



CAPACITY STATEMENT



World Learning
EDUCATION | DEVELOPMENT | EXCHANGE

Health Systems Strengthening



INTRODUCTION

World Learning is a global NGO empowering people and strengthening institutions through education, sustainable development, and exchange programs. The World Learning approach to capacity-strengthening is comprehensive, systemic, and highly adaptive—whether we are helping government ministries and university administrators improve their management practices, assisting civil society organizations (CSOs) to more effectively advocate for policy change, working with villages to better support children affected by HIV/AIDS, or sharing innovative techniques for teachers to incorporate into their classrooms. World Learning believes that health systems are stronger when government, civil society, and communities collaborate to improve service delivery. Our approach emphasizes community engagement, collaborative action, and improved systems by working with government officials and civil society leaders to ensure that vulnerable populations are supported. Using World Learning’s approach, communities and national governments have successfully improved health service delivery and social accountability. Our experience in implementing multimillion and multiyear projects in institutional strengthening for health systems is a key example of our expertise.

GEOGRAPHIC PRESENCE

World Learning brings a global presence, with a range of multicountry projects which bring together participants from more than 150 countries to learn and carry out meaningful dialogue through exchanges to the United States, as well as through projects and events around the world. These projects are supported by more than 400 staff

in field locations around the world, including 13 country offices in locations such as: El Salvador, Iraq, Kosovo, Lebanon, Malawi, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Ukraine, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Our approach is grounded in five key elements: experiential learning, leadership development, inclusive practices, innovation, and grants management. In addition to our on-the-ground programming, leading global exchange programs include the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program (Global UGRAD), and professional exchanges such as the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), the Professional Fellows Program, the Alumni TIES Seminars, the U.S. Speaker Program, and the Arts Envoy Program, where World Learning connects emerging leaders and subject-matter experts.





HEALTH SYSTEMS PROGRAMS

In **Angola**, the **USAID-funded Eye Kutoloka Project: NGO Strengthening through Health Services Delivery** (\$47.3 million, 2011-2017) strengthened partnerships between local governments and CSOs to advocate for increased resource allocation on issues such as malaria prevention and health services delivery monitoring, as well as to form collaborative partnerships with key officials to improve health services delivery. Eye Kutoloka also strengthened the capacity of local CSOs to advocate in key technical areas, including training youth to report on human rights issues, through interventions that combined grantmaking, technical assistance, mentoring, training, and ongoing monitoring. For example, we worked with Angolan CSOs and other partners to advocate for increased resources for issues such as malaria prevention, which they could use to monitor the quality of health services and to develop plans for improving health delivery with local officials. The project developed a budget monitoring manual that provided CSOs with basic information to understand how the public budget process works in Angola, introducing the core concepts of the budget process and discussing how to analyze budgets so as to inform advocacy efforts. Finally, Eye Kutoloka successfully bridged the divide between local organizations and government entities, such as its work in Kwanza Sul Province, where the project advocated for the Provincial Directorate of Health to increase the number of health facilities offering prenatal care and improve access to intermittent preventative treatment for malaria. **Due in part to project efforts, the number of functioning health units offering prenatal services rose from 34 to 188 over the course of one year (2013-2014) and the number of pregnant women receiving three or more rounds of intermittent preventative treatment rose from 17,690 to 36,192 in one year (2013-2014).**

In **Ethiopia**, the **USAID MULU Worksite Project** (\$16 million, 2012-2018) supported the Ethiopian government's efforts to reduce the number of new HIV infections by strengthening HIV prevention initiatives in 100 large-scale workplaces through an evidence-based approach. Guided by epidemiological evidence, MULU Worksite's approach included a combination of biomedical, behavioral, and structural interventions and enabled workplaces to integrate, mainstream, and effectively and sustainably manage HIV prevention initiatives at the worksite level. Activities contributing to improved health-seeking behaviors among vulnerable populations included peer education using evidence-based curricula, community "edutainment" events, and the distribution of informational materials which support the project's overall interpersonal communication strategy. Activities supporting the increased availability of HIV prevention services included HIV testing and counseling; referrals for care, support, and treatment for HIV to ensure the continuum of care; provision of screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections; distribution of condoms; and the training of health workers at worksite clinics. MULU Worksite also strengthened the capacity of the targeted worksites to mainstream HIV prevention into their core business practices by facilitating self-assessments of worksite HIV prevention activities, assisting worksite managers to develop gender-sensitive HIV policies conforming to international standards, establishing HIV taskforces mandated to lead HIV prevention efforts in the workplace, and supporting worksites to allocate human and financial resources for HIV prevention interventions.



