THE USAID GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMALE EMPOWERMENT POLICY: A REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION

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Advancing the Agenda of Gender Equality (ADVANTAGE)

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System		**LGBTI**	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex
ADVANTAGE	Advancing the Agenda of Gender Equality		**PAD**	Project Appraisal Document
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative		**POC**	point of contact
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy		**PPL**	Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative		**RDCS**	Regional Development Cooperation Strategy
E3	Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment		**RDMA**	Regional Development Mission for Asia
GE/FE	gender equality and female empowerment		**USAID**	United Stated Agency for International Development
GenDev	Office of Gender Equality and Female Empowerment			

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

In March 2012, USAID issued an updated, expanded Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GE/FE) Policy designed "to improve the lives of citizens around the world by advancing equality between females and males, and empowering women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies." The GE/FE Policy's goals are intended to be achieved by integrating gender equality and female empowerment throughout USAID's Program Cycle and related processes—strategic planning, programming, project design and implementation, evaluation, and monitoring—to position the Agency to respond systematically to gender gaps and inequalities.

The GE/FE Policy lays out several requirements related to gender integration at USAID, which were subsequently bolstered by the Automated Directives Systems (ADS) Chapter 205: *Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle* (ADS 205) in 2013.

The GE/FE Policy includes a requirement for USAID to "assess the implementation" of the Policy in 2015 to:

- Examine whether and to what extent GE/FE Policy requirements are being implemented
- Identify successes and challenges encountered in implementing the GE/FE Policy
- Gather information about the impact of the GE/FE Policy on USAID's programming and development results
- Identify gaps and lessons learned that can be used to strengthen USAID's work on gender equality and female empowerment going forward.

The USAID Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning (PPL) contracted EnCompass LLC to carry out portions of this assessment (see **Annex 1** for Statement of Work). This assessment report will be combined with two other PPL reports on gender integration in CDCSs and Project Appraisal Documents (PADs) to yield a final composite GE/FE Policy Assessment report for USAID.

METHODOLOGY

The EnCompass team (see **Annex 2** for EnCompass team members) collected data from 1,089 people between November 30, 2015 and February 19, 2016 through semi-structured individual and group interviews, participatory group discussions in Washington, D.C. and at three missions (Colombia, Regional Development Mission for Asia [RDMA], and Rwanda), and an online

survey (see **Exhibit 1**). The assessment team also analyzed solicitations for gender integration, reviewed documents, and observed events at two missions.

Exhibit 1: Sample by Method and Number of Stakeholders

Method	USAID/ Washington staff (including Gender Advisors)[1]	USAID/ Mission Staff (including Gender Advisors)	Washington, D.C.-based implementing partners	In-country implementing and external partners
Semi-structured Interviews (individual and group)	21	126	0	31
Participatory Group Discussions	10	0	21	23
Online Survey[2]	371	486	0	0
TOTAL	**402**	**612**	**21**	**54**

Broadly speaking, the data collection process examined the level of awareness of the content of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205; perceptions of what has changed in how USAID "does business" since the GE/FE Policy was released; perceived successes, challenges, and barriers to implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205; and perceptions of the impact of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 on USAID programming and related outcomes. Data collection also examined the extent to which USAID has sufficient resources, processes, and structures to fully implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. All tools and methods were developed in collaboration with USAID.

FINDINGS

The assessment findings provide an understanding of the rate of *adoption* of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 policy innovation, and how policy implementation has shaped attitudes (*buy-in*) and perceptions of the complexity or difficulty (*capacity*) to integrate gender across USAID's Program Cycle to achieve better development results. They also provide information on

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[1] Gender Advisors (Regional and Pillar Bureau) represent 48 percent of the USAID/Washington staff sample.

[2] While 922 people started the survey, not everyone completed it. Only 857 answered the question about whether they were USAD/Washington or field staff.

implementing partners' perspectives of USAID's adoption of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and how this has affected implementing partners. The findings are presented in five areas.

GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 Adoption: USAID staff are generally aware of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and believe that increased attention to gender equality and female empowerment has resulted. The GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have codified USAID's commitments and given gender champions leverage to elevate gender integration in USAID's work. Leadership support at all levels is a critical enabler of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 implementation, and Gender Advisors have played a key role in advancing implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Additionally, USAID operating units are generally complying with basic requirements of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

USAID Staff Buy-in: Missions have developed structures and processes to support gender integration beyond basic compliance with GE/FE Policy mandates, and to build accountability among USAID staff and implementing partners. However, while the GE/FE Policy has inspired changes in attitudes, there is some resistance to gender equality, female empowerment, and gender integration.

USAID Staff Capacity: Mission staff have limited capacity to integrate gender and tailored training and tools are desired, particularly related to monitoring and evaluation to measure progress toward gender equality and female empowerment. USAID's human resources policies and practices inadequately support implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. For example, the mandate for and demands on Regional Bureau and Mission Gender Advisors and POCs are high, yet their capacity to respond to these demands varies. Some USAID staff perceive the current USAID/Washington gender architecture as confusing and constraining to GE/FE Policy implementation.

Progress Towards Development Results: The GE/FE Policy has catalyzed USAID to collaborate with external partners and other U.S. Government agencies around gender equality and female empowerment. There has been progress toward integrating gender into USAID projects, but it is too soon to see outcomes at the development results level. Constraints to achieving development results include limited gender integration in USAID solicitations, and lack of time and financial resources needed to fully integrate gender throughout the Program Cycle.

Implementing Partners: Implementing partners are generally aware of the GE/FE Policy, believe that USAID has increased its attention to gender equality and female empowerment, and view USAID leadership at all levels as critical for implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Implementing partners working with missions visited have seen changes in Mission processes and requirements for integrating gender. Gender champions within implementing partner

organizations have leveraged the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 to elevate gender integration in their work. However, implementing partners have limited capacity to measure progress toward gender equality and female empowerment beyond sex-disaggregated data. While the GE/FE Policy has allowed implementing partners to be more intentional about integrating gender into proposals, implementing partners believe that gender integration in USAID solicitations is still weak.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strong messaging when the GE/FE Policy was launched conveyed that USAID was serious about gender equality and female empowerment, and gave the innovators and early adopters (usually gender champions) the authority and backing to take action and hold others accountable to gender integration. USAID has taken positive steps toward gender integration, but needs to act on the following recommendations to make additional progress in integrating gender throughout the Program Cycle:

- Clarify Gender Advisor roles and responsibilities, and invest in core skills and competencies to implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Strengthen capacity to monitor and evaluate gender integration results.
- Strengthen USAID staff capacity to monitor and evaluate gender integration results.
- Expand the range and number of capacity-building opportunities across the Agency to increase knowledge and skills related to gender integration.
- Develop focused tools and resources for gender integration, and a strategy for dissemination.
- Strengthen and deploy a gender workforce to maintain momentum, fill gaps, and relocate key gender personnel/offices to better respond to demands.
- Increase outreach, guidance, and capacity building to implementing partners.

INTRODUCTION

In March 2012, USAID issued an updated, expanded GE/FE Policy designed "to improve the lives of citizens around the world by advancing equality between females and males, and empowering women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies." The GE/FE Policy's goals are intended to be achieved through integration of gender equality and female empowerment throughout USAID's Program Cycle and related processes: strategic planning, programming, project design and implementation, evaluation, and monitoring. This integrated approach aims to position USAID to respond systematically to gender gaps and inequalities.

The GE/FE Policy lays out several requirements related to gender integration at USAID including those listed in **Exhibit 2**.

The GE/FE Policy articulates responsibilities related to gender for Mission and USAID/Washington operating units, as well as for staff in specific positions (e.g., Gender Advisors, Contracting Officers). The GE/FE Policy requirements were subsequently bolstered by the release of ADS Chapter 205: *Integrating Gender Equality and Female Empowerment in USAID's Program Cycle* in 2013. ADS 205 is a standalone chapter on gender integration that provides specific, concrete guidance on how to carry out the GE/FE Policy requirements, including a detailed description of how to conduct a gender analysis at the CDCS and project levels.

The GE/FE Policy includes a requirement for USAID to "assess the implementation" of the Policy in 2015 using "appropriate performance benchmarks," such as gender integration in CDCSs, an increase in budget attributions to gender in operating plans, and use of the standard gender indicators in performance plans and reports.

The **purpose** of the assessment is to:

> ## EXHIBIT 2: GE/FE POLICY REQUIREMENTS
>
> - All operating units must have a designated Gender Advisor or POC
>
> - All missions must have a Mission Order on Gender
>
> - Operating units must report, as applicable, against the four gender key issues in the annual operational reports, and performance plan and reports
>
> - Operating units are required, as applicable, to use and report on nine standard indicators on gender
>
> - Gender analysis must be carried out while developing USAID CDCSs and while designing projects
>
> - Staff must receive basic gender training

- Examine whether and to what extent GE/FE Policy requirements are being implemented
- Identify successes and challenges encountered in implementing the GE/FE Policy
- Gather information about the impact of the GE/FE Policy on USAID's programming and development results
- Identify gaps and lessons learned that can be used to strengthen USAID's work on gender equality and female empowerment going forward.

The PPL Bureau contracted EnCompass LLC to carry out portions of this assessment (see **Annex 1** for Statement of Work). This assessment report will be combined with two other PPL reports on gender integration in CDCSs and PADs to yield a final composite GE/FE Policy Assessment report for USAID.

POLICY FLOW: FROM DEVELOPMENT TO RESULTS

The ultimate purpose of the GE/FE Policy is to improve development results. Achieving the desired development results requires USAID to translate the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 into specific actions. Successful "translation" of the GE/FE Policy requires a paradigm shift in how gender is conceived, its role in USAID, and the resulting interventions carried out by implementing partners.

USAID's policies are designed to be dynamic. Policies may be validated and revised based on knowledge gained from the cycle of implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs.[3] The GE/FE Policy was developed with this iterative process in mind. **Exhibit 3** illustrates the flow of policy *adoption* from the GE/FE Policy document to USAID actions that lead to gender integration in projects and activities. USAID staff and implementing partners must *buy in*to the values behind the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and must have the *capacity* necessary to carry out the actions beyond the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 requirements (indicated by the arrows in **Exhibit 3**) in order to achieve the desired development results of advancing gender equality, and empowering women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from development of their societies.

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[3] USAID. 2012. *Program Cycle Learning Guide—DRAFT for comment.*
https://usaidlearninglab.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/DRAFT%20Learning%20Guide%207-17-12-2.pdf

Exhibit 3: The Flow of Policy Implementation- From Development to Results
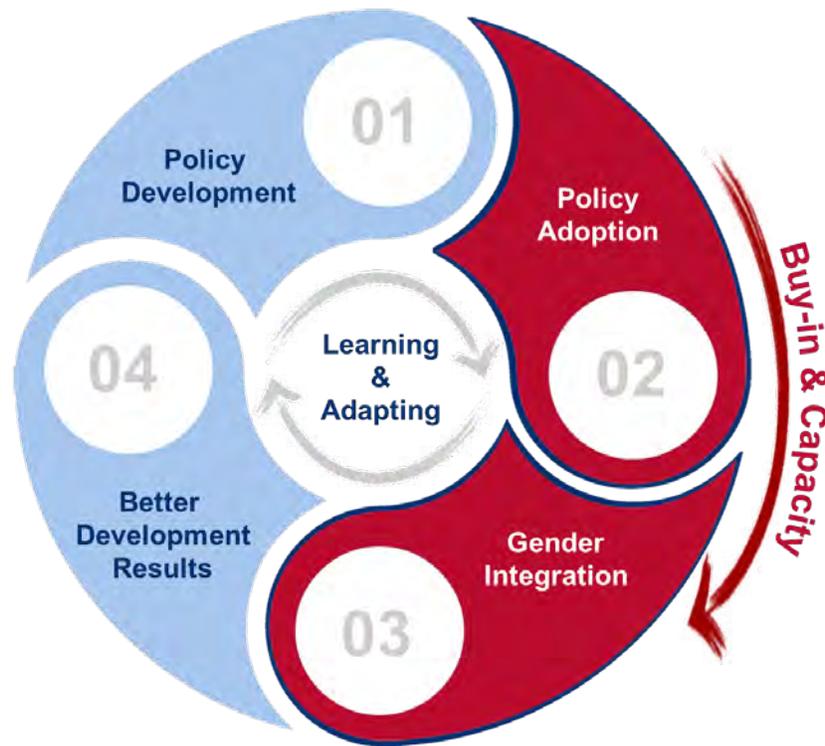
USAID's GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 represent a "policy innovation" in that they seek not only to change processes and procedures, but also perceptions of and attitudes about the importance of advancing gender equality and female empowerment. The literature on implementation of policy innovations suggests that leadership supporting the policy must develop a culture that encourages a shared and collective vision among staff that is aligned with the core values and concepts the policy (or programs resulting from the policy) is promoting. Policy implementation depends on a social system that modifies and shapes the attitudes of those within it to the benefits of a given innovation (*buy-in*).[4] One of the factors influencing attitudes of those charged with policy implementation is the extent to which staff perceive the policy as complex or difficult to use in combination with their own ability to implement (*capacity*).

Policy implementation research also demonstrates that a system's norms are important in influencing the rate of *adoption* of an innovation. Leaders or supervisors closest to staff (as opposed to leadership at headquarters) who do not endorse a policy have significant influence on the willingness of their staff to diverge from supporting a policy innovation. When staff do

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[4] Beets, M.W. et al. 2008. *School Climate and Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes Associated with Implementation of the Positive Action Program: A Diffusion of Innovations Model*. Prevention Science: Vol 9. 264–275. DOI 10.1007/s11121-008-0100-2.

understand the policy and the rules for implementing it, substantial numbers of staff become "principled agents" in fulfilling their professional roles in implementing the process or changes required to implement a policy. Strengthening enforcement practices is of crucial importance for staff who resist or discourage implementation of the policy.[5]

This assessment report provides findings, conclusions, and recommendations within a framework that acknowledges that policy innovation occurs in an iterative, non-linear process.

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[5] Vikolainen, V., de Bruijn, and H. Bressers. 2013. *Improving environmental policy enforcement*. Environmental Engineering and Management Journal: Vol.12 (8). 1637-1643. Available at: http://omicron.ch.tuiasi.ro/EEMJ/.

METHODS

SAMPLE, TOOLS, AND APPROACHES

To achieve the purpose of the assessment outlined above, the EnCompass team (see **Annex 2** for EnCompass team members) collected data from 1,089 people between November 30, 2015 and February 19, 2016 through semi-structured individual and group interviews, participatory group discussions in Washington, D.C. and at three missions (Colombia, RDMA, and Rwanda), and an online survey (see **Exhibit 4**). The assessment team also analyzed solicitations for gender integration, reviewed documents, and observed events at two missions. These methods and approaches are summarized here and described in detail in **Annex 3**.

Exhibit 4: Sample by Method and Number of Stakeholders

Method	USAID/ Washington staff (including Gender Advisors)[6]	USAID/ Mission Staff (including Gender Advisors)	Washington, D.C.-based implementing partners	In-country implementing and external partners[6]
Semi-structured Interviews (individual and group)	21	126	0	31
Participatory Group Discussions	10	0	21	23
Online Survey[7]	371	486	0	0
TOTAL	**402**	**612**	**21**	**54**

Broadly speaking the data collection process examined the level of awareness of the content of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205; perceptions of what has changed in how USAID "does business" since the GE/FE Policy was released; perceived successes, challenges, and barriers to implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205; and perceptions of the impact of the GE/FE

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[6] Gender Advisors (Regional and Pillar Bureau) represent 48 percent of the USAID/Washington staff sample.

[7] While 922 people started the survey, not everyone completed it. Only 857 answered the question about whether they were USAD/Washington or field staff.

Policy and ADS 205 on USAID programming and related outcomes. Data collection also examined the extent to which USAID has sufficient resources, processes, and structures in place to fully implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. All tools and methods were developed in collaboration with USAID.

- **Washington, D.C.-based semi-structured interviews**. Two members of the EnCompass team conducted individual interviews between December 16, 2015 and January 27, 2016 with 16 current and former USAID staff—most of whom were involved in developing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205—and one Mission Gender Advisor. The 60-minute semi-structured individual and group interviews explored perceptions related to implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, factors that enable and constrain gender integration at USAID, and changes in development outcomes as a result of gender integration. See **Annex 4** for semi-structured interview questions.

- **Washington, D.C.-based participatory group discussions.** Two members of the EnCompass team facilitated participatory group discussions between December 14, 2015 and January 13, 2016 with 14 USAID Regional and Pillar Bureau Gender Advisors, and 21 representatives from Washington D.C.-based implementing partners. The team held two 90-minute participatory group discussions each with Pillar and Regional Gender Advisors (and one telephone "make-up" group interview with four Pillar Bureau Gender Advisors who were unable to attend the in-person session) to explore successes and values related to integrating gender and implementing the USAID GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and what can be improved to build on the traction and progress to date. The EnCompass team also facilitated a 1-hour and 45-minute group discussion with implementing partners focused on successes and values related to how USAID and implementing partners have integrated gender as a result of the USAID GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and recommended next steps for USAID to further gender integration. See **Annex 4** for group discussion questions.

