



HEALTH POLICY PROJECT / ASIA REGION

Building capacity for improved health policy, advocacy, governance, and finance

Community of Practice

GPM fostered a virtual community of practice (COP), comprising active members interested in convening around topics of gender, policy, measurement and scale-up.

- More than 1,500 individuals from 44 countries and territories joined the COP.
- The COP coordinated 15 webinars with a total of 892 attendees. Webinar presenters represented 11 organizations.
- In a member survey, 82 percent of respondents claimed the COP helped them stay up to date on topics of interest, and 56 percent said it helped them feel part of a broader community of like-minded people.

Visit the COP at <https://knowledge-gateway.org/global/ibpmembers/scale-up/gpm>.

Overview

The Gender, Policy, and Measurement (GPM) program, funded by the USAID Asia Bureau, collaborated with USAID health programs and other partners in the region to strengthen programs for scale-up in family planning (FP) and maternal, neonatal, and child health (MNCH). GPM, implemented by the Health Policy Project and MEASURE Evaluation, worked to address gender inequality and promote supportive policies and systems that foster sustainability and the scale-up of effective programs. It measured the impact of gender integration and policy implementation on health programs, a critical step in determining the efficacy of related activities. GPM also contributed to global scale-up efforts by synthesizing, disseminating, and facilitating shared learning on scale-up models, approaches, and monitoring systems, particularly related to gender and policy.

Dialogue Promoted for Shared Learning

GPM facilitated knowledge sharing around gender integration and scale-up at the country, regional, and global levels.

- Facilitated a Technical Exchange between Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to promote regional discourse and cooperation among policymakers and other government officials on gender and health topics. The exchange strengthened linkages between the Cambodian and Lao delegations for ongoing dialogue and learning on gender and health.
- Presented research findings at six major international health conferences and hosted satellite sessions at three international conferences.
- Drew more than 32,700 unique visitors to the GPM website and had 20,200 document downloads during the program's duration.

Evidence Gathered for Greater Investment in Gender Equality

To develop effective policies and programs that meet the different needs of women and men, policymakers and program implementers need information about the normative, socioeconomic, and political variables and power dynamics that impede and/or facilitate healthy behaviors and access to and use of health services. They also need evidence on effective approaches to address gender norms and improve health outcomes. GPM supported countries throughout Asia by generating important data related to gender norms, programs, and policies.

- Assessed health-related policies and programs in the Philippines to determine the country's strengths and gaps in addressing gender

Addressing the Different Health Needs of Women and Men

Conducting a gender assessment enables policymakers and program implementers to design policies and programs that better meet the needs of women and men, improve health status, and advance gender equality. GPM successfully developed and implemented a systematic gender assessment process in the Philippines. The steps included

1. Conduct an analysis of the gender and health context
2. Perform a desk review and policy assessment; analyze how policies address the differential needs of males and females and the gender relations and dynamics that underlie health
3. Conduct key informant interviews to validate findings from the desk review
4. Facilitate a validation workshop with key stakeholders
5. Summarize findings and recommendations in a final report

inequality. Recommendations were made to address gaps in four areas: respectful maternity care, men's engagement, gender sensitivity among health providers, and access to sexual and reproductive health information and services for adolescent girls.

- Conducted a systematic literature review to analyze the impact of gender-integrated programs on health outcomes. The review provided USAID/India and partners with evidence of the most effective strategies used by programs in low- and middle-income countries worldwide to address gender inequality and improve health status and behaviors.
- Documented the scale-up experiences of three gender-integrated programs in India. The study explored how gender components are sustained, valued, and/or compromised during the scale-up process. The findings provide valuable information for future scale-up initiatives.

Capacity Strengthened to Advance Policies and Programs for Gender Equality

GPM collaborated with host country partners to increase the knowledge and capacity of individuals and institutions—including USAID country offices, implementing partners, and ministries of health and gender—to incorporate gender into policy and program planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

Partners equipped with practical tools

- Helped the USAID/Philippines Health Office develop a strategy to operationalize the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy.
- With its partners, designed a gender-integration policy checklist for State Program Implementation Plans in India and trained USAID implementing partners and state-level government representatives on its use.
- Created an online resource, PolicyPreventsViolence.org, for policymakers and advocates. Policy Prevents Violence is an interactive, web-based toolkit that enables users to (1) learn about policy approaches to preventing violence against women, (2) undertake a guided situation analysis of their own country context, and (3) identify strategic entry points for advocacy and policy change.
- Developed a global programming approach and companion tool to provide program managers with a methodology to systematically integrate gender into initiatives to scale up health programs.
- Helped prepare the *Guide for Monitoring the Scale-up of Health Practices and Interventions*. The guide provides governments, donors, country organizations, and implementing partners with a low-cost and replicable approach to monitoring the scale-up of innovations in health.

