve understanding of TFGBV across the continuum of conflict and violence, including as a form of CRSV.

- Enhance protective factors that reduce GBV in conflict through investment in women, peace, and security activities, in line with the U.S. Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities that build and maintain peaceful and secure communities.

Priority 2.2: Survivors of gender-based violence have access to justice, health, and psychosocial support and services.

- Strengthen investments in women and survivor led organizations to scale and sustain GBV response services, as part of the Agency's localization objective of providing 25% of program funds to local partners by 2026.

- Implement and scale up integrated, trauma-informed approaches to GBV prevention and response in health services.

- Raise community awareness of GBV laws and policies, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law and relevant national laws and policies.

- Strengthen justice and accountability for GBV crimes, and safeguard high-risk populations by supporting the development and implementation of survivor informed frameworks and increasing coordination between governmental and nongovernmental actors.

- Support survivors by enhancing GBV services, specifically community-based psychosocial support and case management; avoiding secondary victimization and stigma; delivering a sense of justice to victims/survivors including through restorative justice; and holding perpetrators accountable.

- Strengthen and prioritize support and advocacy for GBV prevention and response programming and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment, from the outset of all types of humanitarian crises, as well as in fragile, crises and conflict settings, in line with the objectives outlined in the USAID-State Department Safe from the Start ReVisioned initiative.

PHOTO: OLIVIER LE BLANC / USAID MAURITANIA

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:
EXPANDING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

SOMALIA

PHOTO: USAID SOMALIA

In Somalia, a lack of justice is often cited as a root cause of instability. People struggle to have their grievances justly resolved - they often face discrimination, are not well informed about their rights, and have few functional justice institutions to meet their needs. Seeking justice is especially challenging for marginalized segments of society including women, youth, internally displaced persons (IDPs), members of minority clans or kin groups, and persons with disabilities. The challenge stands out particularly in cases of domestic violence and gender-based violence (GBV).

To help address these challenges, USAID's Expanding Access to Justice (EAJ) program identified and strengthened existing justice mechanisms to fill the gap, thereby increasing access for citizens, particularly marginalized communities, to resolve grievances peacefully. Over five years, USAID's work supported women as key actors in shaping justice services and laws, building trust in those systems and enabling them to be more effective in addressing grievances that drive conflict. It helped put women at the center of developing justice solutions that cater to the challenges facing women and girls in Somalia.

The program ensured participation of women in Land Dispute Committees, addressed negative stereotypes against women, and reaffirmed their role in society by advocating for women's participation in the legal profession and in institutions such as the Somali judiciary. It connected nearly 700 women, mostly from rural areas, to free legal services for a wide array of matters including GBV, land misappropriation, unlawful detention, divorce, and child custody. In Somaliland, women lawyers are starting to replace the traditional role of clan elders in resolving grievances, with clan elders cooperating and encouraging women lawyers rather than feeling threatened.

RELIEF, RESPONSE, AND RECOVERY

Prioritize gender-responsive policies and programs to support the safety, participation, and leadership of women and girls in U.S. government responses to conflict, crises, and disasters, and provide safe, equitable access to humanitarian assistance.

AGENCY OUTCOME

USAID humanitarian response programs and policies promote increased safety, access to humanitarian assistance, and leadership of women and girls in responses to conflict, crises, and disasters.

BACKGROUND

The world continues to face an increasing number of crises, resulting in more displaced persons and a growth in humanitarian assistance needs globally, with disproportionate impacts on women and girls. During times of crisis, national systems—like health, security, and legal systems—and community support structures are compromised. Women and girls, especially those from historically marginalized communities, are disproportionately impacted, and face a heightened risk of GBV, including intimate partner violence (IPV); child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM); sexual violence; and sexual exploitation and abuse. Similarly, women and girls face specific security needs and risks in times of conflict, crisis, or disaster, which local security sector institutions are often ill-equipped to respond to or address adequately. During times of crisis, the breakdown of systems can reduce access to health services and legal services, leading to an environment of impunity in which perpetrators of GBV are not held to account. Women also play a crucial role in recovery after conflict; their integration in the community affords them unique insights into planning next steps.

GOAL

This Line of Effort helps closely align the global WPS agenda and comprehensively capture the U.S. government's work on humanitarian aid and assistance. The joint USAID-State initiative, Safe from the Start ReVisioned, builds on the initial 2013 commitment to renew our efforts to protect all individuals, especially women and girls, from all forms and threats of GBV in emergencies. Safe from the Start ReVisioned calls on the humanitarian community to add to and change conventional humanitarian action to better respond to the needs of women and girls in emergencies and ensure their leadership in those decisions.

Under the Safe from the Start framing, this LOE will increase the safety, participation, and leadership of women and girls in the development and implementation of our responses to crises, conflicts, and disasters. We will prioritize humanitarian response efforts that promote women's leadership, and shift funding opportunities, influence, and decision-making power to women within humanitarian and security response systems. We will also prioritize GBV prevention and life-saving GBV services for all survivors of GBV, including CRSV survivors. To serve—and not stigmatize—survivors of CRSV, USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) will target all women and girls and all survivors of GBV and fund the overall GBV response, including referral pathways; up-to-date, accessible information; and access to the full range of GBV prevention and response.

PRIORITIES AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Priority 3.1: U.S government's relief, response, and recovery efforts increase gender equity and equality and mitigate harmful gender norms.

- Facilitate regular sessions of two-day, in-person BHA Protection and Community Capacities Training which provides experiential and practical training on BHA's role in supporting GBV prevention and response and women's engagement as leaders and responders in a crisis, including as it relates to WPS. This training is newly required for BHA staff serving on Response Management Teams (RMTs) and Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs).