- **Global online survey**. EnCompass designed an online survey that USAID distributed via email to all USAID staff to capture the perceptions of the broadest possible array of USAID staff on their experience with and perceptions of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. The survey was open February 5 to 19, 2016, and contained 70 closed- and two open-ended questions. EnCompass received 922 total survey responses, of which 857 (93 percent) stated whether they were field or USAID/Washington staff, and 644 (70 percent) fully completed the survey. See **Annex 4** for survey questions and **Annex 5** for online survey outputs.

- **Solicitation analysis**. EnCompass developed a gender integration scorecard based on the ADS 205 (see **Annex 4**) to score and analyze the extent to which gender has been integrated into the sample of 78 USAID solicitations (34 from 2011 and 44 from 2014), representing 25 percent of the universe of 313 USAID solicitations that met the sampling

criteria. Solicitations were evaluated in eight review categories: 1) background; 2) statements of work, statements of objective, and performance work statements; 3) program descriptions; 4) monitoring and evaluation; 5) reporting; 6) key personnel; 7) past performance and core capabilities; and 8) evaluation or selection criteria. Sample solicitations spanned seven USAID regions and sectors, and three issuing entities and types. See **Annex 6** for list of solicitations analyzed.

- **Mission visits**. The EnCompass team and a PPL staff member spent 1 week at each of three selected USAID missions: Colombia, RDMA, and Rwanda. During this period, the EnCompass team conducted 60-minute semi-structured individual and group interviews across Mission offices and with implementing and external partners to explore perceptions related to implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, factors that enable and constrain gender integration at the Mission, and progress toward development results due to gender integration. In Rwanda, the EnCompass team facilitated a 90-minute participatory group discussion with implementing partners to explore changes in how USAID approaches gender equality and female empowerment, how implementing partners' work has changed in response to USAID's approach to gender equality and female empowerment, challenges to integrating gender, support received to integrate gender, and suggestions on next steps for USAID to better integrate gender into its work and promote gender equality and female empowerment. See **Annex 4** for interview and group discussion questions.

- **Document review**: The EnCompass team reviewed 46 documents from USAID/Washington and missions to develop data collection tools across methods and orient the EnCompass team conducting country visits to the Mission context vis-à-vis the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. A list of documents reviewed can be found in **Annex 7**.

- **Observations**: During the country visits, some members of the EnCompass team observed activities and interacted with participants at events in Bangkok and Bogota, which provided the team with an opportunity to witness and ask questions about the Mission's role as a collaborator with external partners around gender equality and female empowerment.

All interviews and group discussions were preceded by an informed consent statement and a request to audiotape, then were transcribed.

ANALYSIS

Transcripts from interviews and group discussions with USAID/Washington, Mission, and implementing partner (Washington, D.C.- and field-based) respondents were coded and analyzed (content and thematic) in Dedoose, a cross-platform application for data analysis. All data were disaggregated by respondent (e.g., USAID/Washington staff [non-Gender Advisor],

USAID/Washington Gender Advisor, Mission staff [non-Gender Advisor], implementing partner, external partner).

Survey response data were disaggregated and analyzed in Stata integrated statistical software package and Microsoft Excel using standard descriptive and comparative statistics. The EnCompass team also conducted additional analysis to observe trends among disaggregates of interest including: sex, length of employment at USAID, Gender Advisor status, "gender champion" status, USAID/Washington versus Mission, office type (e.g., program, technical, support), region location of Mission or field office, and technical sector. Responses to the two open-ended questions were coded and analyzed for trends and patterns (content and thematic) in Dedoose.

The 2011 sample solicitation (pre-Policy) scores were compared to the scores from the 2014 solicitations (post-Policy) to identify changes in gender integration in solicitations since the release of the GE/FE Policy. The 2011 data served as the comparative baseline for analysis. The data were analyzed in Excel. In addition to comparing datasets by year (2011 versus 2014), the data were also analyzed by region, sector, issuing entity, type of solicitation, and across solicitation sections (e.g., background, monitoring and evaluation, reporting).

The EnCompass team held a 3-day data analysis and interpretation session March 23 to 25, 2016 to triangulate data across all sources. During the participatory meeting, team members developed and synthesized key findings across five assessment areas: 1) extent to which implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have led to gender integration; 2) enablers of gender integration; 3) constraints to gender integration; 4) contribution to development results; and 5) next steps. The EnCompass team drafted conclusions and recommendations for each assessment area to align with the synthesized key findings and created a framework for the assessment report. On April 4, 2016, the EnCompass team presented and discussed the draft findings and "narrative arc" to nine USAID staff from the Administrator's Office, PPL, and the Office of Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GenDev).

More details on data analysis can be found in **Annex 8**.

LIMITATIONS

While this assessment triangulated a range of data sources and reached out to all USAID staff in the online survey, actual survey respondents may represent those with a stronger positive bias towards gender integration and positive feelings towards the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. It was not possible to obtain information on the distribution of USAID staff by location, technical area, or type of office to determine the representativeness of the resulting survey sample. Interviews and group discussions in Washington, D.C. were conducted with Regional and Pillar Bureau Gender Advisors, former and current USAID staff who were engaged in the development of the

GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and implementing partners most deeply engaged in gender integration. Therefore, they are not representative. The three missions visited were selected based on criteria that indicated successful implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and are not representative of the range of missions. The solicitation sample was not large enough to detect significance between the small differences seen for specific components of the checklist, or for the overall score. The scorecard used for the solicitations was based on illustrative, not mandatory, questions in the ADS 205, which may account for the overall low scores across both years. Limitations are further detailed in **Annex 8**.

FINDINGS

The assessment findings provide an understanding of the rate of *adoption* of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 policy innovation, and how policy implementation has shaped attitudes (*buy-in*) and perceptions of the complexity or difficulty to use in combination with their own ability (*capacity*) to integrate gender across USAID's Program Cycle to achieve better development results. They also provide information on implementing partners' perspectives of USAID's adoption of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and how this has affected implementing partners.

The findings are presented in five areas:

1. **GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 Adoption**: Awareness of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, compliance with its mandates, and key enablers of and constraints to implementation
2. **USAID Staff Buy-in**: Changes in attitudes and behaviors, and resulting actions moving beyond compliance
3. **USAID Staff Capacity**: Individual and organizational areas needing strengthening to identify and address gender gaps throughout the Program Cycle
4. **Progress Towards Development Results**: The degree to which gender integration has led to improved development results
5. **Implementing Partners:** Knowledge of the GE/FE Policy and perceptions of challenges, gaps, successes, and impact of policy implementation for both USAID and implementing partners.

GE/FE POLICY AND ADS 205 ADOPTION

The following findings provide information on USAID staff awareness of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, compliance with its mandates, and key enablers of and constraints to implementation.
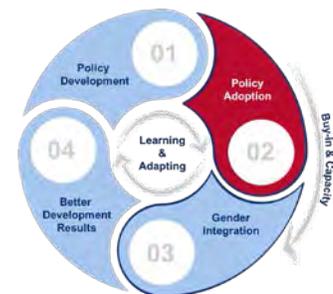
> **USAID staff are generally aware of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and believe that increased attention to gender equality and female empowerment has resulted.**

Online survey respondents and interview and group discussion respondents from USAID/Washington and missions visited demonstrated high levels of awareness of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. **Exhibit 5** illustrates levels of awareness among online survey respondents, with 65 percent of respondents saying they have at least looked at the GE/FE Policy.

Exhibit 5: USAID Staff Awareness of the GE/FE Policy (Online Survey Q10, n=893)

0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

■ Have read carefully ■ Have taken a look at it ■ Aware of it, but never looked at it ■ Never heard of it
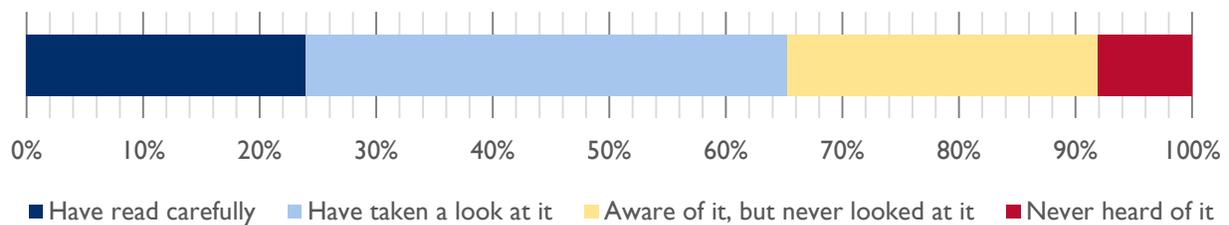
Among online survey respondents, Gender Advisors and POCs reported higher levels of awareness of the GE/FE Policy than the broader USAID workforce. Online survey respondents who have been with USAID less than 1 year reported lower GE/FE Policy awareness: 20 percent of these respondents had not heard of the GE/FE Policy, compared with only 8 percent of online survey respondents as a whole. Online survey respondents with more than 1 year at USAID had very consistent levels of GE/FE Policy awareness.[8]

USAID interview and group discussion respondents in both Washington, D.C. and at missions visited viewed the increase in awareness as a positive step forward.

> *In the past 3.5 years, there has been a significant difference in gender awareness. Knowledge has increased a lot. Acquired through the Gender101 training, [with] which at one point the Mission had 100 percent compliance with completion… There is still a lot to go, but there has been a great advancement from gender equals disaggregation by sex to better understanding of gender. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

USAID interview respondents in Washington, D.C., at missions visited, and online survey respondents indicated an increased focus on gender equality and female empowerment within the Agency and among implementing partners since the GE/FE Policy was launched. These respondents stated that USAID staff and implementing partners are more aware of gender equality and female empowerment because USAID has prioritized these areas since 2012.

> *I think that in that 3-year period, and certainly if I think of 2002 to 2015, there is a huge change in people being more open, more knowledgeable of what gender means. Not being against it, or thinking it was stupid or silly. I'm thinking about my first 5 years here at USAID was very, very different. – USAID/Washington Gender Advisor group discussion*

> *I think, it's more like it created a very enabling environment and there's a broad awareness now that we have a policy, that the [GE/FE] Policy means we focus on integrating gender. People might not know what the details and nuances of that are, but I think it has created a very palatable shift in just the vibe about gender in the Agency*

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[8] Online Survey Question 10. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

compared to pre-policy where people know that it matters. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.

Online survey respondents, of staff whom had an opinion on the question,[9] 84 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the GE/FE Policy has raised awareness of gender equality and female empowerment in their respective Bureau or Mission.[10] Sixty-nine (69) percent of survey respondents with an opinion on the question agreed that staff in their respective Bureau or Mission have demonstrated commitment to implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and that the GE/FE Policy has directly contributed to making the work of their Bureau or Mission more gender-sensitive.[11] Seventy-nine (79) percent of online survey respondents with an opinion on the question also agreed that USAID staff are more gender-aware than they were prior to the GE/FE Policy.[12]

Interview respondents at one Mission visited remarked that simply having an agency-wide GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 provided the Mission with a valuable mandate to prioritize gender integration internally, and promote gender equality and female empowerment externally.

> *[The Mission] is touted as a strong Mission because we are talking about it [gender equality]. Maybe not 100 percent of time, but it is growing. We have moved past gender equals female. We are thinking about gender norms, approaching activities through a gender lens... We have devoted so many resources to ourselves, and now we are appreciating [that] we need to 'share the love' with our implementing partners. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

2 | The GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have codified USAID's commitments and given gender champions leverage to elevate gender integration in USAID's work.

USAID/Washington respondents, including Gender Advisors, credited the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 with creating an enabling environment and a "framework" for gender integration, and empowering "gender champions" (those committed to gender equality and female empowerment) to push their agenda forward and more effectively integrate gender into USAID's work. Over 60 percent of online survey respondents (Washington, D.C.- and Mission-based

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[9] Throughout this assessment report, respondents "with an opinion" are those who did not mark "Don't know" or "Not applicable" as their response to a survey question. For full responses to all survey questions, see Annex 5: Online Survey Output.

[10] Fourteen (14) percent of applicable responses to this question (Question 67) came from staff with less than 1 year of experience at USAID, and thus may not have first-hand knowledge of the evolution of GE/FE Policy awareness at USAID. However, these staff answered consistently with their more tenured peers, suggesting that they have similar perceptions of this process.

[11] Online Survey Question 67. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

[12] Online Survey Question 69. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

staff) self-identified as gender champions (see **Exhibit 6**). Of the online survey respondents who said they were gender champions, only 26 percent were Gender Advisors or POCs. This indicates that there are potential advocates for gender integration in the Agency beyond those officially designated as such.

Exhibit 6: USAID Staff who Identify as Gender Champions (Online Survey Q9, n=768)
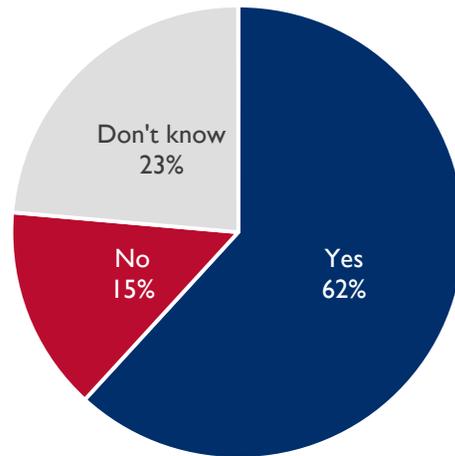
Additionally, in response to the statement, "Overall, I am a good advocate for the GE/FE Policy,"[13] 70 percent of online survey respondents (both Mission- and Washington, D.C.-based), with an opinion on the statement, either agreed or strongly agreed.

USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, spoke of their appreciation of the GE/FE Policy as a framework for gender integration at USAID. USAID/Washington interview respondents said that they have been able to use the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 as tools to support their efforts to integrate gender into USAID's work. One such respondent spoke of how ADS 205 has been a catalyst for conducting gender analyses at project and activity levels, and how the findings from these analyses have helped address the existing gender gaps.

> *I have to say that what I appreciate most is that it [the GE/FE Policy] does provide a foundation for doing gender analysis, and really articulating and communicating that gender matters in the work that we do... We have a lot of policies and guidance in USAID, but the fact that we have a chapter [in the ADS] that tells us how to operationalize our Gender Policy is huge and it really allows us that framework to do gender integration into our work. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

The ease of integrating gender now, as opposed to pre-Policy, was mentioned numerous times by USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors. USAID/Washington

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[13] Online Survey Question 15. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs

interview respondents and online survey respondents shared the view that gender champions' efforts to leverage the GE/FE Policy, combined with increased awareness about the importance of gender equality and female empowerment among USAID staff and implementing partners, have facilitated gender integration into USAID's work.

> *So the [GE/FE] Policy I think is pretty good at making that case in ways that begin sort of [to] diffuse the resistance that people have. Thinking it's not my issue, but somebody else's. And I think it does give anyone who is committed to the issue within the Agency the authority to point to something like the [GE/FE] Policy and say it is Agency policy and we need to find ways to make this work. So, I think it has been effective in that, for this reason. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

At the missions visited, interview respondents spoke of other staff who championed the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 to bring about changes for better gender integration in USAID's work and go beyond the basic requirements. These respondents spoke of how "gender champions" in leadership positions (e.g., Front Office, Program Office, Technical Leads) have made gender a strategic priority and their consistent messaging on the importance of gender has bolstered buy-in from staff at all levels. Interview respondents at missions visited also indicated that the GE/FE Policy gave leadership at all levels the backing to say, "this is what we do," and to hold Mission staff accountable for doing it. For example, all three missions visited established Gender Working Groups, had gender POCs in most of technical and administrative offices, and were providing internal training and events to raise awareness and capacity of Mission staff to integrate gender into their work.

At one Mission visited, interview respondents said that the Program Office has been a strong advocate for ensuring gender integration into project design documents and that, when the Gender Advisor was away, the Program Office ensured that gender integration was well covered. Interview respondents at this Mission gave examples of the Program Office sending documents back to the Technical Office if gender was not well integrated and referring them back to the relevant gender analysis. One interview respondent at a Mission visited said that the Program Office is "the owner of the [sic] gender integration." Mission interview respondents spoke of how the Front Office and Program Office have reinforced and communicated consistently about the importance of integrating gender into the Mission's work.

3 | Leadership support at all levels is a critical enabler of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 implementation.

USAID/Washington respondents, including Gender Advisors, interview respondents at missions visited, and online survey respondents indicated that effective GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 implementation has occurred when leadership at all levels has actively supported gender integration by providing consistent messaging that gender is a priority, allocating sufficient resources, and establishing enforcement and accountability mechanisms. These same

respondents cited supportive leadership as making a difference in their ability (and the ability of others) to implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Some USAID interview respondents at the missions visited shared stories about resistant or unaware leaders who have made it more difficult for Mission staff to effectively implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

USAID/Washington respondents, including Gender Advisors, highlighted the importance of having supportive leadership for gender integration, especially at the highest levels of the Agency.