Capacity increased to integrate gender into policies and programs

- With its partners, trained 137 government representatives, USAID country staff, and USAID implementing partners across Asia on integrating gender into health policies and programs. As a result,

- USAID implementing partners in India and the Philippines improved their projects' gender-integration processes, such as routinely conducting gender analyses; developing strategies to address gender inequality; and maintaining a formal system to routinely collect, analyze, and use sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive data.
- In Cambodia, the Ministry of Health's Gender Mainstreaming Action Group increased its confidence and ability to conduct gender analyses, assess existing policies for gender responsiveness, and integrate gender into new policies.

Capacity built to monitor gender-integrated programs

- Provided training and technical assistance to the Cambodia Ministry of Health's Gender Mainstreaming Action Group, which enabled it to develop and finalize monitoring indicators for its action plan.
- Provided training and technical assistance to USAID/Philippines staff and implementing partners, who can now define U.S. Government foreign assistance gender indicators, understand how lower-level indicators align under the selected foreign assistance gender indicator, and identify gender-sensitive indicators and apply them to programs.
- With MEASURE Evaluation and Suaahara (a USAID-funded nutrition project), co-created a strategy for monitoring and evaluating the scale-up of a gender-integrated health governance project in Nepal.

Health governance strengthened to improve gender-responsiveness

- With Suaahara and the government of Nepal, strengthened local health governance committees and developed a scalable model to ensure women and other disadvantaged groups are empowered to meaningfully participate in committee meetings and decision-making processes.
- In Laos, facilitated an institutional gender audit of the Ministry of Health Sub-commission for the Advancement of the Promotion of Women and used the results to design a capacity-strengthening road map.

The Way Forward

To build on GPM's successes in strengthening capacity and systems for gender integration, USAID and its partners should consider the following recommendations:

- Conduct short-term training and follow-up technical assistance to help policymakers and program implementers apply gender-integration tools during the design, implementation, and monitoring of policies and programs.
- Foster opportunities among USAID missions and implementing partners across Asia to share experiences and lessons learned in integrating gender into health portfolios.
- Expand the evidence base on the effectiveness of gender-integrated policies and programs (e.g., through regularly updating the literature review *Transforming Gender Norms, Roles, and Power Dynamics for Better Health: Evidence from a Systematic Review of Gender-integrated Health Programs in Low- and Middle-Income Countries*).

Strengthening Governance for Improved Health Services

GPM and Suaahara worked with the government of Nepal to revise its local health governance program to better address gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) and to pilot the program in six villages. The pilot test showed promising results. Village health committees, which are responsible for managing local health facilities, are now inclusive—which means representatives from diverse groups, including women, *dalits*, and *janjatis* actively participate in the committees. The committees are taking new steps to identify and address issues related to GESI; and therefore, access to high-quality health services is improving. Suaahara is working with the government to expand the program across two districts, and USAID is supporting an independent impact evaluation. The results should be available in 2017.

... I believe I am able to do gender integration more effectively, for example I could provide more specific feedback as I knew what to review and how to review policies and program from gender perspectives, and I had applicable tools to help with policy reviews.

—Workshop Participant,
Cambodia



Photo by Arundati Muralidharan

- Develop a corresponding curriculum to the Policy Prevents Violence online toolkit to further assist policymakers and advocates with conducting policy assessments and addressing prevention at the policy level, including through effective advocacy.

Selected Publications

- Promoting Gender Equality in India: Three Approaches to Scale-up
- Sample Monitoring and Evaluation of Scale-up Strategy for a Gender-Integrated Health Governance Project
- Gender Guidance Process and Template: A Tool for USAID Country Health Offices
- The Fade-away Effect: Findings from a Gender Assessment of Health Policies and Programs in the Philippines
- Transforming Gender Norms, Roles, and Power Dynamics for Better Health: Evidence from a Systematic Review of Gender-integrated Health Programs in Low- and Middle-Income Countries
- Integrating Gender into Scale-up Mapping Tool
- Promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Local Health Governance in Nepal
- Approach for Promoting and Measuring Gender Equality in the Scale-Up of Family Planning and Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health Programs
- Approach for Addressing and Measuring Policy Development and Implementation in the Scale-Up of Family Planning and Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health Programs
- Family Planning and Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health in Timor-Leste: Assessing Gender Constraints and Opportunities, Improving Outcomes
- Integrating Gender into the Scale-up of Family Planning and Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health Programs
- The Policy Dimensions of Scaling Up Health Initiatives

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The Health Policy Project is a five-year cooperative agreement funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development under Agreement No. AID-OAA-A-10-00067, beginning September 30, 2010. HPP is implemented by Futures Group, in collaboration with Plan International USA, Avenir Health (formerly Futures Institute), Partners in Population and Development, Africa Regional Office (PPD ARO), Population Reference Bureau (PRB), RTI International, and the White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (WVRA).

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