- Ensure that BHA's current emergency application requirements—one of the most comprehensive sets of protection, gender, and inclusion requirements for partner organizations implementing humanitarian assistance activities—are maintained in the next iteration of BHA's application process, a revision of which is currently underway.

Priority 3.2: U.S. government relief, response, and recovery efforts include programs, policies, systems, and mechanisms to prevent GBV risks and provide safe, comprehensive resources to survivors.

- Strengthen and prioritize support and advocacy for GBV prevention and response programming, including through interventions such as psychosocial support, case management and community-based prevention measures, such as safe spaces for women and girls, in line with the objectives outlined in the USAID-State Department Safe from the Start ReVisioned initiative.

- Utilize non-response funds dedicated to global research to address critical challenges and gaps for the GBV prevention and response community of practice, and at the global coordination level, support enhanced leadership of women-led organizations in GBV coordination through the GBV Area of Responsibility.

- Ensure that BHA's current requirements for partners to analyze GBV risks and incorporate specific protection mainstreaming and GBV risk mitigation actions for each sector are upheld or strengthened in the revision of BHA's application process.

- Uphold and update application and monitoring requirements for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA). Maintain commitment to the protection of beneficiaries and to hold partners and staff to the highest standards of conduct, combating inaction, preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and ensuring a survivor-centered and robust response when incidents are reported.

Priority 3.3: U.S. government relief, response, and recovery efforts support local women's leadership in humanitarian response.

- Invest in pooled funds, such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), a global pooled fund dedicated to enabling local women's organizations to conduct and lead humanitarian responses, including GBV prevention and response.

- Offer, whenever possible, noncompetitive fixed amount awards (FAAs) to local women-led organizations (WLOs) to provide urgent humanitarian response. FAAs are more accessible for new, smaller and/or local organizations. BHA has been able to utilize this window to provide direct funding to one WLO in Sudan in FY24.

- Fund local women's organizations to co-lead national and sub-national GBV Areas of Responsibility (GBV AoR), which is the lead coordinating body for humanitarian GBV response activities, led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

LINE OF EFFORT 4
INTEGRATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Integrate WPS principles across U.S. policies and programs to strengthen the institutionalization of comprehensive gender analyses and improve gender equality outcomes.

AGENCY OUTCOME

WPS principles and Strategy objectives will be integrated across development policies, strategies, programming, and operational processes to encourage a transformational shift towards advancing peace and security.

BACKGROUND

Effective institutionalization of WPS principles across USAID policies, processes, and programming will enable the Agency to systematically implement its commitments from the 2023 WPS Strategy and requirements of the WPS Act of 2017. With the complexity and breadth of violence and conflicts today, and different sector and context-specific priorities across USAID Bureaus, Independent Offices, and Missions, implementation of the WPS agenda can easily get overlooked. Failing to proactively and strategically link the WPS agenda across priorities ultimately hinders the efficacy of them all. Across the Agency, a small number of experts that hold multiple roles and responsibilities are committed to lead WPS implementation. Yet, when these staff transition from their roles, institutional knowledge is lost and challenges remain to effectively execute implementation. Policy coherence and implementation of strategies such as the 2020 U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (SPCPS) and the 2022 U.S. Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities (SAPRA), in addition to Agency policies, present an opportunity to strengthen institutionalization of WPS across the Agency.

PHOTO: USAID / INDONESIA

GOAL

To institutionalize WPS principles across USAID efforts in fragile, crises and conflict-affected contexts, USAID will mainstream WPS across policy, programming, and operations, building on lessons learned along the way. USAID will increase staff capacity to implement the WPS agenda, to understand how these issues show up in the communities we work in, and to effectively integrate them into the USAID Program Cycle through WPS training. The WPS Agenda strengthens the Agency's operational and programmatic frameworks, and USAID will continue to work across teams and offices to strengthen understanding of WPS implementation. This will be done by developing guidance, tools, and learning resources for Agency personnel and partners to utilize and effectively integrate WPS in their efforts. The Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization (CPS) provides funding and technical assistance to support communities affected by conflict to build the foundations for peace and stability. CPS will meaningfully integrate WPS principles and objectives across its strategies, programming, funding mechanisms, and technical support.

WPS implementation is also aligned with other prevention-oriented strategies, including the SPCPS and SAPRA. For example, USAID is incorporating gender equality, women's empowerment and GBV considerations in the use of atrocity risk assessments in priority countries and has refined and expanded atrocity prevention toolkits. In SPCPS countries, teams conducted hundreds of consultations, including with women-led organizations (WLOs) and women's rights networks, to inform the analysis of drivers of fragility and the setting of objectives to foster stability. Monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plans and broader analyses will systematically gather gender disaggregated data, enabling teams to conduct gender analysis in conflict-informed ways. We will utilize WPS indicators throughout implementation to continuously assess progress and inform decision-making.

PRIORITIES AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Priority 4.1: U.S. government increases its investment in WPS advisors, staff, and technical experts. Staff are meaningfully integrated and resourced across policies, programs, and training.

- Maintain and expand USAID's WPS Core Team to strategize, share, and exchange information to advance WPS across the Agency.
- CPS conducts needs assessments across Missions, Offices, and teams implementing WPS to identify key gaps, opportunities and provide assistance and support, including training, learning, and professional development opportunities.

Priority 4.2: U.S. government personnel are equipped and properly trained on the knowledge, resources, and technical expertise to advance the Strategy.