> *I think over the last 3 to 4 years, there's been a much stronger emphasis, particular[ly] with when Deputy Administrator Steinberg was here and Carla Koppell started onboard as the first senior agency advisor on gender, that was truly championed within the Agency on a constant basis, and I think that was very helpful to have the champion and then follow through with the [GE/FE] Policy and codify it within Agency policy. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

The key role of leadership was also a notable theme in the online survey responses. Across all demographic groups, online survey respondents reported that leadership commitment at various Agency levels was important to successful GE/FE Policy implementation. Most online survey respondents agreed that leadership is committed to the GE/FE Policy and has acted as a key enabler for the GE/FE Policy implementation (see **Exhibit 7**).

Exhibit 7: Perceptions of USAID Leadership Commitment to the GE/FE Policy (Online Survey Q15 and Q41)
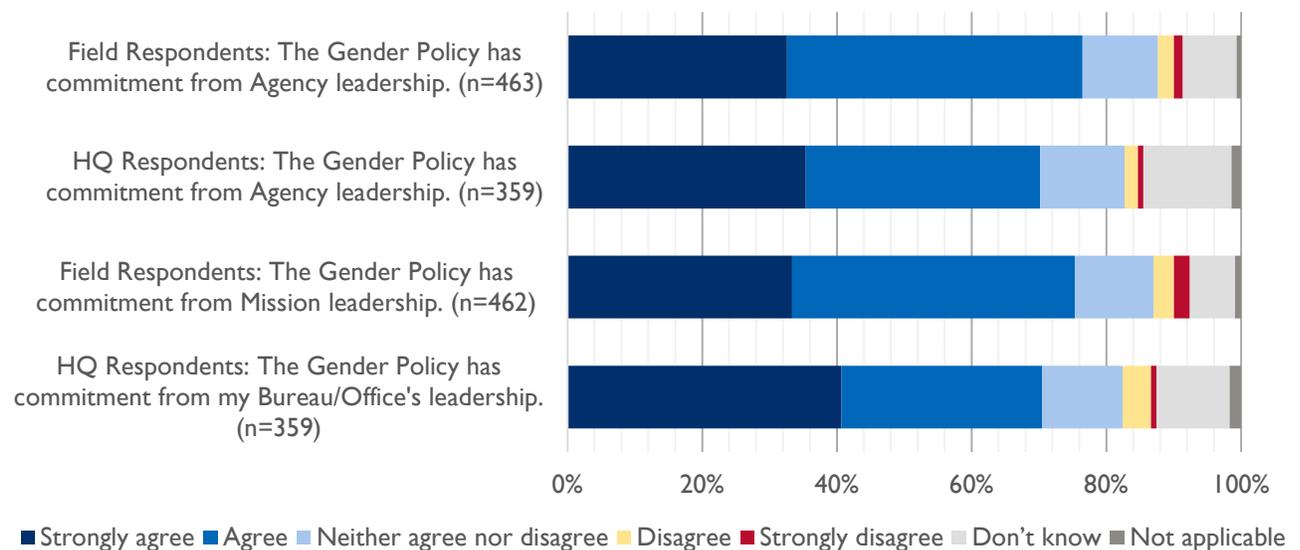
Interview respondents at missions visited spoke of the power of leadership, especially the Front Office, in championing gender equality and female empowerment to set the tone for staff and partners to integrate gender into their work. Specific actions mentioned by these respondents included allocating time and resources to Mission staff, mandating gender integration into

project designs, ensuring that all staff take the Gender 101 course, and empowering Mission staff to hold implementing partners accountable for gender integration. Interview respondents at missions visited also acknowledged that the Front Office alone is insufficient to ensure gender integration across the Mission, and that Office Directors set the tone for their office. Interview respondents at missions visited shared examples of Program Managers who placed a strong emphasis on the implications for gender in activities and making an effort to keep the gender focus evolving as work plans evolve.

> *Support from Front Office is key and I can't imagine us accomplishing everything we have without it. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

> *But I do think that it's crucial of having Mission managers to be champions of gender... I do think that can have a huge impact on how much programs keep that in their minds; how much they really have it on the forefront. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

| 4 | **Gender Advisors have played a key role in advancing implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.** |

Online survey respondents and interview respondents at missions visited said that Gender Advisors have played a central role in implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Over half of USAID Mission online survey respondents indicated that they have reached out to Mission Gender Advisors, POCs, and Mission Program Offices[14] when they have had questions about the GE/FE Policy. The majority of online survey respondents viewed these sources as useful and overwhelmingly sought out their assistance on the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. For all sources listed in **Exhibit 8**, 85 percent or more of online survey respondents indicated that they received "useful" or "moderately useful" assistance when they reached out with question about the GE/FE Policy or ADS 205.

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[14] Gender Advisors who responded to the online survey were distributed fairly evenly between "sitting" in the Program Office and Technical Offices; they were not overwhelmingly in the Program Office.

Exhibit 8: Sources Sought by Mission Staff for assistance with the GE/FE Policy or ADS 205 (Online Survey Q16)

Legend: ■ Sought Assistance From this Source ■ Didn't Seek Assistance From This Source ■ Not Applicable

Chart categories (top to bottom):
- Mission Program Office (n=408)
- Mission Gender Advisor (n=410)
- Mission Gender Point of Contact (n=398)
- Gender Working Group (n=399)
- Implementing Partner (n=388)
- Regional Bureau Gender Advisor (n=392)
- Regional Mission Gender Advisor (n=389)
- GenDev Office (n=392)
- Mission Front Office (n=394)
- Pillar Bureau Gender Advisor (n=387)
- PPL Gender Advisor (n=388)
- Office of the Sr. Gender Coordinator (n=388)

Similarly, interview respondents at the missions visited indicated that an engaged Gender Advisor with strong technical skills has played a critical role in implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. These respondents described their Mission Gender Advisor as a central force for promoting gender integration both internally and externally, and shifting gender integration from a "cross-cutting theme" to a central focus through advocacy, support, and information. USAID interview respondents at missions visited emphasized the importance of having someone with deep technical expertise who can be a critical technical resource for integrating gender into their work serve as a sounding board and an advocate for gender integration, provide technical assistance in gender analysis and gender-sensitive indicators, provide information and access to training and webinars on gender, and serve as an interlocutor between the Mission and USAID/Washington. These respondents shared that they appreciated having a dedicated Gender Advisor as opposed to having gender "tacked on to someone's job description."

> *It helps tremendous[ly] to have someone of [the Gender Advisor's] caliber to just guide me through it. What I appreciate most is the practical nature of the guidance she's provided. It's always been very 'value added' in that it's operational… It's not theoretical, it's practical. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

> *The Gender Advisor was really involved in the development of each analysis and working with Technical Offices to then make those analyses available to inform for solicitations, sometimes put out as supplemental documents. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

5 | **USAID operating units are generally complying with basic requirements of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.**

Data from all sources indicate that a number of GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 requirements have been implemented across operating units: developing Mission Orders on Gender, conducting gender analyses for a CDCS or Regional Development Cooperation Strategy (RDCS) and PADs, and hiring or appointing Gender Advisors.

Regarding the GE/FE Policy requirement to develop a Mission Order on Gender, approximately 70 percent of missions with online survey respondents had at least one respondent who reported reading their Mission Order on Gender. However, many responses, including from within the same Mission, were inconsistent. Overall, over 50 percent of online survey Mission respondents did not know if their Mission had adopted or updated a Mission Order on Gender in the last 3 years. Across offices, respondents at all missions visited were aware of the Mission Orders on Gender at their Mission and indicated that their Mission Order on Gender had played an important role in supporting and monitoring gender integration across the Mission by creating internal structures and systems.

> *The existence of the GE/FE Policy and the Mission Order [on Gender] has generated a streamlined, systematic approach to gender analysis and examination of gender issues in projects. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

Data from missions visited and the online survey also show that missions have conducted gender analyses at RDCS, CDCS, and PAD levels. The online survey found that respondents from most missions believed that their Mission had conducted gender analyses at either the CDCS, RDCS, or PAD levels.[15] Sixty (60) percent of online survey respondents reported that they were aware of a CDCS or RDCS gender analysis at their Mission, and 47 percent reported they were aware of a PAD gender analysis.[16]

There is a gap in awareness among online survey respondents of gender analyses between different categories of Mission staff, as illustrated in **Exhibit 9**. Gender Advisors, Technical Office staff, and Program Office staff were more knowledgeable about their Mission's completion of gender analyses, and were more likely to have participated in a gender analysis, particularly Gender Advisors and POCs.[17] Thirty-eight (38) percent of online survey respondents with an opinion on the question agreed that the "level of staff time and skill to do gender

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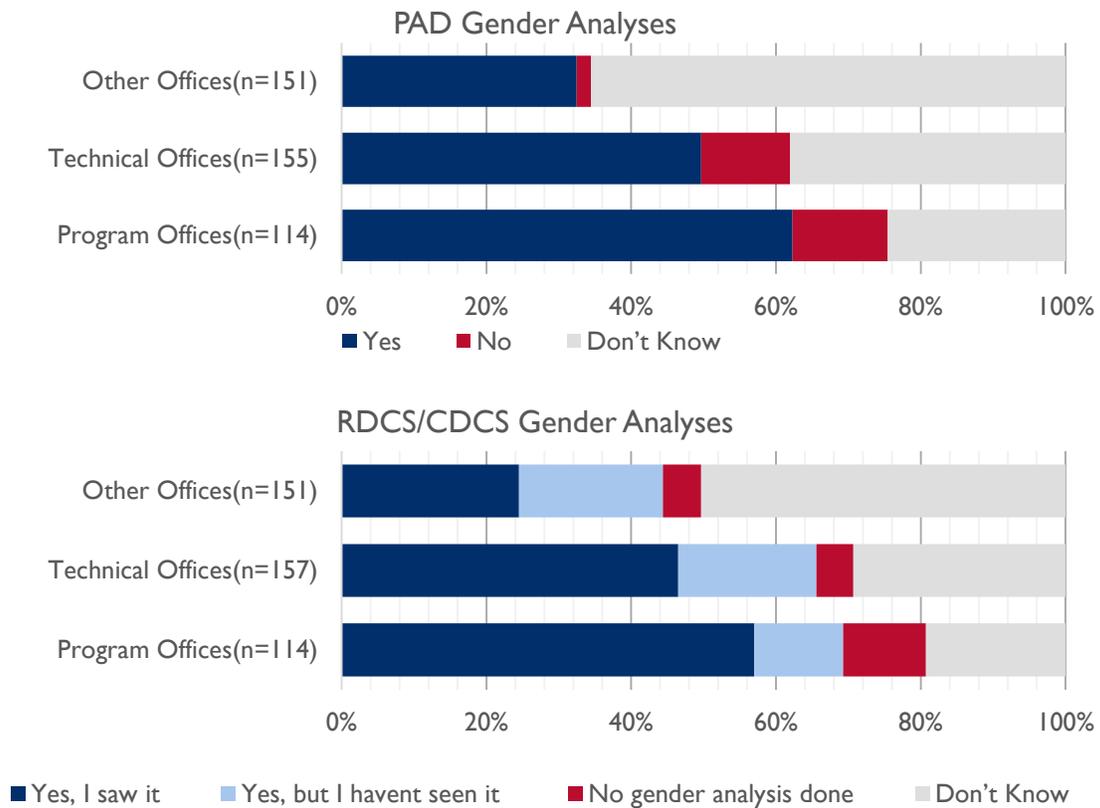[15] The survey data cannot show the definitive number of missions that conducted gender analyses because respondents from several missions provided inconsistent answers. Thus, "awareness" of a gender analyses is the most precise level of measurement possible.

[16] Online Survey Questions 19 and 22. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

[17] Online Survey Question 23. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

analyses and integrate the findings into PADs and CDCS" was a constraint to implementing the GE/FE Policy.[18]

Exhibit 9: CDCS, RDCS, and PAD Gender Analyses Conducted at Missions (Online Survey Q19 and Q22)

PAD Gender Analyses

Other Offices(n=151)

Technical Offices(n=155)

Program Offices(n=114)

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Yes   ■ No   ■ Don't Know

RDCS/CDCS Gender Analyses

Other Offices(n=151)

Technical Offices(n=157)

Program Offices(n=114)

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Yes, I saw it   ■ Yes, but I havent seen it   ■ No gender analysis done   ■ Don't Know

Several interview respondents, from both USAID/Washington and missions visited, reported that one of the key benefits of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 has been the clarity and structure provided to the required gender analysis process. Some USAID interview respondents from missions visited reported programmatic benefits as a result of these analyses. For example, an interview respondent at one Mission visited remarked that gender analyses have increased understanding of gender issues, added value to project designs, and contributed to better outcomes for beneficiaries. This sentiment is supported by the online survey data, which showed that respondents who reported that they had read or participated in their Mission's RDCS,

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[18] Online Survey Question 68. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

CDCS, or PAD gender analyses, widely agreed (over 90%) that the gender analyses were very useful, useful, or somewhat useful in identifying gender inequalities and their root causes.[19]

> *My experience with USAID in those days [2002-2004] is that gender analysis was basically something that everybody just ticked a little box and wrote a paragraph, and the Gender Policy is really what's changed gender analysis, especially ADS 205. And it's completely changed the way we do gender analysis... We use the ADS 205 as the structure to do the gender analysis; that didn't happen before. – USAID/Washington Gender Advisor group discussion*

USAID STAFF BUY-IN

This section presents findings related to how USAID staff perceive the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 to have modified and shaped attitudes towards gender equality and female empowerment and gender integration, and how staff have taken actions beyond the basic GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 requirements.
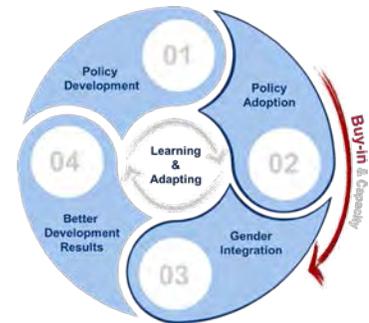
| **6** | **Missions have developed structures and processes to support gender integration beyond basic compliance with GE/FE Policy mandates, and build accountability among USAID staff and implementing partners.** |

Respondents from the online survey, and interviews at USAID/Washington and missions visited indicated that USAID staff have taken the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 requirements seriously, and instituted implementation and accountability processes to ensure gender integration in their work. A number of interview respondents from USAID/Washington and missions visited explained that this accountability has been facilitated by the fact that "the GE/FE Policy has teeth" so holding individuals accountable to gender integration has been easier since the release of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

Interview respondents at missions visited provided examples of structures and processes instituted to integrate gender that go beyond the basic GE/FE Policy and the ADS 205 requirements, particularly:

- Dedicating human resources such as Gender Working Groups, Gender Review Boards, and gender POCs for all offices
- Developing tools and approaches for holding Mission staff and implementing partners accountable for gender integration.

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[19] Online Survey Questions 20 and 24. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

Interview respondents from the missions visited spoke about the importance of dedicating human resources to ensure gender integration across the Mission and with implementing partners, particularly Gender Working Groups, Gender Advisors, and Gender POCs.[20] These respondents spoke of how such human resources provided valuable technical support, such as integrating gender into PADs, program descriptions, statements of work, solicitations, developing gender-sensitive indicators, and building knowledge of and capacity in gender equality and female empowerment across the Mission.

At one of these missions, Gender Working Group members and Mission leadership described a "Gender Scorecard" they developed to monitor their progress towards integrating gender into both technical work and organizationally. These respondents said that the Scorecard provided information on the percentage of solicitations submitted for review and approval by the Gender Review Board, percentage of activities that monitor gender-sensitive performance indicators beyond sex disaggregation, percentage of staff who express confidence in applying the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 guidance into their day-to-day work, and percentage of staff who express satisfaction in the technical assistance provided by the Gender Advisor, Gender Working Group, and Gender Review Board.

One interview respondent from this Mission remarked that using the Gender Scorecard helped the Mission identify gaps in gender integration and take concrete steps to correct those oversights, such as ensuring that data are disaggregated by sex across activities. The Gender Advisor and Gender Working Group members from the same Mission talked about administering a survey to measure levels of Mission staff perceptions of and confidence in integrating gender into their work, and to explore staff engagement in gender integration activities. These respondents said that such tools have been useful for tracking Mission advancement because "if we can't be honest with ourselves as a Mission on what we are doing well, and what we are not doing well, how can we hold [others] accountable?"

