

## PRESS RELEASE

### IPPF Part of Team Funded by USAID to Implement Global Health Equity Project

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*The International Planned Parenthood Federation has joined an international network to promote and sustain improved health and agency in low- and middle-income countries through Agency for All Project*

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has funded a \$38 million, five-year project led by the Center on Gender Equity and Health (GEH) at University of California San Diego School of Medicine and Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science. The project is an international, multi-institutional effort to understand and promote agency for individuals, communities and local organizations in low- and middle-income countries.

“Agency for All” is intended to develop and foster social and behavioral research resulting in a better understanding of how to promote the voices of local people within their own communities and within health and development programming.

It addresses multiple dimensions of health and well-being, including maternal and child health, infectious disease, HIV/AIDS, family planning and reproductive health. The program will work with diverse populations across the globe, with a focus on Africa and South Asia.

GEH will coordinate the consortium of global, regional and local leaders to conduct research and implement solutions, informed by local priorities and agendas, said Rebecka Lundgren, PhD, an applied anthropologist and associate professor of infectious diseases and global public health, who will serve as project director.

“Agency for All will look at the complex questions of ‘agency,’ and what that means for different people, organizations and systems around the world, as well as for our own consortium partners,” said Lundgren. “We are honored to bring together a global consortium of world class researchers and implementers to discover what works to convert intention into action within social and behavior change programs and make it work for real people.”

The initiative will concentrate on three geographical areas or hubs in East Africa, West Africa and South Asia, collaborating with specific organizations and networks in those regions. In addition to the International Planned Parenthood Federation, these partners include the [Centre for Catalyzing Change](#) (India), [Evidence for Sustainable Human Development Systems in Africa](#) (Cameroon), [Makerere University](#) (Uganda), [Matchboxology](#) (South Africa), [Sambodhi](#) (India), [Shujaaz, Inc.](#) (Kenya), [University of Witwatersrand](#) (South Africa), [CORE Group](#), [Promundo-US](#), [Save the Children](#) and [Viamo](#).

“These locally-led partnerships are critical,” said Paul Bukuluki, PhD, director of research for Agency for All and an associate professor at Makerere University. “We hope to develop context-specific mechanisms for measuring agency, and more effectively evaluate the approaches that help us improve the quality of life of women and men at the margins of society.”

#### **About the Center on Gender Equity and Health**

The GEH conducts multidisciplinary research to understand and eliminate gender inequities, specifically in the areas of child marriage, unpaid labor, gender-based violence and gender social norms. It is directed by Anita Raj, PhD, professor of infectious diseases and global public health in the UC San Diego School of Medicine.

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