- Update and expand WPS 101 training to increase skills for staff across the Agency.
- Build the skills of technical experts to support WPS policy and programming by providing WPS training for Conflict Advisors, Democracy Rights and Governance Advisors, technical experts for gender equality and women's empowerment, and others.
- Meaningfully incorporate WPS principles into relevant technical/sector training, e-courses, and person-to-person learning.
- Increase WPS technical assistance to support integration of WPS principles into program design, implementation, and evaluation through in-country and virtual support to USAID Bureaus, Offices, and Missions.
- Develop and update WPS technical tools to integrate WPS into USAID programs and policies.

Priority 4.3: U.S. government policies and programs are informed by intersectional and inclusive gender analysis.

- Develop guidance for USAID gender analysis tools that integrate violence and conflict assessment (VCA) frameworks and advance understanding of WPS principles across contexts.
- SPCPS MEL framework integrates gender analysis and is consistently implemented, monitored, and tracked.
- Atrocity Risk Assessments systematically incorporate a gender lens to understand how GBV, and CRSV in particular, are a dimension of atrocity risks.

Priority 4.4: Training, reporting, and integration of relevant U.S. government strategies and policies occurs across agencies.

- Strengthen integration of WPS principles in training to implement prevention-oriented policies such as SPCPS and SAPRA.
- Develop WPS-specific goals/objectives in peace- and security-related strategies and policies to further integration.
- Integrate and ensure reporting of WPS across peace- and security-related strategies and policies such as SPCPS, SAPRA, Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), and Climate Security.
- Develop guidance to enable integration of WPS-specific results in USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS), Regional Development Cooperation Strategies (RDCS), and Strategic Frameworks.

Priority 4.5: U.S. government improves monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems and data collection methods to better capture WPS efforts.

- Strengthen and expand use of WPS indicators across policy and program implementation to capture inputs, outputs, and outcomes.
- Integrate WPS within relevant learning agendas to build the evidence base for conflict prevention and stabilization and integrate key research and learning questions.
- Establish a WPS community of practice and process to both capture and disseminate institutional knowledge and lessons learned from WPS efforts across the Agency.

PHOTO: USAID / PHILIPPINES

LINE OF EFFORT 5
PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage partners to mainstream WPS principles across policies and strategies, and strengthen capacity to improve gender equality in processes and institutions connected to peace and security decision-making.

AGENCY OUTCOME

Relationships with new and existing partners will be developed and strengthened across all levels of society to advance the WPS agenda, guided by the local voices and experiences of women and girls, particularly from underrepresented populations.

BACKGROUND

Effective implementation of the WPS agenda cannot be done without a coordinated and integrated partnership approach. Partnerships across sectors, geographies, with non-traditional entities, and across different conflict contexts are critical for the success of the WPS agenda and required for sustainable development outcomes. With conflicts and instability on the rise, gains made to achieve gender equality and advance women's empowerment are being rolled back. Critical funding for these initiatives are decreasing. As a result, organizations and entities around the world are updating their approach to advance peace and sustain development progress. Women leaders, civil society organizations, and advocates are organizing in new and different ways to advance the WPS agenda amidst current realities. New opportunities are opening to collaborate differently and shift the paradigm for sustainable peace.

GOAL

USAID will strengthen and build partnerships with a diverse range of entities across all levels of the development sector. This will include multilateral institutions, civil society organizations including women-led organizations; partner governments; and, most importantly, women peacebuilders across a range of areas and inclusive of women and girls from marginalized communities. USAID will coordinate with partner governments, multilateral institutions, and civil society to secure the necessary resources, build capacity, and strengthen accountability mechanisms to support the ongoing implementation of WPS commitments within broader development goals. With our bilateral partners, USAID will support their implementation of the WPS agenda, including fostering learning, enabling access for women leaders and women-led organizations within key peace and security institutions, and celebrating positive momentum towards achieving our peace and security goals. Through our ongoing localization efforts, we will address the barriers local women leaders and women-led organizations face in accessing USAID funding and work with them to co-lead and co-create initiatives that help reduce violence, provide security, and foster long-term development. Recognizing that women and girls take on many different roles in conflict and crises contexts, USAID will work to expand our outreach and partnership with groups that represent the diverse roles women play, such as midwives, teachers, and other influential cohorts, given their deep contextual knowledge and understanding of their communities.

PRIORITIES AND PLANNED ACTIONS

Priority 5.1: U.S. government provides support for partner governments in adopting and enforcing laws and implementation frameworks that promote gender equality.

- Build bilateral partnerships on WPS to support partner nations' efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment and encourage their adoption of WPS National Action Plans.
- Strengthen and support partner nations' Transitional Justice Mechanisms or mechanisms that respond to closing democratic spaces.

Priority 5.2: U.S. government builds upon and develops mechanisms for ongoing communication and information-sharing loops with partner governments, civil society, academia, research institutions, and the private sector.

- Strengthen relationships and coordination on WPS with bilateral partners to identify shared goals and commitments.
- Convene civil society with governments, multilateral partners, and the private sector to share lessons learned and best practices in WPS implementation.
- Develop shared commitments with partners to invest in gender-responsive initiatives that support the implementation of the WPS Agenda.
- Develop an approach to regularly consult with a broad range of civil society organizations, women leaders, and peacebuilders to inform conflict prevention, stabilization, and response.
- Develop and implement a plan to build and strengthen relationships with philanthropic organizations and the private sector to encourage investment in the WPS agenda.
- Strengthen partnership with Congress, including with members of the WPS Caucus, to support advancement of the WPS Act of 2017.