> *[GE/FE] Policy implementation has meant hiring staff, has been hiring of Gender Advisor. It has also meant putting systems in place, like the Gender Review Board, which provides clearance on all of the PADs. We have a structured Gender Working Group in place that can be part of design teams. So we've put systems in place that provide technical support for everyone. People know that it's a priority... We're measuring ourselves and holding ourselves accountable. The release of the [GE/FE] Policy alone doesn't make the difference so much as the implementation at each Mission. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

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[20] Forty-four (44) percent of field-based survey respondents reported that their Mission has a Gender Working Group, and 78 percent reported that their Mission has at least one Gender Advisor or POC. Online Survey Question 36 and Question 30. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

Interview respondents at all missions visited said that the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 had been used as a tool and enforcement mechanism to hold implementing partners accountable for integrating gender, and to elevate gender integration from something partners *should* do to something partners *must* do. At one Mission, interview respondents stated that solicitations now have explicit requirements to include a gender strategy with the proposal. USAID interview respondents at this same Mission described a process whereby, during the project launch meetings, the Gender Advisor or Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)/Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) explained the Mission's expectations for the strategy: that it should connect to the broader project goals, describe how the project will promote gender equality and social inclusion, and explain foreseen bottlenecks, risks, or anything that may halt their proposed work. The respondents said that these discussions were explicitly linked to the GE/FE Policy, Mission values around gender equality and social inclusion, and alignment with the PAD gender analysis, and that the Mission has used these gender strategies as a monitoring tool for implementing partners.

> *I think it [the GE/FE Policy] gives us more the public visibility. It's helped more with getting implementing partners and other donors understanding what we were doing... I think it [the GE/FE Policy] made it [gender equality] more visible, and particularly that we were going to hold ourselves accountable externally. So then people began to think: let's take this a bit more seriously. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

USAID/Washington interview respondents said that there is still more work to be done on accountability because staff are often overburdened and struggle to prioritize gender integration given the limited accountability for gender integration at USAID/Washington. USAID/Washington interview respondents also highlighted the fact that USAID needs to hold implementing partners more accountable for gender integration, and should develop processes and procedures to help implementing partners hold USAID accountable as well.

> *If I were held accountable to do a better job at looking at all the RFAs and RFPs, I would pay attention to that... [but]I have a lot more responsibilities than just making sure that people are integrating gender. So, I have a better understanding that people have a lot of other work on their hands. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

> *I think we need to make it easier for them [implementing partners] to hold us accountable for it. Be sure that we enable them and that we ask them for their gender strategy, and that we need to put gender stuff into RFPs, not just sex-disaggregated stats, but use gender work plans, an annual gender work plan... It needs to become part of what we allow them to do so that those gender champions in the field, who haven't been able to champion much, can hold us accountable. – USAID/Washington Gender Advisor group discussion*

7 | **While the GE/FE Policy has inspired changes in attitudes, there is some resistance to gender equality, female empowerment, and gender integration.**

A few USAID interview respondents at missions visited reported some resistance to gender integration mostly in the form of cultural beliefs, social norms, and views that gender equality and female empowerment are not relevant to their sector or country, as well as an overall lack of interest. There were a few examples of resistance from USAID/Washington interview respondents as well in terms of working with partners in country who perceived that gender roles and norms hindered them from identifying gender gaps and modifying interventions accordingly. USAID interview respondents at missions visited cited cultural norms and religious beliefs among Mission staff, implementing partners, and community members as sometimes hindering more gender integration.

> *Some cultural constraints. Even [locals] who work here in the Mission may have a grain of resistance though they know better than to say so here at work. But even though they know better than to say so, it is a sign of progress. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

At one Mission visited, a few USAID respondents reported "no pushback" from staff on gender, while some others disagreed describing "extreme pushback" from technical teams to conduct gender analysis and take responsibility for it. One interview respondent at the same Mission mentioned "too much gender" and argued against including gender in all solicitations because they felt like they had "to invent a problem to get past the gender review." While two other interview respondents at the Mission remarked that gender issues are not relevant to all programs and that USAID's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) focus "dilutes" the focus on gender. Some interview respondents at the same Mission mentioned resistance from implementing partners as well as inside the Mission, attributing this to cultural values, and grappled with the question of how to maintain gender at the forefront of implementation in such contexts.

> *When we see in those programs, we see efforts to empower women, sometime we think it is too much. It might be different if you go to other countries where women need this. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

CAPACITY TO INTEGRATE GENDER THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM CYCLE

This section provides findings on the extent to which USAID staff perceive the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 as complex or difficult to use, and what individual and organizational areas need strengthening to make gender integration less complex and difficult to identify so that USAID staff can address gender gaps throughout the Program Cycle.
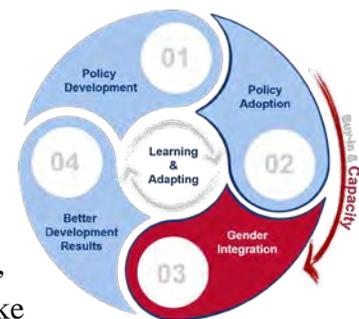
8 | **Capacity of USAID staff to integrate gender is limited, and tailored training and tools are desired.**

USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, emphasized that staff capacity to implement the GE/FE Policy is limited, and referred to a gap between knowledge and capacity. USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, and online survey respondents indicated that they would benefit from targeted training opportunities and technical guidance that speaks directly to their role, sector, and tasks at hand. These respondents also asked for training that recognizes that USAID staff members have different learning styles, is relevant and engaging, and matches staff interests and the existing expertise and skills. These respondents also suggested that staff who are new to USAID and unfamiliar with gender integration should take Gender 101, but that a more nuanced, "higher-level," and sector-specific understanding of gender is needed.

> *I think we need to go beyond making Gender 101 mandatory, I think that's really basic. It's really keeping the bar very low. I mean come on. I think, at the very least, you should go through 102 and 103, and how that would [be] a mandatory thing. I mean you are designing projects, you should have the whole gamut of training. You should not be designing programs without those trainings. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

Approximately 80 percent of USAID staff who responded to the online survey indicated that they had completed the Gender 101 training within the past 3 years. These data were corroborated by interview respondents at missions visited, almost all of whom said they had completed the Gender 101 training. According to the online survey respondents, Gender 102 and 103 trainings were completed at much lower rates within the past 3 years: approximately 25 percent reported taking the Gender 102 training and 18 percent reported taking the Gender 103 training (see **Exhibit 10**).

Exhibit 10: USAID Gender Training Completion (Online Survey Q11)
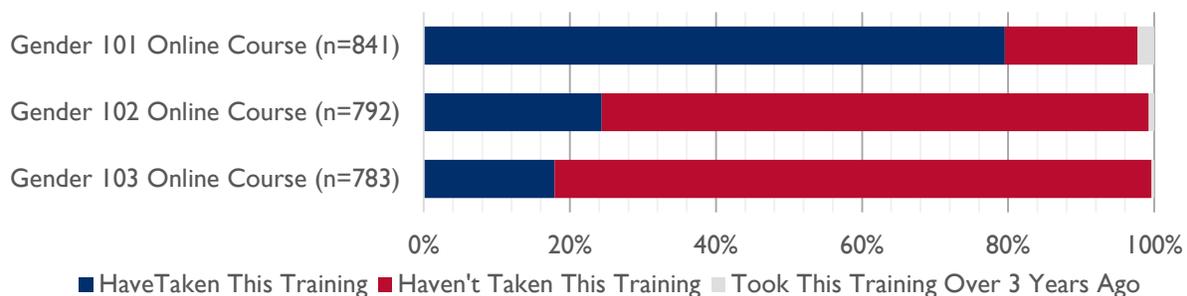
Over 90 percent of those online survey respondents who took the Gender 101 training indicated it was at least somewhat useful for implementing the GE/FE Policy. While slightly more respondents rated the Gender 102 and 103 trainings as very useful or useful (see **Exhibit 11**).

Exhibit 11: USAID Gender Training Usefulness (Online Survey Q11)

Gender 101 Online Course (n=669)
Gender 102 Online Course (n=193)
Gender 103 Online Course (n=140)

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ Training very useful ■ Training useful ■ Training somewhat useful ■ Training not useful
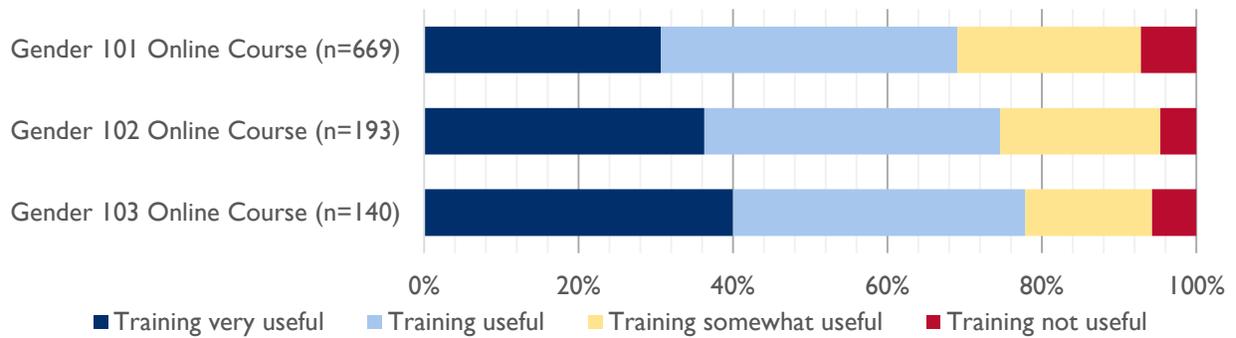
Gender Advisor online survey respondents reported having taken the Gender 101 training at a higher rate (over 90 percent) and found these trainings more useful than their non-Gender Advisor counterparts (see **Exhibit 12**).

Exhibit 12: Gender 102 and Gender 103 Training Completion and Usefulness by Gender Advisor and non-Gender Advisor (Online Survey Q11)

Gender 101: Gender Advisors who attended this training (n=113)
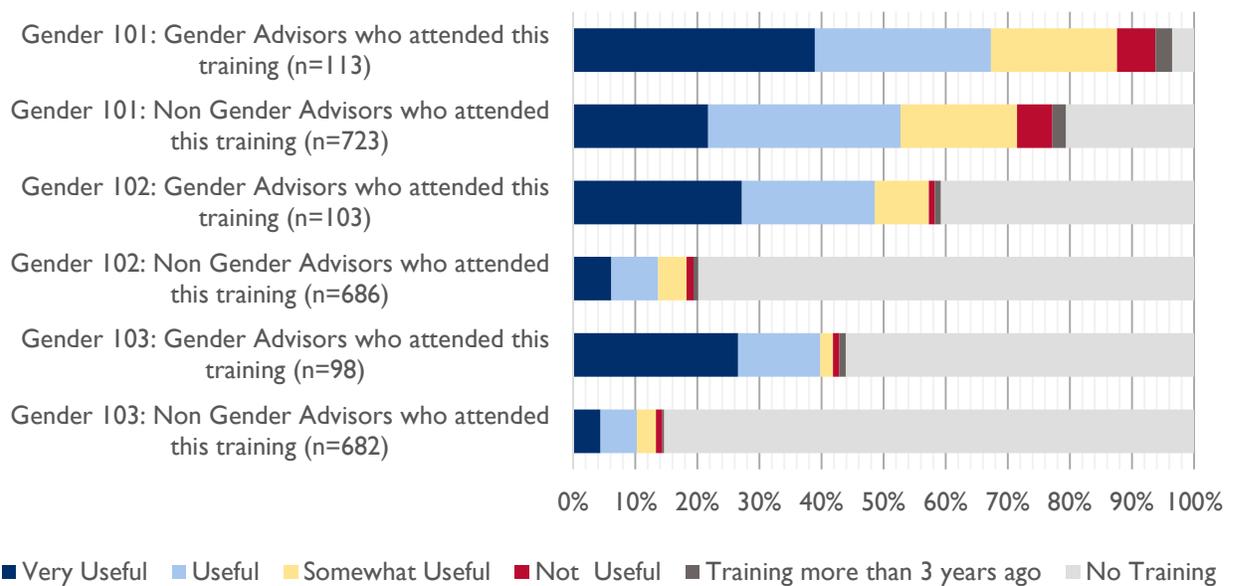Gender 101: Non Gender Advisors who attended this training (n=723)
Gender 102: Gender Advisors who attended this training (n=103)
Gender 102: Non Gender Advisors who attended this training (n=686)
Gender 103: Gender Advisors who attended this training (n=98)
Gender 103: Non Gender Advisors who attended this training (n=682)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Very Useful ■ Useful ■ Somewhat Useful ■ Not Useful ■ Training more than 3 years ago ■ No Training

A few interview respondents at missions visited mentioned other trainings that have helped them integrate gender into their work, and some were unaware that the Gender 102 and 103 trainings existed. One USAID/Washington interview respondent remarked that the mere existence of the Gender 101, 102, and 103 trainings was an important achievement of the GE/FE Policy.

> *People have not taken Gender 102 and 103. Some are aware of them, but not even the Gender Advisor or Gender Working Group members have taken them. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

> *When I first came here, there were no gender trainings and now we have three online trainings, and sectoral trainings, and the ones that EnCompass does, and we used to have zero. That's just one example of sort of the growth of things that I think really are*

related to having the [GE/FE] Policy, and having that policy connote an increased focus and attention on gender at the Agency level. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.

Some interview respondents at missions visited said that they felt confident in their abilities to integrate gender while others cited lack of knowledge as a constraint. One such respondent described a survey their Mission conducted to assess staff confidence in applying USAID guidance on gender integration in their day-to-day work. The interview respondent said that 73 percent of the Mission's survey respondents reported that they felt confident they could do so, but noted that support staff felt less confident than technical staff, which is understandable given their role.

A number of interview respondents from Technical Offices at missions visited indicated areas in which they would like to build their expertise or receive more training. These interview respondents expressed uncertainty about how to integrate gender into some specific sectors, such as energy and infrastructure, and indicated that other sectors, in their estimation, appeared to lend themselves to gender integration more clearly, such as health and agriculture. Two interview respondents at two missions visited mentioned the *Africa Regional Training of Trainers: Teaching Gender Integration to USAID Implementing Partners* held in November 2015 (which they heard about, but could not attend) as a good example of USAID moving toward training for staff who are not experts, but are responsible for reviewing documents and providing input. Several interview respondents at one Mission visited suggested that training focus on enabling staff to move beyond valuing gender equality to practical skills for integrating gender into development work to produce better results.

Interview respondents at missions visited recognized the need to deepen and broaden capacity at the Mission level to create ownership for gender integration across offices. One of these respondents outlined the risks of relying on external rather than internal capacity for core tasks remarking, "We can be contracting this out forever and teams will never own this." Interview respondents at missions visited explained that many staff do not have the formal gender training necessary to have the knowledge and confidence to improve their work internally, and to hold implementing partners accountable to gender integration.

> *Need more training on specifically how not addressing gender affects your results. Not just "it's the right thing to do," but it will result in better outcomes. Case studies help people understand a compelling story, can sway people to do more. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

Requests for training were voiced by multiple interview respondents at missions visited, often in tandem with discussions of time and resource limitations that have been constraints to deepening their knowledge.

> *Should have mandatory annual training on gender, need more than just the online course, like the ethics training, which is only an hour long. If it turns into multiple days,*

it is hard because there are so many demands on time. Looking at existing training as well and how to tag on sessions on gender... For a lot of online courses people don't know if they should take them. They know they have to do Gender 101, but other people will think, 'well I'm not on the [Gender Working Group] so I don't need to take it.' It would be good to send out information about this again. – USAID interview, Mission visit

Interviews with staff at USAID/Washington and missions visited indicated that training geared toward those in specific roles, such as Mission leadership positions, Contracting Officers, and AORs/CORs would be particularly beneficial. USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, and online survey respondents indicated the need for Contracting Officer- and AOR/COR-specific gender training. One USAID/Washington interview respondent remarked that even when gender is initially integrated into a project design, the AOR/COR may cut language from the solicitation due to lack of awareness of gender integration, which can hinder gender integration, especially at the project level. Interview respondents at the missions visited suggested that gender also be incorporated into Mission Director training, given the important role the Mission Director plays in ensuring implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

> *Get the Contract[ing] Officers fully trained up and onboard with strengthening gender integration in solicitations and procurements. And make sure a gender expert checks up on their efforts. AORs/CORs and other Mission staff have little power to ensure gender integration at the implementation level if the contract/agreement doesn't push for it. – Online survey respondent, Gender POC, Mission*

> *Also for Mission Director training what might be very helpful is an executive level Mission Director-level course in Technical Areas. You get thrown into being a Mission Director with only a few mandatory courses. This is why you need to be an advocate for this... even a 1-day blast on gender might be too much because the Mission Director just needs to know why it is important, not how to do the assessment. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

Interview respondents at USAID/Washington and missions visited offered myriad ways in which to deliver training that both meets staff needs and time constraints, such as:

- Provide a variety of training formats that are accessible to different learning styles. For example, several respondents at missions visited remarked that they did not retain learning from online training, and other respondents said that they learned best through conversations with colleagues on what gender means for their work.
- Hold trainings at missions. Several respondents at missions visited suggested training the Gender Advisor to train other Mission staff.
- Integrate gender into the core trainings for Technical Officers and Acquisition and Assistance Officers to increase awareness of the importance of gender and how it is relevant to their work.
- Allow for more frequent training for gender POCs.