The **USAID-funded Liberia Grants Solicitation and Management (LGSM)** (\$13 million 2009-2014) provided technical assistance to Liberia's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW), capacity-building assistance to the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), capacity-building assistance to 10 partner CSOs of MoHSW, graduate scholarships to employees and partner training institutions of the MoHSW, and in-country training to midwives and lab technicians. LGSM also served as an umbrella grant-making mechanism to support service delivery activities aimed at assisting vulnerable populations. The grants were in four areas: Orphans and Vulnerable Children (HIV/AIDS), Youth (Reproductive Health), Maternal and Child Health (Family Planning), and NGO Capacity-Building Activities in Health and Social Welfare (Social Services).

Achievements under this project included:

1. The development of 15 policy documents and training manuals, including case management, community health baseline assessment, and procedures for supporting children without appropriate care;
2. the training of 427 DSW staff to improve services in all county offices;
3. support given to 135 scholarship students as they earned degrees in nursing, midwifery, laboratory technology, and master's and post-graduate degrees in public administration, public health, and health sciences;
4. the strengthening of 14 local CSOs to expand child protection and wellbeing by improving service delivery through local clinics and health outreach campaigns.
5. rapid support to DSW in the early stages of the 2014 Ebola crisis, including case management, psychosocial support, disease prevention, and health education for families and children affected and infected by Ebola.

Conference in Myanmar. In June 2014, World Learning partnered with a group of local disabled persons organizations to convene the first **National Disability Advocacy Conference in Myanmar**. The three-day event convened more than 550 participants from across the country to discuss disability rights issues in Myanmar. **As a result, the Myanmar Council for Persons with Disabilities (MCPD) was elected by participants of the conference to be the umbrella organization tasked to collectively advocate for the country's larger disability community.** In October 2014, World Learning began an eight-month activity to provide capacity development assistance to the newly formed advocacy organization. In collaboration with the U.S. International Council on Disabilities (USICD), World Learning developed a five-year strategic plan with MCPD to guide them through their organizational development as well as apply for and secure funding from the international donor community including USAID. Additionally, World Learning and USICD provided hands-on support in governance, program development, and start-up activities, as well as workshops on various human rights topics related to persons with disabilities such as advocacy, coalition-building, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. **MCPD is now the leading disability rights organization in Myanmar** working collaboratively with public and private partners to ensure that the recently approved national Law on Protection of Persons with Disabilities is implemented in accordance with international standards.

The **USAID HIV/AIDS Grants, Solicitation, and Management Program (CGSM)** in **Jamaica and the Bahamas** (\$9.8 million, 2010-2015) served as an umbrella grant-making mechanism to support sub-awardees that enabled Jamaica and the Bahamas to meet their targets concerning the Most-At-Risk-



Populations, including youth at risk of contracting or spreading HIV. By working with sub-awardees and other governmental and nongovernmental organizations, the CGSM built the capacity of these organizations to strategically plan for and achieve their immediate and long-term targets. Given the highly stigmatized environment and social complexities of working with the target populations, the grant solicitations prioritized highly innovative organizations and activities that demonstrated their ability to build confidence and trust with these vulnerable populations.

As part of the process, each organization engaged in the Participatory Institutional Analysis (PIA), a facilitated self-assessment to identify gaps in eight key competency areas: Governance, Operations and Management Systems, Human Resources, Financial Resources, Service Delivery, External Relations and Advocacy, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Subgrant Administration. Based on the final PIA reports and action plans, World Learning developed capacity building work plans for each year of the project to serve areas of common need for all grantees, as well as areas for improvement that were only needed by a selected number of grantees. World Learning provided tailored training through workshops, technical assistance, development of manuals and strategic/operational plans, and regular hands-on coaching. **As a result, the increased capacity of these organizations has contributed to a stronger and better coordinated response to HIV/AIDS in Jamaica and The Bahamas. In total, the project supported 14 local organizations, 11 in Jamaica and 4 in the Bahamas, while also working closely with government partners in both countries.**

In addition, World Learning conducted a research study approved by the Ministry of Health Ethics

Committee entitled “Situational Analysis on the Psychosocial Needs of Orphans and Children Made Vulnerable by HIV (OVC) and their Caregivers.” This study identified the gaps in services currently provided to OVCs and the results were used to inform the administration of small grants to three NGOs providing psychosocial support to OVC and their families. Areas included counseling, skills building, and training of volunteers across the island to increase their ability to identify and respond to the needs of OVC.