Priority 5.3: U.S. government partners with multilateral institutions and fora to elevate Women, Peace and Security action and promote shared responsibility.
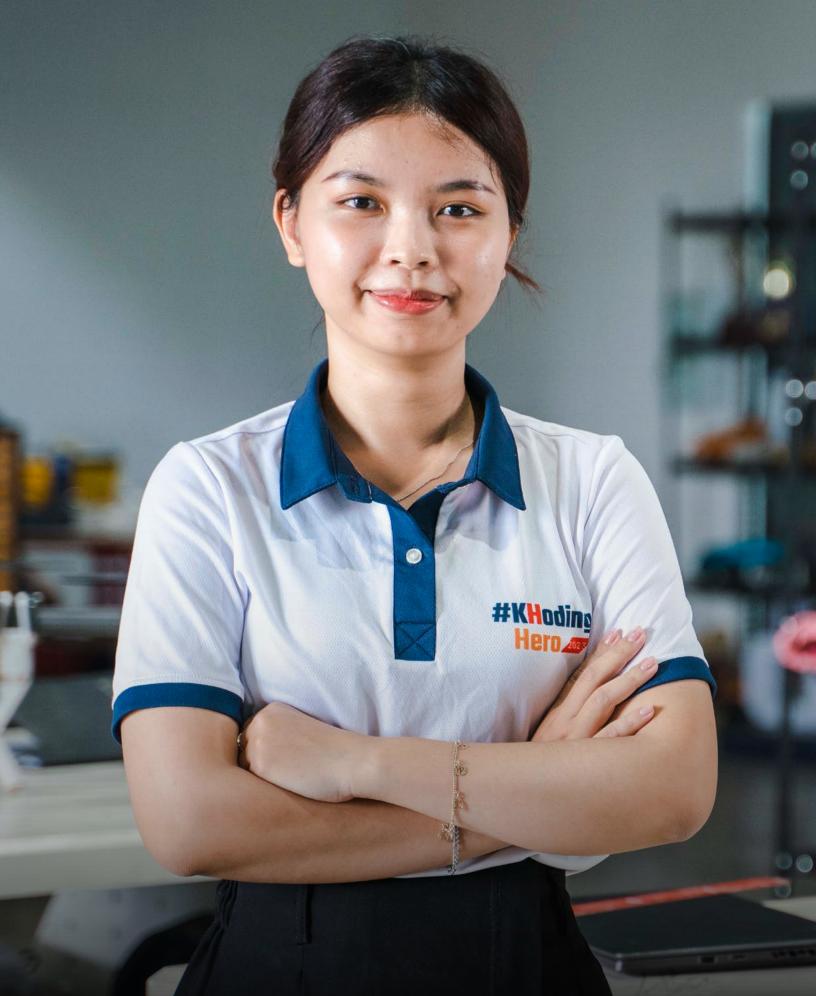
- Regularly consult with and exchange lessons learned with bilateral partners Support partnerships on WPS through coordination with NATO, UN Agencies, and other multilateral fora.
- Elevate WPS in strategic and security dialogues that advance priorities of women leaders and women-led organizations.
- Amplify U.S. messaging and national statements to multilateral institutions that signal WPS as a priority.

Priority 5.4: U.S. government prioritizes supporting local civil society organizations through its policies, funding, and partnerships.

- Strengthen investments in local women led, women's rights and gender equality organizations as part of the Agency's localization objective of providing 25% of program funds to local partners by 2026.
- Increase investments to women-led organizations within existing USAID mechanisms in line with WPS principles.
- Consistently engage with diverse groups of civil society, implementing partners, and academia to facilitate knowledge sharing on the WPS Agenda and deepen understanding of ongoing and new trends in the peace and security space.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

USAID is committed to advancing all lines of effort of the WPS agenda, as outlined in the WPS Act of 2017 and 2023 Strategy and National Action Plan on WPS. USAID will closely coordinate implementation of WPS with interagency partners at the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of State to ensure efforts result in the most effective outcomes possible. In the annual report to Congress USAID will report on ways the interagency is coordinating, collaborating, and learning from one another to comprehensively track shared USG progress.

USAID's reporting on this implementation plan will build upon the existing set of standard foreign assistance indicators, including reporting on the cross-cutting gender indicators that address gender equality and women's empowerment. USAID's Operating Units track Women, Peace, and Security as a Key Issue in their Performance Plan Report (PPR) Quality Narratives. Additionally, the USAID Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Objectives and Key Results will also track progress on the WPS Agenda. USAID's approach to data collection and MEL will strictly adhere to the "do no harm" principle –prioritizing survivor-centered approaches sensitive to local contexts, and seeking to reduce data collection burdens when possible. USAID will continue to track outputs and will measure both qualitative and quantitative outcomes whenever feasible. Furthermore, as part of MEL efforts on WPS, USAID will continue to measure progress against core WPS objectives and action-oriented research on emerging areas of practice.

USAID recognizes it is essential to sync efforts to track progress across relevant USG and Agency strategies and policies. In USAID's Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization, WPS is integrated across efforts to implement the Global Fragility Act and the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act – these three pieces of legislation and their respective strategies signal the USG's commitment to prevention and a new way of thinking about effective MEL. Both WPS and AP are interwoven into the GFA MEL framework.

The WPS Results Framework will be regularly updated to incorporate changes to any indicators and integrate stronger and effective metrics and benchmarks for progress.

APPENDIX A:
USAID WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN RESULTS FRAMEWORK

LINE OF EFFORT 1
PARTICIPATION

Seek and support the preparation and meaningful participation of women and girls in civic and political leadership, in informal and formal decision-making processes, and in institutions related to peace and security.