Interview respondents at missions visited repeatedly voiced a desire to understand what gender integration means for their work and expressed a need for guided applications of tools to complete required or recommended tasks. These respondents suggested alternatives to training, such as discussions among peers to tailor gender integration to specific tasks and contexts, and site visits (within the country) between Technical Officers and the Gender Advisor to better understand gender gaps in target communities. Interview respondents from missions visited also said that they found toolkits and other resources, such as the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index and a guide to gender and land tenure, useful for conducting gender analysis or focusing on specific gender issues for their projects, and shared these tools with their implementing partners who adapted them to the local context.

Interview respondents at the missions visited described how their Gender Advisors have developed tools to meet their Mission's specific resource needs such as "quick guides" to the Mission Order on Gender. Interview respondents in Washington, D.C. and at missions visited requested more sector-specific training and resources, such as checklists or summaries of best or promising practices, to support staff with limited gender expertise to better integrate gender, monitor progress, and evaluate outcomes.

> *We need tools to help us understand if the implementing partners are doing what they should be doing. We also need to make better use of custom gender indicators. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

9 | USAID staff lack capacity to measure progress toward gender equality and female empowerment.

Across all missions visited, technical and support office interview respondents asked for more capacity building on how to develop and collect data for gender-sensitive indicators in order to better understand how their activities address gender inequalities. Interview respondents from these missions also voiced concerns about how to capture results at the project level. These respondents said that they understood that gender-sensitive indicators needed to be developed and tracked, but were uncertain of how to do so or report on changes in gender equality outside of standalone gender-specific project components. Interview respondents at all missions visited remarked that projects need to go beyond sex-disaggregated data, but determining how to do that was a challenge. These respondents also said that they would like to use data for strategic planning and project design purposes, but accurate and timely data were not always available at the project level.

Interview respondents at missions visited also wished for more support to learn how to measure gender-related results and outcomes, and spoke of the need for more guidance on including gender into performance plan reports and how to report on gender indicators. They also noted that better understanding of gender-sensitive indicators would help them hold implementing

partners accountable for achieving the gender equality outcomes they proposed in their solicitations and work plans.

> *We track how the performance and indicators, counting of the number of women and men, disaggregating the data, but how can we link the data to the budget to ensure we achieved something that we can report? That is just a question I am putting out. Ensuring that the budget that is attributed to gender, even secondary, has achieved the objectives that the Mission has as priorities in the field of gender. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

> *We count how many women attend things, at a training for example. I don't know if we, as social scientists, we quite yet know how to capture the outcomes for gender… but it would be great if someone could help us get that in our monitoring and evaluation plans. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

This was corroborated by the solicitation analysis, which found that few solicitations called for the use of one or more of the nine standard F gender indicators. Of the 44 solicitations in the 2014 sample, only 7 (16 percent) mentioned use of the standard indicators on gender.[21]
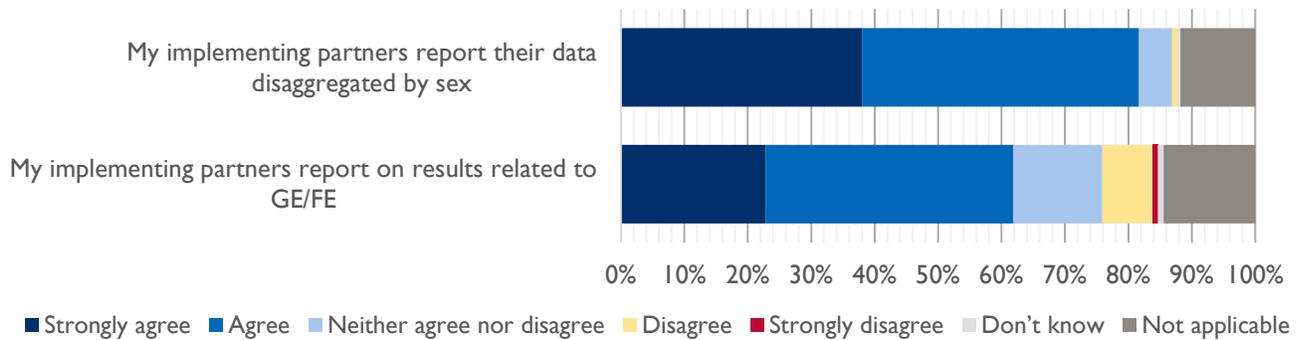
> *When I got here the [GE/FE] Policy was super new so what we did at that stage was to see if our programs match in any way the objectives of the Gender Policy. After that, as gender was a criteria for the selection process, we started to not only keeping track of how the programs did in gender, but also having gender F indicators. But as not all gender F indicators apply, that has been a challenge so we created some gender outcome indicators. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

A similar trend was seen among online survey respondents. Over 80 percent of AOR/COR respondents agreed with the statement: "My implementing partners report their data disaggregated by sex."[22] While only 60 percent of online survey respondents agreed that their implementing partners "report on results related to gender equality and female empowerment" (see **Exhibit 13**).

Exhibit 13: AORs and CORs Report Implementing Partner Monitoring and Evaluation Practices Related to GE/FE (Online Survey Q66, n=228)

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[21] Of the seven solicitations that included standard gender indicators, six were issued by bilateral missions and one was issued by a Regional Mission. USAID/Washington issued no solicitations that encouraged the use of the standard gender indicators in this sample.

[22] Online Survey Question 66. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

My implementing partners report their data disaggregated by sex

My implementing partners report on results related to GE/FE

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know ■ Not applicable

Interview respondents at missions visited and online survey respondents remarked that understanding how to effectively capture gender-related outcomes is challenging for many implementing partners and USAID staff. Interview respondents in Washington, D.C. and at missions visited noted that the current pool of standard gender indicators can be difficult to use.

> *In terms of challenges in the [GE/FE] Policy, I think the idea of standardized indicators did not work, and [the indicators] weren't picked up very well. I think there are just too many challenges with standardizing outcome indicators and it can be costly. So, I think our approach to monitoring and evaluation was somewhat naïve. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

At all three missions visited, interview respondents wished for more skills in how to collect gender-sensitive data, stronger capacity to develop custom gender-sensitive indicators, and increased ability to hold implementing partners to higher monitoring and evaluation standards. At one Mission visited, interview respondents voiced concerns about how to capture results at the activity level, understanding that more nuanced reporting is required, but uncertain of how to achieve this level of reporting. Some of these respondents were unsure of how to develop gender-sensitive indicators or report on gender outside of standalone, gender-specific project components.

> *What is equity in representation – [is it] participation in workshops? Participation in training programs? You get the 50:50, but what does that mean? Are they speaking out? Some of these things are hard to measure, hard to pinpoint. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

10 USAID's human resources policies and practices inadequately support implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, stated that USAID's human resources systems have not yet caught up with the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and that performance management and promotion processes should better take into account USAID's

commitment to gender as articulated in the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. This was corroborated by online survey respondents, 41 percent of whom had an opinion on the question reported that the "level of staffing or resources" constrains the implementation of the GE/FE Policy.[23]

USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, highlighted the need for human resources policies and practices, including hiring systems, staffing priorities, performance evaluations, and promotion criteria, to be more clearly linked to implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Online survey respondents spontaneously mentioned in open-ended questions that USAID's human resources policies and practices are not currently aligned with the needs of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

USAID/Washington Gender Advisor group discussion participants believed that the current human resources guidance on Gender Advisor role and responsibilities is inadequate and a need exists to establish full-time Gender Advisors in each Mission/operating unit with clear statements of work. This was echoed by a Gender Advisor interviewed at one of the missions visited who remarked on the lack of clarity and guidance in the GE/FE Policy ("one small paragraph describing the position") and the ADS 205 ("vague description"). This same Gender Advisor also commented on USAID/Washington's expectations for the Gender Advisor position and suggested that job descriptions be developed that clearly articulate roles and responsibilities within the Mission, with USAID/Washington, and with partners (external and implementing).

> *Implementation of the [GE/FE] Policy at our Mission is still limited. Our Project Design and Gender Specialist cannot commit 100 percent on gender (his position was designed to be half on project design and half on gender). The next step for the Mission is for the Mission leaders to prioritize gender and equip the Mission with adequate resources: human resources and materials. – Online survey respondent, Non-Gender Advisor, Mission*

> *We've been saying this from the beginning because the [GE/FE] Policy references the responsibilities of human resources. But there's no guidance and there is a lot of resistance. There is nothing for people to go off of when developing positions. No one has looked at how much time should be spent on gender for a given budget or portfolio. Even for us, as Gender Advisors and POCs. Currently, the [GE/FE] Policy says that any Mission with a budget of more than $25 million needs to have a Gender Advisor and to me, that is the most arbitrary thing. – USAID/Washington Gender Advisor group discussion*

USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, also highlighted the need to integrate gender into USAID's hiring processes. This would include evaluating potential

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[23] Online survey Question 68. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

candidates for employment with USAID based on their "gender sensitivity." The same respondents cited the need to include gender in annual evaluations, promotion processes, and USAID's core competencies. Developing a USAID/Foreign Service backstop for gender was also mentioned spontaneously by USAID/Washington interview and online survey respondents (in open-ended questions) who remarked that creating this position could help implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 across the Agency.

> *A Foreign Service gender backstop should be seriously considered. Agency backstops haven't changed in YEARS... we're still staffing to meet the needs of the Agency decades ago. – Online survey respondent, Non-Gender Advisor, Mission*

> *So my wish would be – just as we have a bar, a standard around technical expertise in a number of different fields in the Agency – we should hold that same standard to gender in terms of our hiring practices, in terms of our evaluations, etc. In the core competencies. I think it's hugely important. – USAID interview respondent, Washington, D.C.*

" | The current USAID/Washington gender architecture is confusing to some and seen as constraining GE/FE Policy implementation across the Agency.

USAID/Washington interview respondents, especially Gender Advisor group discussion respondents, as well as online survey respondents both Gender Advisors and non-Gender Advisors in open-ended questions, described the current USAID/Washington gender architecture as confusing and at times conflicting. These respondents explained that the structure in which GenDev, PPL, and the Senior Coordinator's office share leadership for gender equality and female empowerment is not clear enough regarding leadership responsibilities, specifically in regard to GE/FE Policy implementation. These same respondents explained that the current architecture has created confusion around USAID's gender messaging, funding streams, and priorities.

USAID/Washington Gender Advisors in group discussions, in particular, highlighted the manner in which the current gender architecture has made their role more challenging due to the lack of clear hierarchy and shared authority of GenDev, PPL, and the Senior Coordinator's Office. These respondents said that this lack of clarity has left them wondering who exactly is in charge of gender at USAID, and who is ultimately responsible for ensuring implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 across the Agency.

> *I think the biggest issue with how the way the GenDev office is set up, with the Senior Gender Coordinators' Office is a huge issue. You have an office that implements the Policy, which is GenDev, and then you have the Senior Coordinator who manages the funds that we get. There is a huge disconnect in that... Because the office [GenDev] is the one that is implementing all of this. And I think that the Senior Coordinator's role is very important because it's the face of the Agency on gender issues, and I think it's critical to have that. But I don't think that they should delegate the funding and have such an oversight on what GenDev gets to do. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

In addition to the multi-pronged leadership structure, USAID/Washington Gender Advisors in group discussions remarked that GenDev "is buried" in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3). USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, and online survey respondents stated that the location of GenDev has been a hindrance to cross-agency GE/FE Policy implementation because GenDev often responds to the needs of the E3 Bureau before engaging with the broader Agency. According to USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, the GenDev Office lacks a strong cross-agency mandate, although issues of gender equality and female empowerment cut across every USAID technical sector, Bureau, and Mission. USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, suggested moving GenDev into the Front Office or PPL in order to expand its reach and establish it as a cross-agency office with enough power and status to ensure effective GE/FE Policy implementation.

> *And the other huge issue is that gender is housed in E3 and they are completely separate from [my Bureau], and it's an issue for all the Pillar Bureaus. And is a particular issue for the DRG center where all the other social inclusion issues are housed and they have a rights-based approach, and GenDev has a very technical approach and they don't talk to each other and disagree on the best way to go about integrating gender. That is really tricky and we don't have a consistent message and someone needs to be in charge and that means changing the leadership structure. – USAID/Washington Gender Advisor group discussion*

Washington, D.C.-based Gender Advisors, and some non-Gender Advisor online survey respondents to open-ended questions, remarked most often, and spontaneously, about the need to restructure the current USAID/Washington gender architecture. These individuals regularly interact with and seek direction from the current gender architecture and are likely to be affected by the structure, coordination, and delegation of responsibilities. This sentiment was corroborated by online survey respondents, fewer than 40 percent of whom agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "I think the Agency's current organization and structure for the implementation of the Gender Policy is working."[24]

12 | The mandate for and demands on Regional Bureau and Mission Gender Advisors and POCs are high, yet their capacity to respond to these demands varies.

Interview respondents in Washington, D.C. and at missions visited remarked on the substantial workload that has been placed on Regional Bureau, and Mission Gender Advisors and POCs, and suggested that further staffing and support are needed.

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[24] Online Survey Question 67. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

At missions visited, interview respondents across offices described the role of the Gender Advisor as one that involves a broad and daunting array of tasks that may include serving as the lead Mission technical expert on gender integration (conducting gender analyses, facilitating trainings related to gender integration, ensuring that gender is incorporated into procurements and solicitations); chairing the Mission's Gender Working Group; building staff capacity and systems for integrating gender throughout the Program Cycle; conducting site visits; fostering partnerships; positioning the Mission as a thought leader in gender equality and female empowerment; and participating in meetings on gender issues organized by the both the donor community and the government.

Interview respondents at missions visited consistently remarked that their Gender Advisor was "fully engaged and in high demand," and that having a single expert responsible for their Mission was insufficient. Across all three missions visited interview respondents said that their Gender Advisor needed more support due to competing demands, and suggested expanding sources of support to alleviate this burden on a single individual and to improve access to technical support within their Mission.
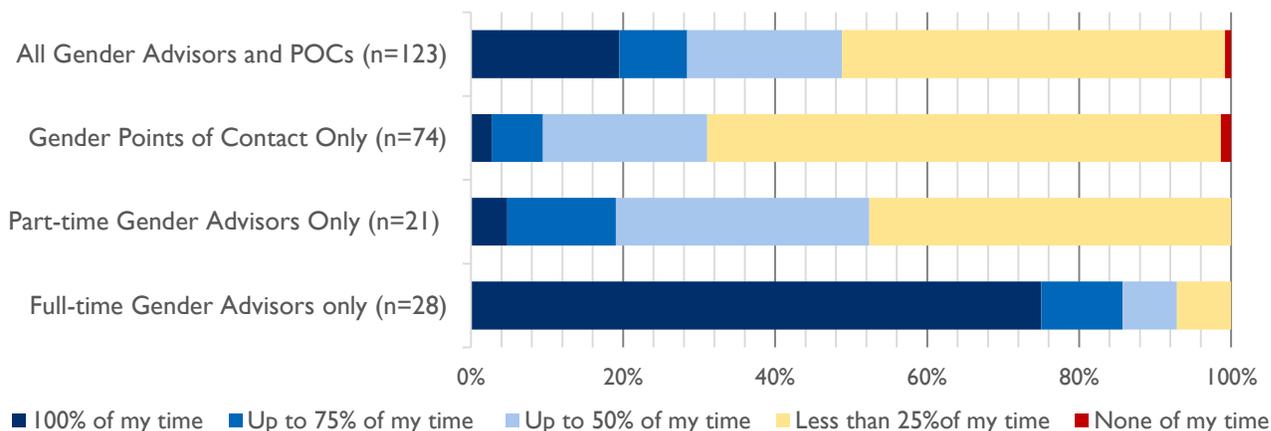
> *I'm not sure, it would be great if we have more technical support from Washington. [The Gender Advisor] is very good, but she has to cover the whole region so she is very busy. – USAID interview, Mission visit*
>
> *[Our Gender Advisor] is great and she helps us a lot, but she is only one person. So, if we are really serious about getting this gospel out, then we need someone who backs her. Because, basically now, she can't take vacation. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

Online survey data supported this claim. Online survey respondents included both Gender POCs and part-time and full-time Gender Advisors. Half of these respondents reported that they spent *less than 25 percent* of their time on gender-related tasks. Even among full-time Gender Advisor respondents, 25 percent reported dedicating less than 100 percent of their time to gender-related tasks (See **Exhibit 14**).[25]

Exhibit 14: Gender Advisor and POC Time Spent on Gender-related Tasks (Online Survey Q6 and 7)

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[25] Online Survey Question 6 and 7. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

All Gender Advisors and POCs (n=123)					
Gender Points of Contact Only (n=74)					
Part-time Gender Advisors Only (n=21)					
Full-time Gender Advisors only (n=28)					

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

■ 100% of my time ■ Up to 75% of my time ■ Up to 50% of my time ■ Less than 25% of my time ■ None of my time

Mission Gender Advisors were cited by online survey respondents as a primary source for questions about the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Concurrently, Mission Gender Advisors online survey respondents were more likely to reach out with questions (both to other Gender Advisors and other sources, such as GenDev) than Mission staff online survey respondents in general, indicating that Gender Advisors are both a source of knowledge and actively seeking knowledge from other sources (See **Exhibit 15**). Several Gender Advisors interviewed at the missions visited discussed reaching out to USAID/Washington Gender Advisors and gender leadership for technical support and policy implementation guidance.

