

The Demographic and Health Surveys Program Releases New Report on Women's Lives Worldwide

WASHINGTON, March 7, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- How much progress have women made over the last decade? USAID and The Demographic and Health Surveys Program assess gains in women's status and gender equality worldwide with the release of a new report, ***Women's Lives and Challenges: Equality and Empowerment since 2000***.

This report, among the most extensive recent assessments of women's status, looks at women's progress in four continents and more than 45 countries. Based on almost 100 national surveys, *Women's Lives and Challenges* evaluates levels and trends in women's access to education and health care, employment, domestic decision-making, and experience of violence.

"Gender equality is still an elusive goal for many countries," says Katie Taylor, USAID's Deputy Assistant Administrator for Global Health. "Supporting countries to expand women's and girls' access to healthcare, education, clean water, proper nutrition, and more, USAID is committed to translating data into policies and programs that save women's and girls' lives, improve their futures, and promote women's full participation."

Despite some notable gains, overall progress towards women's empowerment and gender equality is halting and inconsistent, the new report shows. For example, access to primary education is expanding for women worldwide, but more men than women are literate and have completed primary school in almost every country surveyed. While more than half of women are employed in the majority of countries surveyed, women are still less likely than men to be paid in cash for their work.

The new report will be released on March 7, 2014, during the forum -- "USAID's Enduring Commitment to Improving Women's Lives: Closing the gender data gap with the Demographic and Health Surveys." Invited guests include Carla Koppel, Chief Strategy Officer for USAID, Katie Taylor, USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator for Global Health of USAID, Ken Cummings, Foreign Affairs Adviser to Representative Van Hollen of Maryland, Ambassador Amina S. Ali of the African Union, Ambassador Koukku-Ronde of Finland, and Ambassador Kare Aas of Norway. The event will be live tweeted (@DHSprogram #WomensLives).

About The Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) Program

DHS is a USAID-funded program. USAID awarded the seventh round of the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) Program to ICF International and partners. DHS collects, analyzes, and disseminates accurate and representative data on population, health, HIV, and nutrition through more than 300 surveys in over 90 countries.

SOURCE The Demographic and Health Surveys Program

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