U.S. GOVERNMENT OUTCOME:

Increase the meaningful participation of women and girls in peace and security decision-making processes.

AGENCY OUTCOME:

Safe, meaningful participation and leadership of all women and girls in peace, security, political and civic decision-making processes and institutions strengthened.

Priority 1.1: *Mitigate barriers and increase enabling environments for women and girls' meaningful participation in peace and security decision-making processes related to the cycle of preventing, resolving, and rebuilding after conflict, crisis, and violent extremism.*

Target: Increase number of local women participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported with USG assistance every year.

USAID ACTIONS

- Identify and address barriers to women's leadership and participation in peace, security, and democratic processes utilizing gender analyses inclusive of different demographics.
- Invest in initiatives that address the backlash and targeted violence women and girls encounter when taking on public and/or leadership roles.
- Increase understanding of and address opportunities, barriers, and risks associated with advancements in technology for women and girls; including but not limited to increased accessibility of digital technology and media, the gender digital divide, artificial intelligence, and technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV).

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[GNDR-10]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator - Number of local women participating in a substantive role or position in a peacebuilding process supported with USG assistance.
- **[DR.4-1]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator -Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women.

Priority 1.3: *The U.S. government and partner governments are responsive to women and girls' needs and recommendations in peace and security processes.*

Target: Increase the number of training and capacity building activities conducted with USG assistance that are designed to promote the participation of women or the integration of gender perspectives in security sector institutions or activities per year.

USAID ACTIONS

- Invest in programs that support women's leadership skills and programming that advances women and girls' civic and political leadership.
- Invest in programming that facilitates women's leadership and meaningful participation in formal and informal peace and security processes, including those related to climate security.
- Support men and boys' partnership to facilitate and create the enabling environment for women's and girls' access to formal and informal peace and security-related institutions.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[PS.6.2-4]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator - Number of people who participated in USG-supported events, trainings, or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation (disaggregated by gender).
- **[GNDR-9]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator - Number of training and capacity building activities conducted with USG assistance that are designed to promote the participation of women or the integration of gender perspectives in security sector institutions or activities.

Priority 1.4: *Women and girls have increased opportunity to access and influence decision-making bodies, networks, and processes.*

Target: Increase funding attributions by 10% by 2027.

USAID ACTIONS

- Invest in programming that advances women's political participation and civic engagement, including in, but not limited to, elections and political process strengthening, rule of law, and human rights initiatives.
- Invest in programming that advances peace, security, and democratic institutional reforms that prioritize equity, thereby creating an environment conducive to women's leadership and meaningful action to address gender issues.
- Invest in programming that supports democratic institutional strengthening and norm-building that enables equitable participation and women's leadership.
- Invest in programming that builds upon social cohesion initiatives that reinforce equitable shifts in gender norms before, during, and after conflict and crises.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[DR.3.3-2]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator - Number of USG-assisted political parties implementing initiatives to increase the number of candidates and/or members who are women, youth and from marginalized groups.
- **[DR.4.1]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator - Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women.
- **[GNDR-8]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator - Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations.

LINE OF EFFORT 2
PROTECTION

Promote the protection of the human rights of women and girls, and prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence (GBV) across the continuum of peace, conflict, and crisis contexts, including conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV).

U.S. GOVERNMENT OUTCOME:

The human rights of women and girls are promoted and respected throughout the cycles of violence, conflict, and crisis, including in the prevention and response to all forms of gender-based violence.

AGENCY OUTCOME:

High-quality GBV prevention and response throughout the cycles of peace, conflict, and crisis are integrated in USAID initiatives.

Priority 2.1: *The development of U.S. government policies and programs includes a survivor- and trauma-informed approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, including integrating localized and survivor-determined definitions of justice and accountability.*

Target: Increase the number of tools that provide guidance on how to conduct context-driven GBV analyses for the Agency and its partners.

USAID ACTIONS

- Improve USAID's understanding of how people experience GBV across a range of conflict and post-conflict settings, including CRSV, by conducting relevant analyses and assessments, including but not limited to the Violence and Conflict Assessment (VCA), Atrocity Risk Assessments, Gender and GBV Analyses, and Inclusive Development Analyses.
- Invest in programming that prevents and responds to gender-based violence across a range of fragile and conflict affected settings.
- Invest in programming that promotes survivor-centered justice and accountability within formal and informal systems and fosters locally led processes.
- Prevent and mitigate violence against women in political and public life, including manifestations of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) such as gendered information manipulation and Artificial Intelligence to promote women's and girls' civic and political leadership.
- Increase investments in TFGBV research, including gathering data and evidence on the prevalence and manifestations of TFGBV.
- Improve understanding of TFGBV across the continuum of conflict and violence, including as a form of CRSV. Enhance protective factors that reduce GBV in conflict through investment in women, peace, and security activities, in line with the U.S. Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities that build and maintain peaceful and secure communities.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[GNDR-6]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator: Number of people reached by a USG funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g., health, legal, psycho-social counseling, shelters, hotlines, other), disaggregated by sex.
- **[DR 4.2-1]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator: Number of human rights organizations trained and supported (with attention to DR 4.2-1a, LGBTI issues, and DR 4.2-1b, women's rights groups).

Priority 2.2: *Survivors of gender-based violence have access to justice, health, and psychosocial support and services.*

Target: Number of human rights defenders, including environmental rights defenders, journalists, activists, anti-corruption activists, election observers, and other at-risk populations protected through either physical, legal, cybersecurity, mental health, economic support, and any other type of related assistance increased by 10% by 2027.