Exhibit 15: Gender Advisors are More Likely to Seek Assistance to Questions about the GE/FE Policy (Online Survey Q16)
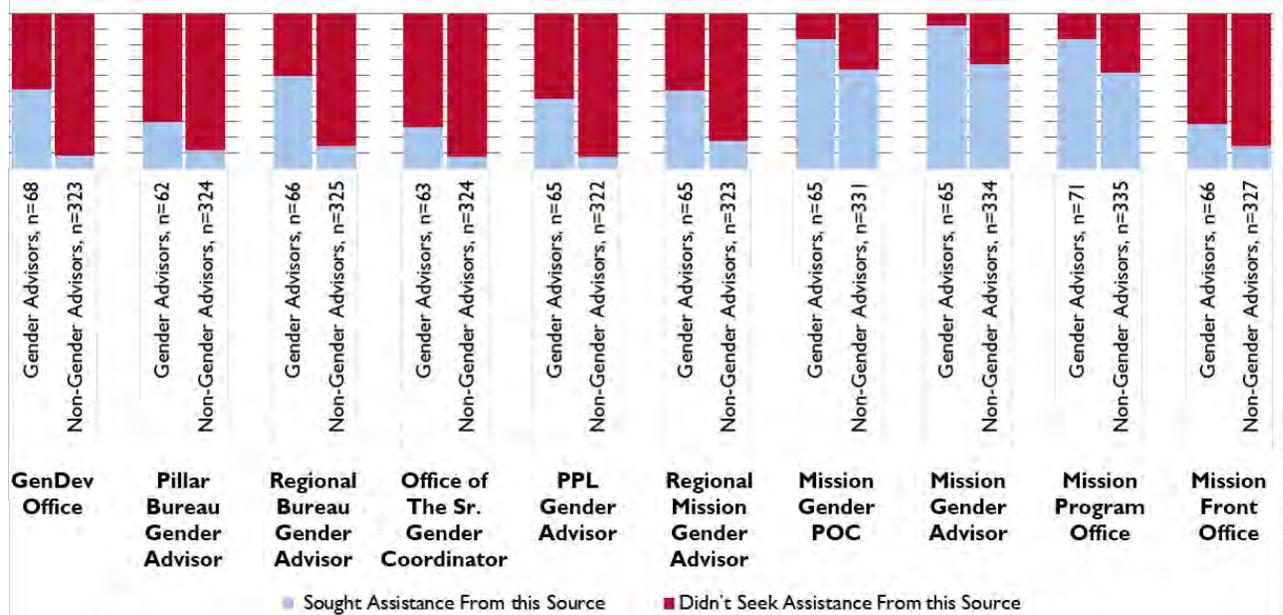
Interview respondents at USAID/Washington and the missions visited also spontaneously mentioned Regional Bureau Gender Advisors as overextended. One interview respondent at a Mission visited said that their Regional Bureau Gender Advisor had been very supportive, but has three regional programs and approximately 50 countries to support resulting in severe constraints on his time.

USAID/Washington interview respondents, including Gender Advisors, explained that both Mission and USAID/Washington Gender Advisors and POCs are stretched very thinly across their portfolios, and often split their time between gender and another position. They noted that even those staff who do have the capacity for and interest in gender integration are overwhelmed with large portfolios and/or competing responsibilities. Interview respondents at USAID/Washington and the missions visited, and online survey respondents (in open-ended questions) acknowledged the importance of expanding staffing given the limited number of gender experts at missions (one) and bureaus (one) so that gender expertise is mainstreamed and not residing with one or two people. These respondents suggested ensuring that every operating unit has a skilled full-time Gender Advisor and encouraging each Technical Office in every operating unit to identify and support the training of a gender POC for that office who can complement the work of the Gender Advisor. Interview respondents at USAID/Washington, including Gender Advisors, and the missions visited cited lack of funding as a constraint for hiring the additional staff needed to integrate gender into USAID's work.

> We have just one Gender Advisor per Bureau and it doesn't matter if it's 2 countries or
> 64 countries. It doesn't matter if your budget is tiny or huge. Because the ADS says you

only need one per operating unit and it doesn't matter. And there has to be stricter, more concrete suggestions about duties, training, and other opportunities, and maybe that belongs in the human resources section and isn't appropriate for ADS 205 because people who are writing position descriptions are not looking there for guidance. – USAID/Washington Gender Advisor group discussion

If we really want to do a better job incorporating gender considerations into our projects, we need to get more staff who know how to do it and whose full-time job is working on it – otherwise it's going to be lip service as usual. – Online survey respondent, Gender POC, Regional Bureau, USAID Washington

Interview respondents at USAID/Washington, including Gender Advisors, and missions visited said that while Mission Gender Advisors serve as the trusted resource on gender integration, their technical capacity varies. Online survey respondents identified their Gender Advisors' skills as the strongest enabler to implementing the GE/FE Policy (see **Exhibit 16**) and generally found their Gender Advisors to be sufficiently knowledgeable to provide guidance on how to implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 (see **Exhibit 17**).

Exhibit 16: USAID Staff Report Key Enablers to Implementing the GE/FE Policy (Online Survey Q68)

Categories (top to bottom):
- Skill levels of Gender Advisors or Points of Contact
- Level of support from my Mission/Bureau management
- Level of support from Agency leaders
- Staff perception of the relevance of promoting gender equality
- Understanding among implementing partners of their roles in including gender
- Skill levels of implementing partners to carry out gender integration activities
- Availability of tools and toolkits on best practices for gender integration
- Resources available to integrate gender
- Skill levels of implementing partners to report on gender-sensitive indicators
- Level of staff time and skills to do gender analysis and integrate into PADs and solicitations
- Access to Gender Policy implementation guidance at the Bureau/Mission level
- Level of support of host countries for gender equality and female empowerment
- Level of staffing or resources to implement the Gender Policy and ADS 205
- Amount of training staff have received on how to implement the Gender Policy

Legend: ■ Strongly enables ■ Enable ■ Neither constrain nor enable ■ Constrain ■ Strongly Constrain ■ Don't know ■ Not applicable
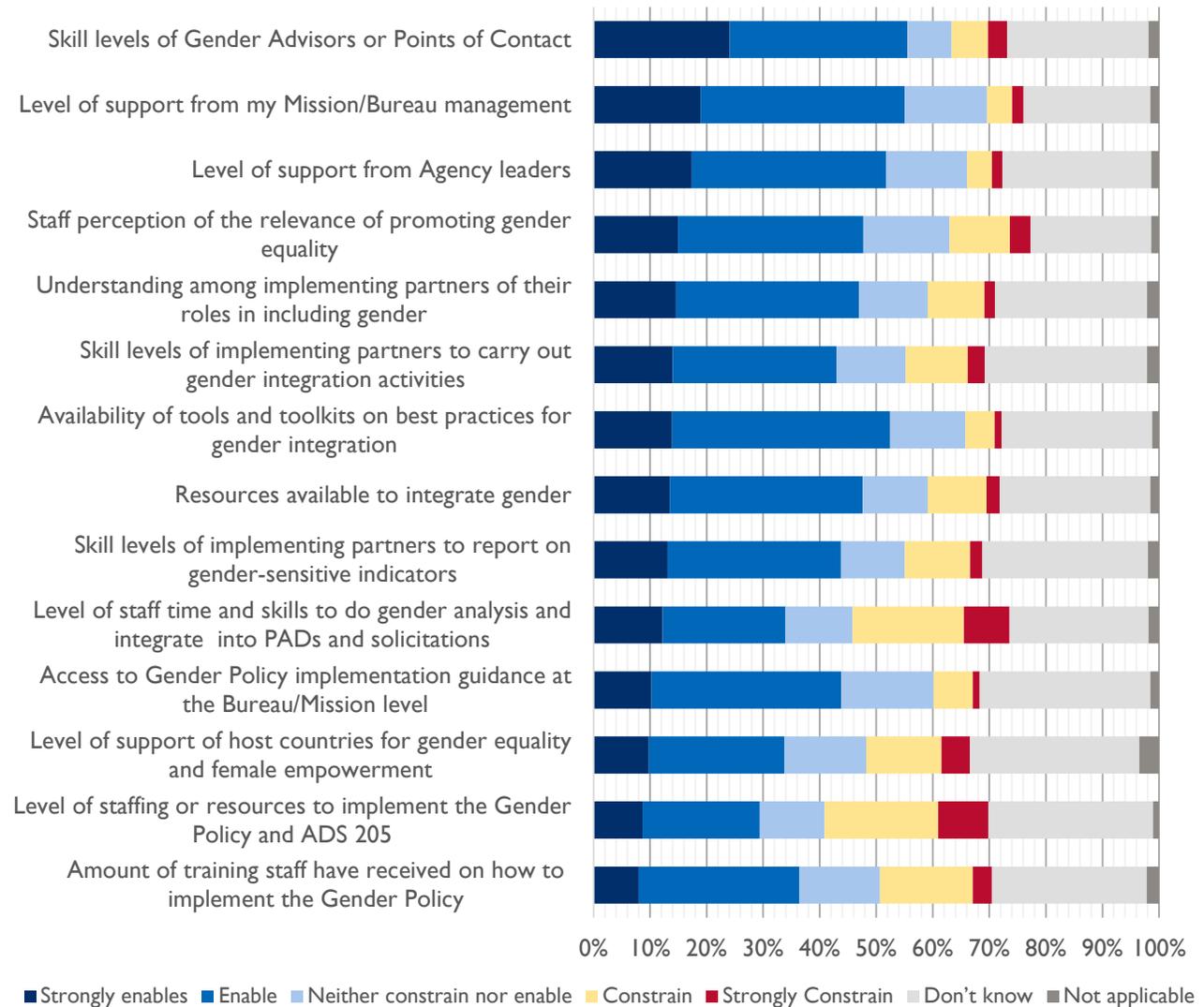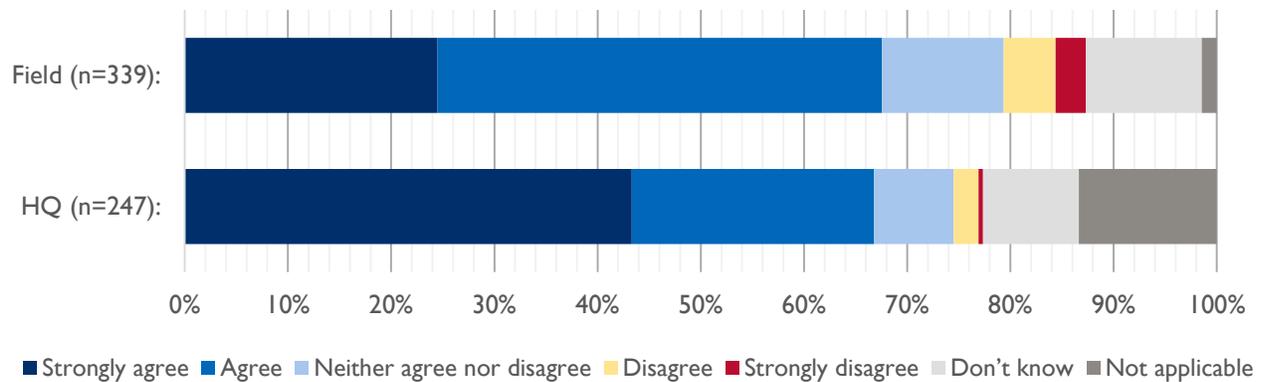
Exhibit 17: USAID Staff Report that their Gender Advisor, POC, or Other(s) is Sufficiently Knowledgeable to Provide Guidance on Implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 (Online Survey Q31 and Q46)

Field (n=339):
HQ (n=247):

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Don't know ■ Not applicable

However, interview respondents at missions visited, including Gender Advisors, felt their skills could be improved. In other words, USAID staff view Gender Advisors as more skilled in gender integration than many Gender Advisors themselves feel they are, and Gender Advisors at missions visited said that their skills could be bolstered so they can better serve their missions and implementing partners.

> *I mean, one of my best learning experiences have been with other missions, with gender POCs. They've come to me, asking me how these things work. And I am also looking for people to tell me that because I don't always know. We followed the [GE/FE] Policy and we did this, and you know, which is great. But when I started, I really didn't know what I was doing. – USAID interview, Mission visited*

> *I would like to have a formal gender training of trainers to get the good tools I could use. Whatever I know on gender I feel I should share with my colleagues in a formal way. Even in the Gender Working Group. Our knowledge is important for the Mission internally, but also [to] make our implementers accountable for what they do. I would love to see more trainings coming in. – USAID interview, Mission visited*

Interview respondents at the missions visited commented on how their Gender Advisors have grown in their level of engagement, and would like to see more support both for their technical growth and because of competing demands on their time. These respondents suggested that USAID provide minimum standards for Gender Advisors and POCs so they have the skills necessary to conduct gender analyses or confidently discuss gender with external partners. This message was echoed in interviews with USAID/Washington staff, including Gender Advisors, who felt that Gender Advisors' and POCs' capacity levels varied across the Agency.

> *For Gender Advisors, I think we need to be equipped and enabled to do this work. Most of our trainings are about the indicators, the definition of gender, and the existence of policies, but it's not about how to do the work. It's not about approaches and how to do the gender diplomacy. We need to train our Gender Advisors. I used to do this with our advisors, AORs, and CORs. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

> *I wish that there was a way to really up the skills level of some of our Gender Advisors and POCs so that they really have deeper skills, and that would involve missions having*

enough funds to really hire gender experts, which they don't by and large, so indirectly, this is partially a money point again. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.

PROGRESS TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT RESULTS
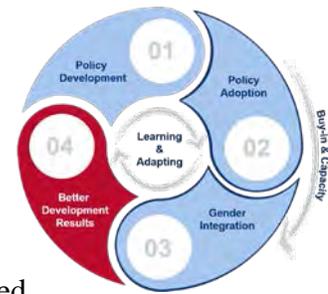
This section presents findings related to the extent to which implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 has led to the intended development results: "to improve the lives of citizens around the world by advancing equality between females and males, and empowering women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies."

13 | **The GE/FE Policy has catalyzed USAID to collaborate with external partners and other U.S. Government agencies around gender equality and female empowerment.**

Interview and group discussion respondents at USAID/Washington and the missions visited mentioned that the GE/FE Policy has encouraged and enabled USAID to partner with other donors, external partners, and government agencies (national and other U.S. Government) in fora related to gender equality and female empowerment in ways USAID did not in the past.

Interview respondents at missions visited described how their Mission has used the GE/FE Policy to leverage its convening authority and build regional partnerships around issues, such as supporting female entrepreneurs; LGBTI rights and health; and gender-based violence prevention and response.

> *[The Gender Advisor] is very active in terms of being a resource for Embassy writ large. She represents us also in terms of the government meeting on gender, organized by Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, as well as the fact that there is a gender monitoring office here. So, the Gender Advisor participates in meetings organized by the both the donor community as well as the government on gender issues. – USAID interview, Mission visit*

14 | **Progress is being made towards integrating gender into USAID projects, but it is too soon to see outcomes at the development results level.**

At missions visited, interview respondents across many technical offices and some support offices spoke with enthusiasm about how their programs, projects, and activities were integrating gender, and indicated that this would not have happened without the GE/FE Policy, and some mentioned the ADS 205.

> *Two new projects that are just gender-focused, that wouldn't have existed before [the GE/FE Policy]... but not only that the Mission supported it, they said, 'Oh hey, here is $4*

million work with UN Women and develop something on gender-based violence.' This is a hole in our portfolio. So, this wouldn't have happened without the [GE/FE] Policy, without the changes, without the Mission. Everything that came from that and the awareness that is now on this subject matter. – USAID interview, Mission visit

One interview respondent from a Mission visited gave an example of child soldier recruitment activity that was initially gender-blind when it came to the Mission through a global annual program statement. Although staff were unsure of its applicability, "a gender component was included" in the design phase because of the Mission's focus on gender integration. During a monitoring visit to the project, Mission staff were surprised to see how ingrained gender roles were among children under 6 years old. As a result of that monitoring visit, the Mission increased the gender focus of the project. At another Mission visited, interview respondents said that their gender analysis found that transportation costs were a barrier for women farmers, when they had assumed that the major barrier was literacy. Interview respondents said that the gender analysis showed that gender norms prohibited women from driving so they must hire transportation, which increases the cost of their products.

A USAID/Washington interview respondent spoke of the role the GE/FE Policy played in helping to integrate gender into USAID's response to the Ebola epidemic, and how the GE/FE Policy was leveraged to ensure that women were involved in Ebola prevention and response on the ground.