World Learning also expanded beyond the project’s core activities to strengthen regional CSO networks in the Caribbean. In collaboration with the Caribbean HIV/AIDS Alliance (CHAA), World Learning conducted two regional training workshops on Management & Leadership Sustainability and Resource Mobilization—with participation of 19 lead representatives from NGOs and faith-based organizations from Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Through this network support, individual organizations were able to work together for the first time, sharing resources, lessons learned, and identifying areas where their advocacy efforts can be more powerful by working together.

The **Malawi Scholarship Program**, funded by USAID (\$9.3 million, 2012-2019), aims to improve the country’s health services by supporting nearly 800 healthcare workers over seven years as they pursue certificates, diplomas, and bachelor’s and master’s degrees in such fields as public health, nutrition, midwifery, and reproductive health and family planning. The Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health recently named participant Barwani Msiska one of this year’s 120



Under 40: The New Generation of Family Planning Leaders. Msiska is studying public health at Emory University, and has championed the development of programs in Malawi to improve family planning education and access to contraceptives. Another standout is Rose Kanyangalazi, who is studying for a master's degree in reproductive health and will help expand Malawi's pool of skilled healthcare workers by teaching other student nurses at Bwaila Hospital in Lilongwe about HIV prevention.

The **USAID Special Programs to Address the Need of Survivors (SPANS) Project** Project (\$53 million, 2008-2018) serves as an umbrella grant-making mechanism to support service delivery, training, and related activities aimed at assisting vulnerable populations in conflict-affected countries. **To date, World Learning has issued 35 grants totaling more than \$45 million for projects in 41 countries.** As the prime implementor, through close collaboration with USAID and feedback from partner organizations, we have developed a suite of tools and mechanisms for grant administration that builds capacity in grantees to improve their reporting and management of U.S. government funding. We provide technical assistance to grantees beyond grant management, including establishing a capacity development plan using World Learning's Participatory Institutional Analysis tool. World Learning organizes partners' meetings for grantees to share learning and technical expertise. In May 2016, World Learning managed an Inclusive Education training for 15 USAID Education Officers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, drawing on internal inclusion and education experts, and providing comprehensive logistical leadership.

Through the USAID **Global Health Grants Solicitation and Management (Health GSM)** project, (\$79 million, 2004-2013) awarded through Leader with

Associates cooperative agreements, **World Learning has awarded 129 subgrants in 49 countries.** This includes support to 22 local NGO subrecipients; 15 of these subrecipients are implementing HIV prevention activities among high-risk groups, while five were awarded gender-based grants. World Learning developed the management capacity of two large networks of CSOs who are Global Fund Principal Recipients (PRs). In addition to financial and human resources management, the capacity strengthening program for the CSOs included development of annual work plans and performance management plans, as well as design of a resource mobilization strategy. With World Learning's support, both PRs have now begun to disburse and manage subgrants to their designated subrecipients.





GLOBAL EXCHANGES

World Learning's exchange programs help people from different walks of life find their voices, transform, and lead, while making their communities better places in which to live. Each year, World Learning administers short-term learning experiences abroad for thousands of professionals, which offer links to U.S. and international colleagues, exposure to new ideas, and a broader view of core U.S. values and culture. Since 1986, we have been implementing the U.S. Department of State's **International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)** which brings professionals from around the world to the U.S. for short-term exchanges in almost every field to get a first-hand look at trends, best practices, and new ways of tackling challenges with their professional counterparts in the U.S. As part of our work with IVLP, World Learning has created programs on a wide variety of themes, including topics that are pertinent for the visitors on this program, such as health care policy, nursing, global health challenges, and disease prevention. In July and August of 2017, World Learning led the IVLP program on Global Women's Health Issues, which focused on common challenges facing the global community in preventing, treating, and managing health problems affecting women such as cancer, stroke, heart diseases, diabetes and HIV-related illnesses. Participants visited counterparts in Washington, DC, Detroit, Dallas, California, and Vermont, including dialogues with the National Cancer Institute Women's Cancer Program and the American Heart Association.

In February and March of 2018, World Learning is leading a IVLP Media and Messaging Strategies exchange group. The group is touring the U.S., including visits to key journalism schools, where they will examine the roles and responsibilities of a free

press in democracy and gain a better understanding of the evolution and current trends in a variety of media. The program also addresses the impact of governmental countermeasures and messaging through social media and other new communication technologies.





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