USAID ACTIONS

- Strengthen investments in women survivor-led organizations to scale and sustain GBV response services, as part of the Agency's localization objective of providing 25% of program funds to local partners by 2026.
- Implement and scale-up integrated, trauma informed approaches to GBV prevention and response in health services.
- Raise community awareness of GBV laws and policies, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law and relevant national laws and policies.
- Strengthen justice and accountability for GBV crimes, and safeguard high-risk populations by supporting the development and implementation of survivor informed frameworks and increasing coordination between governmental and nongovernmental actors.
- Support survivors by enhancing GBV services, specifically community-based psychosocial support and case management; avoiding secondary victimization and stigma; delivering a sense of justice to victims/survivors including through restorative justice; and holding perpetrators accountable.
- Strengthen and prioritize support and advocacy for GBV prevention and response programming and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment, from the outset of all types of humanitarian crises, as well as in fragile, crises and conflict settings, in line with the objectives outlined in the USAID-State Department Safe from the Start ReVisioned initiative.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[DR.6.1-4]** Standard Foreign Assistance Indicator - Number of human rights defenders, including environmental rights defenders, journalists, activists, anti-corruption activists, election observers, and other at-risk populations protected through either physical, legal, cybersecurity, mental health, economic support, and any other type of related assistance.
- **[DR 4.2-1]** Number of human rights organizations trained and supported (with attention to DR 4.2-1a, LGBTI issues, and DR 4.2-1b, women's rights groups).
- **[GNDR 5]** Number of legal instruments drafted, proposed, or adopted with USG assistance designed to improve prevention of or response to sexual and gender based violence at the national or sub-national level.

PHOTO: OLIVIER LE BLANC / USAID SENEGAL

LINE OF EFFORT 3
RELIEF, RESPONSE, RECOVERY

Prioritize gender-responsive policies and programs to support the safety, participation, and leadership of women and girls in U.S. government responses to conflict, crises, and disasters, and provide safe, equitable access to humanitarian assistance.

U.S. GOVERNMENT OUTCOME:

An intersectional gender approach is systematically integrated by the U.S. government as part of preparedness for, prevention of, and responses to conflict, natural disasters, and the climate crisis.

AGENCY OUTCOME:

USAID humanitarian response programs and policies promote increased safety, access to humanitarian assistance, and leadership of women and girls in responses to conflict, crises, and disasters.

Priority 3.1: *U.S. government's relief, response, and recovery efforts increase gender equity and equality and mitigate harmful gender norms.*

Target: 70% of BHA staff trained by 2027.

USAID ACTIONS

- Facilitate regular sessions of two-day, in-person BHA Protection and Community Capacities Training which provides experiential and practical training on BHA's role in supporting GBV prevention and response and women's engagement as leaders and responders in a crisis, including as it relates to WPS. This training is newly required for BHA staff serving on Response Management Teams (RMTs) and Disaster Assistance Response Teams (DARTs).
- Ensure that BHA's current emergency application requirements - one of the most comprehensive sets of protection, gender, and inclusion requirements for partner organizations implementing humanitarian assistance activities - are maintained in the next iteration of BHA's application process; a revision of which is currently underway.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- Number and percentage of BHA staff who completed the PCC Training.

Priority 3.2: *U.S. government relief, response, and recovery efforts include programs, policies, systems, and mechanisms to prevent GBV risks and provide safe, comprehensive resources to survivors.*

Target: 4 million people reached by USG-funded GBV prevention and response services.

USAID ACTIONS

- Strengthen and prioritize support and advocacy for GBV prevention and response programming, including through interventions such as psychosocial support, case management and community-based prevention measures, such as safe spaces for women and girls, in line with the objectives outlined in the USAID-State Department Safe from the Start ReVisioned initiative.
- Utilize non-response funds dedicated to global research to address critical challenges and gaps for the GBV prevention and response community of practice, and at the global coordination level, support helpdesks, technical support and enhanced leadership of women-led organizations in GBV coordination through the GBV Area of Responsibility.

- Ensure that BHA's current requirements for partners to analyze GBV risks and incorporate specific protection mainstreaming and GBV risk mitigation actions for each sector are upheld or strengthened in the revision of BHA's application process.
- Uphold and update application and monitoring requirements for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). Maintain commitment to the protection of beneficiaries and to hold partners and staff to the highest standards of conduct, combating inaction, preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, and ensuring a survivor-centered and robust response when incidents are reported.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[GNDR 6]** Number of people reached by a USG funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g., health, legal, psycho-social counseling, shelters, hotlines, other)

Priority 3.3: *U.S. government relief, response, and recovery efforts support local women's leadership in humanitarian response.*

Target: Increase number of FAAs to local women's organizations.

USAID ACTIONS

- Invest in pooled funds, such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), a global pooled fund dedicated to enabling local women's organizations to conduct and lead humanitarian responses, including GBV prevention and response.
- Offer, whenever possible, noncompetitive fixed amount awards (FAAs) to local women-led organizations to provide urgent humanitarian response. FAAs are more accessible for new, smaller and/or local organizations and BHA has been able to utilize this window to provide direct funding to one WLO in Sudan in FY24.
- Fund local women's organizations to co-lead national and sub-national GBV Areas of Responsibility, the lead coordinating body for humanitarian GBV response activities.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- Number and percentage of BHA staff who completed the PCC Training.
- Number of WLOs supported by global awards.
- Number of FAAs to local women's organizations.