> *The Ebola team had no stats because they were on the first frontline and I encouraged them to collect disaggregated data by sex. We tried to write up why these women's groups and the Liberian ministries thought women were dying more, and we explored if we could use these women's groups to help fight Ebola, and use the existing network so women were no longer seen as victims and could play an important role in identifying and controlling Ebola. That for me is one of the strengths of the Gender Policy because it's not just about including women, but also exploring the roles women can play and how to increase women's decision power, especially in cases like the Ebola crisis. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*
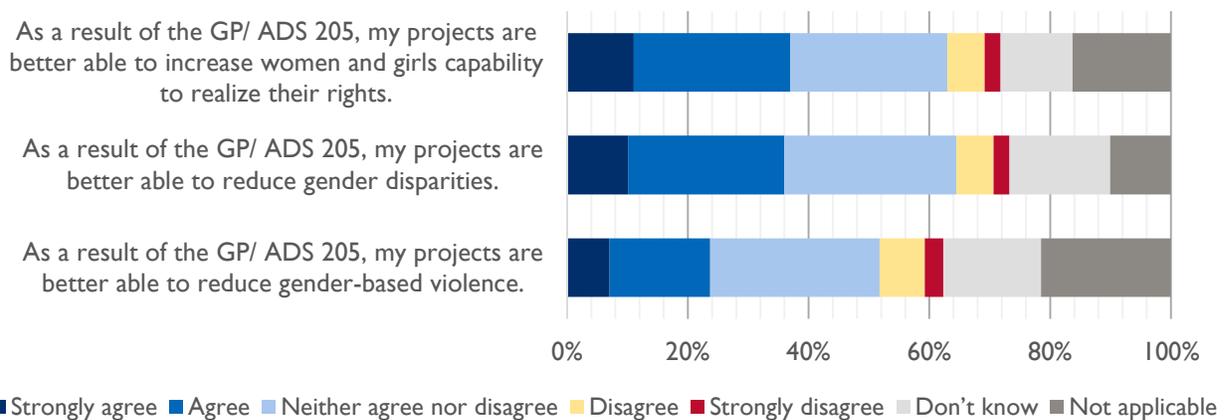
Interview respondents at missions visited provided other examples of how their programs, projects, and activities were integrating gender because of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 such as:

- Reducing gender-based violence by working with local women's organizations, judges, investigators, prosecutors, police officers, and local and international nongovernmental organizations to prevent and respond to gender-based violence against indigenous women, Afro-Colombian women, persons living with disabilities, and LGBTI people
- Working with female mediators in conflict
- Working with men on "new masculinities," gender-based violence, and gender equality
- Female empowerment, especially with ex-combatant women trying to reintegrate into society, and strengthening the work of women in the labor movement

- A malaria prevention program that recognized that men do not seek services in the same way as women and developed a peer-to-peer service delivery model for male migrant workers
- A program that used the Women Peace and Security Framework to identify the unique challenges facing women in conflict and engaged young women in conflict mitigation
- A forest management project that recognized the double discrimination against indigenous women and adjusted the design to engage them actively in planning
- A disaster assistance program that is consciously engaging females in local government planning activities for complex emergencies, an activity from which they were previously omitted
- A program focused on working with jurists on a rule of law activity that helps combat domestic violence
- An anti-trafficking initiative tailoring their message to women and men based on understanding their differing perceptions of human trafficking and their vulnerability to being trafficked.

Despite these examples of gender integration into projects, less than 40 percent of AOR/COR online survey respondents agreed that because of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 their projects are better able to increase women's and girls' capability to realize their rights and reduce gender disparities. Less than 30 percent agreed that their projects are able to reduce gender-based violence (see **Exhibit 18**).[26]

Exhibit 18: AORs and CORs Report the Contribution of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 in Achieving Development Results (Global Survey Q66, n=228)

Interview respondents at USAID/Washington and the missions visited, and online survey respondents were generally positive about the direction in which gender integration has been

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[26] Online Survey Question 66. See Annex 5: Online Survey Outputs.

moving at USAID, but believed that more time and evidence is needed to see the impact on the ground at the development results level.

15 | **There is limited gender integration in USAID solicitations, with little improvement from 2011 to 2014.**

Analysis of a sample of solicitations indicates that gender integration in solicitations was limited despite the clear guidance laid out in the ADS 205. Although there was a slight increase in gender integration in solicitations from 2011 (pre-Policy) to 2014 (post-Policy), overall, the majority of solicitations scored low across both years for the sample of 34 (2011) and 44 (2014) solicitations for this assessment. The average percent score (the percentage of total possible scorecard points) in 2011 was 18 percent and it rose to 23 percent in 2014; an increase of less than 5 percent. Even for those solicitation sections that improved, the score increase was small. Improvements were also inconsistent across sub-categories, such as sector, region, and issuing entity. Solicitation scores by year and section are displayed in **Exhibit 19**.

Exhibit 19: Solicitation Scores by Year and Section

Solicitation Section	Possible Total Points per Section	2011 Average Percent Score (n=34 solicitations)	2014 Average Percent Score (n=44 solicitations)	Change from 2011 to 2014
Background	11	13%	16%	3%
Statements of Work, Statements of Objective, and Performance Work Statements	6	50%	61%	11%
Program Descriptions	3	10%	9%	-0.8%
Monitoring and Evaluation	5	13%	16%	3%
Reporting	8	3%	11%	8%
Key Personnel	4	10%	14%	4%
Past Performance and Core Capabilities	4	3%	10%	7%
Evaluation or Selection Criteria	2	79%	80%	0.1%
TOTAL SCORE	43	18%	23%	5%

Interview respondents at USAID/Washington, including Gender Advisors, and the missions visited, as well as online survey respondents mentioned the need to improve gender integration in solicitations and the procurement process. Interview respondents from one of the missions visited mentioned that efforts have been made to integrate gender into solicitations, but there is still room for improvement and they '*can do better.*'

Interview respondents from USAID/Washington and the missions visited, and respondents to the open-ended online survey questions repeatedly called for additional training for AORs and CORs on gender integration and the ADS 205 requirements. These respondents said that, even if program and technical offices integrate gender into solicitations, this information may be cut by AORs/CORs before solicitations are issued. Therefore, more needs to be done to ensure that AORs/CORs are aware of the importance of gender, have the capacity to integrate it into solicitations, and can hold implementing partners accountable for gender integration at the project level.

> *I think our CORs and our AORs probably need to be better trained in validating some of the gender information that comes across their desks in regards to contracts and agreements, and I think shoring that up would be helpful for some of the data that we try to collect when programs and projects finish up. – USAID interview, Washington, D.C.*

16 More time and financial resources are needed to fully integrate gender throughout the Program Cycle.

Interview respondents at USAID/Washington and the missions visited spoke about the need for more time and resources, both human and financial, to support gender integration into all phases of the Program Cycle, particularly the preparation of PADs and solicitations. These respondents, even those eager to integrate gender into their work, said it was challenging to set aside the time needed to bring themselves up to speed on gender integration via training or sharing best practices. Others cited the quick turnaround time on deliverables and competing demands on their time as constraints to their ability to be thoughtful and consider whether gender is being addressed adequately.

Several interview respondents at the missions visited cautioned that knowledge and skills may be insufficient to bring about improved practice because of Mission staff's time constraints, which make it very difficult to attend training. Additionally, even if they do attend, when they return to work, they cannot put the learnings into practice due to multiple demands on their time and resource constraints.

> *Everything is resources. [We need to] advocate for these poor CORs/AORs and technical offices. If you look at their daily lives, some of our offices, not only they need to work on project design and work on everything and take care of every single comma, they are administering three or four or five projects at the same time and designing two activities.*

So, I would assume they could have very good intentions, but they are overwhelmed. – USAID interview, Mission visit

Time is a huge issue for the programmatic side, as well [as] in terms of implementation of gender. We could easily take a whole week and shut down the Embassy, and literally just think about gender in our programs, with panels etc. There is that balance about how much time you have available. – USAID interview, Mission visit

USAID/Washington interview respondents and respondents to the open-ended online survey questions not only noted the lack of funding for skill-building activities around gender, but also discussed the impact that limited project budgets can have on the ability to address gender gaps thoughtfully and the need for dedicated funds to help spur gender-focused standalone activities.

Increase available resources (funding, personnel) to provide technical assistance (virtual and in-country) to operating units when needed for gender analysis, strategic planning, project design, preparation of solicitations, and evaluation. – Online survey respondent, Non-Gender Advisor, Regional Bureau, USAID/Washington

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

The findings in this section relate to Washington, D.C.- and field-based implementing partners' knowledge of the GE/FE Policy, and perceptions of challenges, gaps, successes, and impact of USAID GE/FE Policy adoption.

17 | **Implementing partners are generally aware of the GE/FE Policy and believe that increased attention to gender equality and female empowerment has resulted.**

Washington D.C.- and field-based implementing partner interview and group discussion respondents demonstrated high levels of awareness of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Washington, D.C.-based implementing partner group discussion respondents reported an increased awareness of the GE/FE Policy within their own organizations and among USAID staff they have worked with. One Washington D.C.-based implementing partner group discussion respondent described how the launch of the GE/FE Policy raised awareness among their staff that "the gender department exists," and that they saw increased requests for assistance in order to comply with the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 mandates. Field-based implementing partner interview and group discussion respondents remarked that the GE/FE Policy has made USAID visible and present in networks and partnership related to gender equality and female empowerment, where they were absent before.

Among implementing partners, there is an increased attention to gender, more staff working on these issues, trainings developed for staff members; and in implementation, there is an increased monitoring of both gender equality and female empowerment. – Implementing partner group discussion, Washington, D.C.

I don't really know what goes backstage, and I don't know if it was the [GE/FE] Policy that made the change—I assume it was because it coincided at that time—but it's clear that USAID has had a strong shift towards gender programming and pushing gender issues at every level. – Implementing partner interview, Mission visit

18 Gender champions within implementing partner organizations have leveraged the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 to elevate gender integration in their work.

Washington D.C.-based implementing partner group discussion respondents remarked that the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have created an enabling environment and a "framework" for gender integration in their work. These respondents reported that they have leveraged USAID's increased focus on gender equality and female empowerment to advance this agenda in their organizations. Washington D.C.- and field-based implementing partner group discussion and interview respondents spoke of USAID staff who have championed the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 to bring about changes for better gender integration in USAID's work and have gone beyond the basic requirements. Washington D.C.-based implementing partner group discussion respondents also mentioned differences in levels of commitment to and capacity for gender integration among Missions.

[The] ADS 205 and the [GE/FE] Policy are great compliance tools for addressing these issues within implementing partners. Before the [GE/FE] Policy was in place, gender had to be argued as a rights issue, but now it's a business case issue and that speaks to a different audience, and gives you a different way to approach why this should be done... Having the compliance stick helps to ensure gender integration. – Implementing partner group discussion, Washington, D.C.

There is a lot of contrast between different missions on their response to the [GE/FE] Policy. It is inconsistently applied. Some missions are on point with committed leadership, standalone strategies, and even have gender featured in their CDCS. Other missions are way behind. The same is true for different AORs. Some are big gender champions. Others slash the gender focus from design, budgets, etc. – Implementing partner group discussion, Washington, D.C.

19 USAID leadership at all levels is critical for implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

Implementing partner group discussion respondents in Washington, D.C. and interview respondents in the field spoke of the importance of all levels of USAID leadership to provide consistent messaging that gender is a priority and allocate sufficient resources. These same respondents cited supportive leadership as making a difference in their ability (and the ability of others) to integrate gender into their work. Washington, D.C.-based implementing partner group discussion respondents said that USAID staff would benefit from gender training that was geared

toward specific roles (e.g., Mission leadership, contract officers, and AORs/CORs) to ensure consistent gender integration in all aspects of USAID's work.

> *We see a lot of variation across individual missions and their response to the [GE/FE] Policy. Those missions with committed leadership even feature the issues heavily in CDCS, but [at] other missions AORs and CORs are way behind. Even within missions themselves, different offices have different priorities and a lot of it depends upon personality. – Implementing partner group discussion, Washington, D.C.*

20 | Implementing partners working with missions visited have seen changes in Mission processes and requirements for them to integrate gender.

Implementing partner interview and group discussion respondents at all three missions visited said that the missions have instituted new processes and systems to ensure that implementing partners are integrating gender from proposals to implementation. At one Mission visited, implementing partner group discussion respondents described how solicitations now have explicit requirements to include a gender strategy with the proposal. They stated that there is a significant change from previous experiences when implementing partners could "just include a couple of paragraphs on women, typically towards the end, or in the annexes" to now having to present a "proper, coherent gender strategy" with their annual work plan that the Mission uses to monitor implementing partners' work.

> *We recently piloted a curriculum on gender for our own staff in gender mainstreaming. Not just trying to render this in our reporting, but tasking our partners to feel a lot less like ticking the box. It feels decidedly a lot less like this because of the [GE/FE] Policy than it did a few years ago. – Implementing partner group discussion, Mission visit*

Implementing partner respondents working with one Mission visited relayed a number of steps they had taken to build internal capacity in gender integration for themselves, such as tools to address gender inequalities in proposals and guidance documents, checklists, and assessment guides. Other implementing partner respondents at missions visited said that they hired gender experts to conduct seminars and workshops for staff on how to integrate gender more effectively into their programs. One implementing partner respondent at a Mission visited said that their Gender Specialist liaised with the Mission Gender Advisor twice a year to discuss their work in gender and to collaborate on learnings expected from evaluations. Another implementing partner respondent from the same Mission commended USAID for recognizing their need to budget for a Gender Specialist to provide quality assurance and review proposals, inception reports, work plans, and data collection instruments for gender sensitivity in order to better integrate gender into their work.

> *They [the Mission] have ensured that we streamline gender into the program so that is a good thing that didn't happen before. They [the Mission] insisted that we present a coherent gender strategy and that was something that didn't happen before. They've*

provided sufficient resources within the program so we can flexibly target activities that can reflect that gender program. – Implementing partner group discussion, Mission visit

21 | Implementing partners have limited capacity to measure progress toward gender equality and female empowerment beyond sex-disaggregated data.

Across all missions visited, implementing partner respondents said that they struggled with how to go beyond sex-disaggregated data to measure progress toward gender equality and female empowerment.

We disaggregate by sex. Not everything, but where it makes sense it is. We have some specific gender indicators, but they are mostly tied to the area where work has a gender component to it... – Implementing partner interview, Mission visit

The Gender Policy and ADS 205 have helped and contributed to some of these things, but we don't have enough concrete evidence to establish a clear link between the [GE/FE] Policy and these better and equitable results. We need more evidence because they are just getting started. Impact data will take a while and we need more impact evaluations to determine what is really going on. – Implementing partner group discussion, Washington, D.C.

22 | The GE/FE Policy has allowed implementing partners to be more intentional about integrating gender into proposals, but gender integration in USAID solicitations is still weak.

Washington, D.C.-based implementing partner group discussion respondents spontaneously mentioned solicitations when asked about changes in their work and how USAID approaches gender equality and female empowerment because of the GE/FE Policy and the ADS 205. These respondents said that the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have allowed them to be more intentional when responding to solicitations, but that gender integration in USAID solicitations still needs improvement. These same respondents said that the solicitation process has not allowed for addressing gender analysis properly in proposals. For example, some solicitations have allowed for gender analysis within Project Year 1, but these respondents said that many solicitations have not laid the groundwork for proper gender analysis and integration prior to project implementation. These Washington, D.C.-based implementing partner group discussion respondents also stated that USAID has often passed responsibility for conducting gender analysis onto implementing partners in solicitations, yet many implementing partners lack capacity to conduct sound gender analysis. These respondents also remarked that solicitations are an area for USAID to strengthen gender integration and suggested that USAID require that all solicitations have gender as an evaluation criterion, allot (or increase) points to gender, give points for staffing and monitoring plans (not just for integration into project design), include a budget for gender, and integrate gender throughout the program design.

Even in solicitations, we are often asked to include a gender paragraph as a separate annex, unlike the Millennium Challenge Corporation, which requires gender to be integrated across the solicitation. And that is something that USAID has yet to do. The solicitations would be a place to strengthen gender integration. – Implementing partner group discussion, Washington, D.C.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings show that adoption of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 is happening throughout the Agency. The GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have required USAID staff and its implementing partners to shift some paradigms related to gender equality and female empowerment, and to take action toward gender integration.
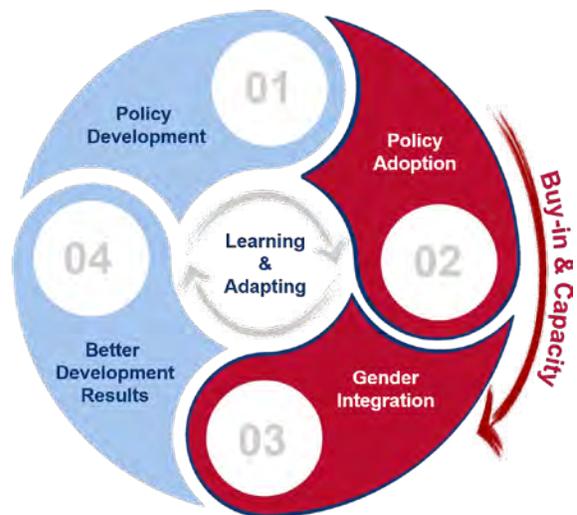
Referring back to the Policy Flow (**Exhibit 20**) and considering the Diffusion of Innovation Theory, findings show that the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have allowed "innovators" to take steps, sometimes bold, to find ways to ensure gender is integrated throughout the Program Cycle. The GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have given "early adopters" the space and support needed, while others are not fully onboard, and USAID and implementing partner knowledge or skills to integrate gender into their work varies with many seeking more capacity building. The findings provide some emerging evidence of gender integration at project level, but it is too early to see development results. In order to achieve the three overarching outcomes laid out in the GE/FE Policy, gender integration is still needed throughout the Program Cycle, particularly in solicitations, as are development and use of gender-sensitive indicators.

