



# SUPPORTING UZBEKISTAN'S RURAL WOMEN

**IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:** October 2021 – September 2022

**IMPLEMENTING ORGANIZATION:** Chemonics International Inc.

**BUDGET:** \$1 million

At USAID, gender equality and women's empowerment are at the core of our development work. USAID is supporting women's economic empowerment in rural Uzbekistan through its Agribusiness Development activity.

Rural women in Uzbekistan have very limited opportunities for employment outside of agricultural work, many lost their livelihoods because of climate change, and are overrepresented in informal employment. Gender roles dictate that women should be in charge of child rearing and housework, acting as a deterrent for women to obtain formal employment or start a business. Women's labor in agriculture tends to be low-skilled manual labor, and seasonal work not covered by a written contract. Women who work informally on dehqan (smallholder) farms do not receive protection under labor law in terms of sick pay, maternity, or childcare leave. Additionally, it is commonly considered unacceptable for women to use the internet which exacerbates economic inequalities.

To address this situation, USAID's Agribusiness Development activity (Activity) is taking the following actions:

- 1) **Skills development:** provide skills development trainings in IT/digital, entrepreneurship, vocational, access to credit, and labor rights to women in rural Uzbekistan.

- 2) **Linking training participants to the private sector:** identify internships and employment opportunities with local businesses for training graduates.
- 3) **Support the launch and expand business enterprises:** procure machinery, equipment, inputs, and/or other assets to assist women in realizing their entrepreneurial ambitions and also explore opportunities to link women to financial organizations, for alternative financing to launch or grow their businesses. Women participants will complete concept papers that detail their plans to launch or expand their businesses.
- 4) **Communications:** create a Telegram group through which the Activity and its partners will disseminate information about women's rights, labor rights, gender-based violence, and other gender-related issues. The women beneficiaries will also be able to use the Telegram group platform as a support mechanism to discuss business ideas, as well as jointly resolve the challenges they face in their daily business activities.

The Activity will include male sensitization approaches in marketing and recruitment campaigns to ensure women can freely participate in the training programs without facing any repercussions at home.

In addition, the Activity will also partner with local mahalla leaders to support women's empowerment and convey to their respective communities that women's inclusion in the workforce will directly strengthen their communities and improve their livelihoods.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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CLEARANCE PAGE

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