LINE OF EFFORT 4
INTEGRATION AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Integrate WPS principles across U.S. policies and programs to strengthen the institutionalization of comprehensive gender analyses and improve gender equality outcomes.

U.S. GOVERNMENT OUTCOME:

U.S. government internal systems, processes, and structures integrate WPS principles in training personnel and program design are more inclusive, diverse, and representative of the needs of the population.

AGENCY OUTCOME:

WPS principles and Strategy objectives will be integrated across development policies, strategies, programming, and operational processes to encourage a transformational shift towards advancing peace and security.

Priority 4.1: *U.S. government increases its investment in WPS advisors, staff, and technical experts. Staff are meaningfully integrated and resourced across policies, programs, and training.*

Target: Every USAID Bureau is represented in WPS Core Team.

USAID ACTIONS

- Maintain and expand USAID's WPS Core Team to strategize, share, and exchange information to advance WPS across the Agency.
- CPS conducts needs assessments across Missions, Offices, and teams implementing WPS to identify key gaps, opportunities and provide assistance and support, including training, learning, and professional development opportunities.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- [Custom indicator] Number of of Bureaus/ Offices Represented in WPS Core Team.

Priority 4.2: *U.S. government personnel are equipped and properly trained on the knowledge, resources, and technical expertise to advance the Strategy.*

Target: Increase number of WPS subject matter experts in the Agency by 2027; Data Source: USAID University.

USAID ACTIONS

- Update and expand WPS 101 training to increase skills for staff across the Agency.
- Build the skills of technical experts to support WPS policy and programming by providing WPS training for Conflict Advisors, Democracy Rights and Governance Advisors, technical experts for gender equality and women's empowerment, and others.
- Meaningfully incorporate WPS principles into relevant technical/ sector training, e-courses, and person-to-person learning.
- Increase WPS technical assistance to support integration of WPS principles into program design, implementation, and evaluation through in-country and virtual support to USAID Bureaus, Offices, and Missions.
- Develop and update WPS technical tools to integrate WPS into USAID programs and policies.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[Custom indicator]** Number of WPS 101 trainings completed.
- **[Custom indicator]** Number of WPS technical tools updated and developed.

Priority 4.3: *U.S. government policies and programs are informed by intersectional and inclusive gender analysis.*

Target: Completed guidance document for USAID gender analysis tools on how to conduct an gender and conflict analysis developed.

USAID ACTIONS

- Develop guidance for USAID gender analysis tools that integrate violence and conflict assessment framework and advances understanding of WPS principles across contexts.
- SPCPS MEL framework integrates gender analysis and is consistently implemented, monitored, and tracked.
- Atrocity Risk Assessments systematically incorporate a gender lens to understand how GBV, and CRSV in particular, are a dimension of atrocity risks.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[Custom indicator]** Completed guidance document for USAID gender analysis tools on how to conduct an intersectional gender and conflict analysis (Yes/No).

Priority 4.4: *Training, reporting, and integration of relevant U.S. government strategies and policies occurs across agencies.*

Target: WPS reporting incorporated across all CPS peace and security related policies.

USAID ACTIONS

- Strengthen integration of WPS principles in training to implement prevention-oriented policies such as SPCPS and SAPRA.
- Develop WPS specific goals/objectives in peace and security related policies to further integration.
- Integrate and ensure reporting of WPS across peace and security related policies such as SPCPS, SAPRA, Countering Violent Extremism and Climate Security.
- Develop guidance to enable integration of WPS-specific results in USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS), Regional Development Cooperation Strategies (RDCS), and Strategic Frameworks.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[Custom indicator]** Guidance developed to integrate WPS results in CDCS, RDCS, Strategic Frameworks (Y/N).

Priority 4.5: *U.S. government improves monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems and data collection methods to better capture WPS efforts.*

Target: WPS MEL plan developed and reported on every year through 2027.

USAID ACTIONS

- Strengthen and expand use of WPS indicators across policy and program implementation to capture inputs, outputs, and outcomes.
- Integrate WPS within relevant learning agendas to build the evidence base for conflict prevention and stabilization and integrate key research and learning questions.
- Establish a WPS community of practice to capture and disseminate institutional knowledge and lessons learned from WPS efforts across the Agency.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[Custom indicator]** Updated WPS MEL plan (Y/N).
- **[Custom indicator]** Establish a WPS community of practice (Y/N).

LINE OF EFFORT 5
PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage partners to mainstream WPS principles across policies and strategies, and strengthen capacity to improve gender equality in processes and institutions connected to peace and security decision-making.

U.S. GOVERNMENT OUTCOME:

The U.S. government builds and strengthens partnerships with other governments, multilateral organizations, academia and research institutions, civil society, and the private sector to advance the objectives of the WPS agenda.

AGENCY OUTCOME:

Relationships with new and existing partners will be developed and strengthened across all levels of society to advance the WPS agenda, guided by the local voices and experiences of women and girls, particularly from underrepresented populations.

Priority 5.1: *U.S. government provides support for partner governments in adopting and enforcing laws and implementation frameworks that promote gender equality.*

Target: Increase number of national institutions that protect and promote human rights and gender equaity.

USAID ACTIONS

- Build bilateral partnerships on WPS to support partner nations' efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment and encourage their adoption of WPS National Action Plans.
- Strengthen and support partner nations' Transitional Justice Mechanisms, or mechanisms that respond to closing democratic spaces.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[DR 6.1-1:]** Number of USG supported national human rights commissions and other independent state institutions charged by law with protecting and promoting human rights that actively pursued allegations of human rights abuses during the year.