Exhibit 20: The Flow of Policy Implementation- From Development to Results

ENABLERS AND CONSTRAINTS TO POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The findings indicate that USAID's launch and early adoption of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 have led to greater gender integration in the Agency's work, and laid the groundwork for positive development outcomes down the road. USAID staff are generally aware of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and believe that the Policy's introduction has focused greater attention on gender equality and female empowerment throughout the Agency. Following 3 years of advocacy, awareness raising, and training, the findings indicate that USAID staff believe that the GE/FE Policy "has teeth" and USAID is taking gender integration seriously. By formalizing USAID's commitments, the Agency has given gender champions the support and "stick" they need to advocate for gender integration.

USAID staff identified support from leadership at different levels as an imperative enabler of implementation, particularly Front Offices that have embraced their mandate to promote gender

integration and hold staff and implementing partners accountable for achieving the GE/FE Policy's goals. Gender Advisors and POCs across the Agency, as required by the Policy, have played a central enabling role in ensuring implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 by serving as key technical resources for USAID staff. These leaders, Gender Advisors and POCs have served as key enablers for GE/FE Policy implementation when they have the resources and skills to provide technical support, hold staff accountable, and raise awareness about the GE/FE Policy, ADS 205, and the importance of gender equality and female empowerment more broadly.

Given this confluence of enabling factors, operating units throughout USAID are implementing the basic requirements of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205: ensuring all staff have completed basic gender training, developing Mission Orders on Gender, and conducting gender analyses (CDCS, RDCS, and PAD). In some cases the GE/FE Policy has fostered a commitment not only to gender integration internally, but also to collaborating with external stakeholders to promote gender equality and female empowerment.

These signs of significant progress should not lead to complacency, however. The findings also revealed a gap between USAID staff awareness and the ability to integrate gender, which is constrained by lack of knowledge, skills, and time to gain these knowledge and skills. This is a major constraint for effective implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Findings show that many USAID staff seek further guidance to help them integrate gender at every stage of the Program Cycle. Additional constraints to effective implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 include limited resources dedicated to gender integration, USAID staff time constraints, and competing work demands.

USAID STAFF BUY-IN

Findings indicate that missions are going beyond basic compliance with the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 requirements, and have developed internal structures to enable gender integration and instated accountability mechanisms to monitor progress. Mission-level coordination mechanisms, such as Gender Working Groups, have contributed to internal processes that have enabled Gender Advisors and other staff to hold themselves and their implementing partners accountable to gender integration.

At the same time, there are some indications of resistance. The findings suggest that sustained awareness raising and sensitization on gender equality and female empowerment principles and concepts, allocation of more resources, and time to internalize these concepts are necessary to address the existing resistant attitudes and ensure a gender-transformative culture across the Agency.

USAID STAFF CAPACITY

Findings indicate that many staff, including Gender Advisors, find gender integration complex and seek capacity building that is specific to their technical role and administrative function. While USAID staff have acquired a basic understanding of gender equality and female empowerment via the Gender 101 training, the findings showed that staff clearly desire more nuanced training, guidance, tools, and toolkits targeted to their particular roles and responsibilities, sectors, and activities within the Program Cycle. Gender Advisors and POCs across the Agency find themselves tasked with a daunting array of responsibilities and demands, yet have varying levels of technical expertise with which to respond, particularly skills to integrate gender into solicitations and develop and use gender-sensitive indicators.

An overarching concern that ran across findings is the need for more time and funding for staff to integrate gender meaningfully and thoughtfully into their work in the face of competing demands and resources. The findings show a desire for a human resources system that aligns hiring, performance management, and promotion practices with the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 desired outcomes and mandates. For USAID to take gender integration to the next level, building a cadre of professionals prepared to integrate gender across the Program Cycle is key.

USAID/Washington's gender architecture may have served the Agency well during the GE/FE Policy development and launch process, but the findings show that now, 3 years in, more staff are needed to support full implementation and USAID/Washington staff seek more clarity and linearity about who "owns" the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, and who holds the Agency accountable. The findings showed that the shared authority of GenDev, PPL, and the Senior Coordinator's Office, and the fact that GenDev is "buried within E3" are hindering further implementation and messaging on USAID's gender priorities and funding streams.

PROGRESS TOWARD BETTER DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

USAID staff have taken clear strides forward in integrating gender. However, more time is needed, beyond the initial 3 years, to see changes in development results. Better application of gender analyses in solicitations and increased understanding of how to develop and use gender-sensitive indicators will help USAID monitor and evaluate progress toward equitable development outcomes.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

There was no major divergence between the views of USAID staff and implementing partners on the GE/FE Policy implementation. Findings show that, like USAID staff, implementing partners are generally aware of the GE/FE Policy and see that USAID/Washington and missions have increased their attention to gender equality and female empowerment and, as a result, have started holding implementing partners more accountable to gender integration. USAID

leadership (at all levels) was recognized by implementing partners as a critical enabler to USAID's implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205. Like USAID staff, implementing partners would like to see better and more gender integration in USAID's solicitations so that proposals, and ultimately projects and activities, can better respond to gender gaps and advance gender equality and female empowerment. Because of the GE/FE Policy, gender champions within Washington, D.C.-based implementing partners have been able to be more intentional about integrating gender into proposals, but are often limited by solicitations that still require "gender paragraphs" or a "gender annex." The GE/FE Policy has had influence beyond the Agency because it has been used by gender champions within implementing partner organizations to elevate gender integration into their own organizations, in addition to their USAID-funded proposals and projects. However, like USAID staff, implementing partners have limited capacity to measure progress toward gender equality and female empowerment beyond collecting sex-disaggregated data and conducting gender analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strong messaging when the GE/FE Policy was launched conveyed that USAID was serious about gender equality and female empowerment, and gave the innovators and early adopters (usually gender champions) the authority and backing to take action and hold others accountable to gender integration. Looking forward, it is important that USAID continue this momentum to ensure that GE/FE Policy implementation moves into the next phase of diffusion. Current USAID realities and varying capacity among USAID staff and implementing partners pose challenges to implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 throughout the Program Cycle. Continued advocacy, communication, information sharing, and capacity building will be key to reduce uncertainty and attain the desired benefits of the GE/FE Policy.

USAID has taken positive steps toward gender integration, but needs to address key factors that are hindering further progress in integrating gender throughout the Program Cycle. The Diffusion of Innovations Theory recognizes that innovation will happen within different groups at different rates over time, at organizational and individual levels.

This section provides recommendations for USAID to move through the "policy flow" and achieve the desired development results. It is recommended that key gender stakeholders gather and assign responsibilities for the specific recommendations listed below.

1 Clarify Gender Advisor roles and responsibilities, and invest in core skills and competencies to implement the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

The GE/FE Policy requires that missions, regional bureaus, pillar bureaus, and PPL appoint a Gender Advisor. At the Mission-level, the GE/FE Policy states that this individual "should have (or be given the opportunity to fully develop) the technical skills and competencies necessary to provide appropriate guidance to technical and program staff to ensure that the policy is successfully implemented at the Mission." Although Gender Advisors have been appointed across the Agency (in large part), their roles and responsibilities are unclear and inconsistent, which creates confusion. This ambiguity, due in part to a lack of a shared position descriptions and requirements, has led to a variance in skills and expertise. For example, the Gender Advisors in the three missions visited had three different titles and their purview ranged from covering issues related to LGBTI and disability to counter-trafficking, as well as other responsibilities related to the office in which they "sat." Given that Gender Advisors are a key enabler to implementing the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205, further investment in Gender Advisors and more clarity of their roles are crucial to moving from policy adoption to development results.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Short-term:

- Develop a **standard Gender Advisor position description**, especially at Mission-level, to ensure a cadre of Gender Advisors across the Agency with equivalent roles and responsibilities that are clear to all. These position descriptions should provide specific guidance on roles and responsibilities within a Mission and a Bureau, across USAID and operating units, with external and internal partners, and for Mission-level vis-à-vis USAID/Washington. These position descriptions should also clarify the purview of Gender Advisors and, possibly, consistency in titles.

- Design a **learning agenda for Gender Advisors** (especially at missions) for building core skills and competencies. This could be done by conducting a needs assessment for all USAID Gender Advisors (possibly through an online survey) that assesses competencies and identifies capacity gaps. Findings from the needs assessment could be used to develop a strategy and approach(es) for addressing the identified gaps through targeted skill-building activities such as mentorship, professional development funds, and knowledge sharing events to deepen their technical skills, share best practices, and build a community of practice across the Agency.

2 Expand the range and number of capacity-building opportunities across the Agency to increase knowledge and skills related to gender integration.

USAID staff capacity is still low in a range of areas related to gender equality, female empowerment, and gender integration. Lack of time, competing demands, a range of learning styles and preferences, and levels of specificity in staff needs require diverse capacity-building opportunities to meet the various needs in topic and delivery. The Gender 101 training served an important role in the early years of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 rollout and will continue to be important for new employees, but more in-depth training is required to build the capacity of program, technical, and contract staff to integrate gender into their work.

Based on USAID staff time constraints, capacity building should consider nontraditional interactive, online, blended learning approaches. Face-to-face opportunities should be held at the regional level as much as possible both to reach more staff and to reduce staff travel time.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Short-term:

- Establish a **minimum standard of competencies for AORs and CORs** for integrating gender, tracking gender-sensitive indicators, and reporting on how projects are

addressing or changing gender disparities, responding to gender-based violence, or empowering women and girls.

- Increase messaging and marketing of the **Gender 102 and Gender 103 trainings** and make these, in addition to the Gender 101 training, a requirement for CORs, AORs, technical, program, monitoring and evaluation, and Acquisition and Assistance staff, as well as Contracting and Agreement Officers.

- Develop sector-specific **"gender modules"** that can be incorporated into the existing and future trainings for Technical Office staff that include information such as gender-sensitive indicators, key gender analysis questions, examples of gender gaps, and how to conduct gender analysis or and apply the findings into PADs. Prioritize sectors where gender integration is more challenging, such as energy and infrastructure.

Long-term:

- Continue to **examine USAID training** for staff who are not Gender Advisors or POCs to identify where gender-related content could be incorporated, and work with the Office of Human Resources to modify relevant USAID trainings that do not include gender-related content. This could include, for example, "gender modules" at annual Directors' Conferences that include both technical (e.g., gender analysis) and operational (e.g., ADS 205) content for Mission Directors and Deputy Directors to foster gender champions among those in leadership positions.

- Make **Gender 101, 102, and 103 trainings, and ADS 205 prerequisites** for Project Design and Management, and Acquisition and Assistance 104 training.

3 Strengthen USAID staff capacity to monitor and evaluate gender integration results.

One challenge widely identified by staff across USAID and implementing partners was how to develop and use gender-sensitive indicators to measure progress toward gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as how to use sex-disaggregated data, which are being collected. Building this capacity would support USAID to gather evidence that it can use for learning and adapting, showcasing and sharing best practices on gender integration, and achieving results that reduce gender gaps and empower women and girls.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Short-term:

- Develop and provide **specific guidance/tools/training/support** to Mission staff, especially AORs/CORs and Monitoring and Evaluation Officers on how to develop, monitor, and analyze gender-sensitive indicators.

- Revise and **standardize USAID quarterly and annual reporting formats** to reflect gender-sensitive data collection and reporting.

- Develop **more tools and ensure proper accountability systems** are in place to hold USAID staff responsible for integrating gender into performance monitoring plans, and activity monitoring and evaluation plans

4 Develop focused tools and resources for gender integration and a strategy for dissemination.

USAID staff have found resources and tools to fill the gap in knowledge and skills related to gender integration an enabler to gender integration. USAID staff need a platform for creating and sharing information to achieve and act on shared values and understanding of the relative advantages of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Short-term:
- Develop tools and guidance for **integrating gender into solicitations**, using gender analyses to inform project design, and developing gender-sensitive indicators.

- Create a **dissemination strategy** for the existing tools, toolkits, guides, and other resources related to gender integration developed across the Agency and available on MyUSAID to ensure all staff are aware of their existence and can easily access them.

Long-term:
- Establish an **Agency-wide reference group** (including Mission representatives) to conduct an audit of existing tools and resources related to gender integration that have been developed by missions and bureaus since 2012 and make sure they are available on MyUSAID. Once amassed, assess what further tools, resources, and guidance are needed and pilot these materials to ensure their relevance to the target audience.

5 Strengthen and deploy a gender workforce to maintain momentum, fill gaps, and relocate key gender personnel/offices to respond to demands better.

Gender champions and "early adopters" have been able to use the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 to achieve substantial changes in USAID in 3 short years. The launch of the GE/FE Policy and

ADS 205 benefitted from Mission and USAID/Washington Gender Advisors; a triumvirate of the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, PPL Gender Advisor, and GenDev; and gender champions across the Agency who provided consistent and constant messaging on requirements and expectations. As USAID moves towards full policy adoption, it is necessary to have a sufficient (in number and skills) "gender workforce" to continue the messaging and technical assistance still needed to integrate gender throughout the Program Cycle.

Gender Advisors are in high demand, particularly in regional bureaus and at missions, and the "asks" placed on them are beyond the capacity of a single individual. The intensity of these demands indicates a desire and need from missions for support to integrate gender. USAID needs to respond in kind by ensuring that it has an adequate gender workforce that can provide the support needed without "burning out" its passionate and committed Gender Advisors.

The current USAID/Washington gender architecture served an important role in raising the profile of gender in key locations, but 3 years later, is a source of confusion for many, especially USAID/Washington Gender Advisors. In response, USAID should provide clearer messaging on who is the "central authority" for the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 in a way that articulates the central "owner" and "point of accountability" for the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 across the Agency. This will be important to sustain momentum and profile of gender equality and female empowerment across the Agency.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Short-term:
- Develop an approach to understand the extent and source of **resistance** to gender equality and female empowerment.

- Establish and build the capacity of USAID/Washington Bureau and Mission **gender teams, working groups, or similar entities** to provide technical assistance, support, and messaging beyond a single Gender Advisor whose current demands are beyond a single individual.

- Form a joint USAID/Washington and Mission working or reference group to identify the **strengths and challenges** of the current gender architecture structure, scope, and mandate, and make suggested changes to ensure that USAID has the gender workforce and structure needed to influence and respond to the Agency's needs more effectively.

- Articulate, throughout the Agency, how the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, GenDev, and the PPL Gender Advisor work together, and how their **different roles, responsibilities, and authority** hold USAID accountable to the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205 so that USAID staff know whom to turn to for what kinds of support or actions.

Long-term:
- **Mainstream gender into human resources processes and procedures** so that gender is a core competency and expectation of all staff, not just those who have "gender" in their title. This could include incentives such as annual rewards/recognition to USAID staff who are promoting gender equality and female empowerment in their operating unit, such as "Gender Champion of the Year" and public recognition of gender champions in various positions. Specific objectives that promote gender equality and female empowerment could be incorporated into staff evaluations and promotion criteria, such as annual performance reviews and personnel evaluation reviews.

- Establish a **Gender Foreign Service Officer** backstop for missions and create **Gender Specialist** positions in USAID/Washington to support current Bureau Gender Advisors, balance the workload of the current Mission and USAID/Washington Gender Advisors, and ensure needed technical support is provided in a timely fashion.

6 Increase outreach, guidance, and capacity building to implementing partners.

Implementing partners are aware of the GE/FE Policy and its requirements, and are keen to do their part in its implementation. Like USAID staff, implementing partners' capacity in gender integration varies—especially between local and international partners—and they require specific guidance and more clarity on USAID's expectations.

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Short-term:
- Develop a strategy for **formal communication and dialogue** with implementing partners in Washington, D.C. and at missions on expectations related to implementing the GE/FE Policy.

- Develop **tools and** ensure proper **systems** are in place to hold implementing partners accountable to integrating gender into interventions, monitoring, and evaluation.

- Consider ways to increase capacity of implementing partners, particularly local partners, in conducting **gender analysis and using sex-disaggregated data and gender-**

sensitive indicators for learning and adapting, including making Gender 102 and Gender 103 online courses available to implementing partners.

- **Solicit feedback** from implementing partners on issues related to implementation of the GE/FE Policy and ADS 205.

ANNEXES

Annexes are provided as a separate document.