Priority 5.2: *U.S. government builds upon and develops mechanisms for ongoing communication and information sharing loops with partner governments, civil society, academia and research institutions, and the private sector.*

Target: Plans to engage with multiple partners, including bilateral, civil society, women peacebuilders, the private sector are developed and engagement becomes standard.

USAID ACTIONS

- Strengthen relationships and coordination on WPS with bilateral partners to identify shared goals and commitments.
- Convene civil society with governments, multilateral partners, and the private sector to share lessons learned and best practices in WPS implementation.
- Develop shared commitments with partners to invest in gender responsive initiatives that support the implementation of the WPS agenda.
- Develop an approach to regularly consult with a broad range of civil society organizations, women leaders, and peacebuilders to inform conflict prevention, stabilization, and response.
- Develop and implement a plan to build and strengthen relationships with philanthropic organizations and the private sector to encourage investment in the WPS agenda.
- Strengthen partnership with Congress, including members of the WPS Caucus, to support advancement of the WPS Act of 2017.

Priority 5.3: *U.S. government partners with multilateral institutions and fora to elevate Women, Peace and Security action and promote shared responsibility.*

Target: USAID will avance messaging aligned with priorities of women leaders and women-led institutions at atleast three high level stabilization, security, and peace related dialogues per year through 2027.

USAID ACTIONS

- Regularly consult with and exchange lessons learned with bilateral partners Support partnerships on WPS through coordination with NATO, UN Agencies, and other multilateral fora.
- Elevate WPS in strategic and security dialogues, and advance themes in line with priorities of women leaders and women led organizations.
- Amplify U.S. messaging and national statements to multilateral institutions that signal WPS as a priority.

Priority 5.4: *U.S. government prioritizes supporting local civil society organizations through its policies, funding, and partnerships.*

Target: USAID provides 25% of program funds to local partners by 2026 including women led organizations as a part of the Agency's Localization Agenda.

USAID ACTIONS

- Strengthen investments in local women led, women's rights and gender equality organizations as part of the agency's localization objective of providing 25% of program funds to local partners by 2026.
- Increase investments to women led organizations within existing USAID mechanisms in line with WPS principles.
- Consistently engage with diverse groups of civil society, implementing partners, and academia to facilitate knowledge sharing on the WPS agenda and deepen understanding of ongoing and new trends in the peace and security space.

CORRESPONDING INDICATORS

- **[GNDR-8]** Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations.

PHOTO: LOUISA GOULIAMAKI / AFP

APPENDIX B:
POLICY COHERENCE

USAID's WPS implementation plan of the 2023 WPS Strategy is in accordance and alignment with the following U.S. government and agency-wide strategies and policies. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

National Security Strategy

National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality

U.S. Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities

U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability

United States Strategy on Global Women's Economic Security

2022 U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally

USAID and Department of State Joint Strategic Plan FY 2022-2026

USAID and Department of State Joint Regional Strategy (JRS)

USAID Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy

USAID Policy for Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Through Development Assistance

USAID Youth In Development Policy

USAID Safe from the Start Revisioned

USAID Protection From Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy

USAID Policy on Countering Trafficking in Persons (C-TIP)

USAID Rule of Law Policy

USAID Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) Policy

USAID Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversary (APCCA) Strategy

USAID Climate Strategy

USAID Digital Strategy

APPENDIX C:
ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
AP	Atrocity Prevention
APCCA	Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity Strategy
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CEFM	Child, Early, and Forced Marriage
CPS	Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization
CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
C-TIP	Countering Trafficking in Persons
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
DA-PP	Deputy Administrator for Policy and Programming
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Teams
DRG	Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance
EAJ	Expanding Access to Justice Program
FAA	Fixed Amount Awards
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
Gender Policy	USAID Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy
GFA	Global Fragility Act
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
JRS	Joint Regional Strategy
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex Plus
LOE	Line of Effort
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
PPR	Performance Plan Report

PSEA	Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
RDCS	Regional Development Cooperation Strategy
RMT	Response Management Teams
SAPRA	U.S. Strategy to Anticipate, Prevent, and Respond to Atrocities
SPCPS	U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability
2023 WPS Strategy	2023 Women, Peace, and Security Strategy and National Action Plan
TFGBV	Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund, formerly United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USG	U.S. Government
VCA	Violence and Conflict Assessments
VEO	Violent Extremist Organizations
WLO	Women Led Organizations
WPHF	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund
WPPL	Women in Political and Public Life
WPS	Women, Peace, and Security

APPENDIX D:
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

USAID's Women, Peace and Security Implementation Plan reflects robust consultation and collaboration across our Missions, Regional Bureaus, Pillar Bureaus, implementing partners, civil society, and the interagency. The core drafting team was composed of technical advisors from the Bureau for Conflict Prevention and Stabilization and Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. Technical staff from the following bureaus also played a key role in the development of the Implementation Plan: Bureau for Africa, Bureau for Asia, Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, Bureau for Middle East, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Over the course of four months we held consultations with a diverse set of stakeholders from around the world. We sincerely thank all USAID regional and pillar bureau technical experts who provided valuable feedback and suggestions throughout the development process. We are deeply grateful to representatives from civil society organizations and experts that participated in the consultations that informed the Implementation Plan.

In particular, we would like to thank the Navanti Group who helped facilitate the consultations. We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to the U.S. Civil Society Working Group on Women, Peace, and Security and countless other civil society organizations and experts who shared their time, expertise, and experiences to strengthen the Implementation Plan.

Most importantly, we have profound gratitude to all the women and girls who are on the frontlines of building peace in their communities, countries, and regions every day.