



Australian High Commission
Kenya

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**MARIE STOPES
INTERNATIONAL
AUSTRALIA**

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

World Vision

Australia leading the change for women in Kenya

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An Australian-funded scheme is saving and transforming lives in the Rift Valley, Nyanza, Eastern and Coast region in Kenya.

With funding from the Australian Government, Kenyan NGOs have improved the health of more than 52,000 women and children. The funding provides modern family planning methods, child vaccinations, and safe and clean baby delivery services. Nearly 9,000 women smallholder farmers have also improved their agricultural productivity thanks to Australian funding for fertiliser and seeds, and access to agricultural extension services.

“Our work to help Kenyan women improve their lives is very important to Australia,” said John Feakes, Australia’s High Commissioner to Kenya. “Giving birth in Kenya can be risky for mothers and their children, not enough children are vaccinated, and women still do not have equal access to farming income. Strong support to Kenyan people working in these fields will improve the situation for thousands of Kenyan women and their children.”

Australian-supported NGOs work with private sector healthcare clinics to provide sustainable, cost-effective sexual and reproductive health services. An increase in access to health services means women can make informed decisions on the family planning methods they want. Being able to control how many children they have saves women’s lives and gives them greater control over education for themselves and their children.

In Eastern Kenya, women from marginalised communities identify and demand their rights through women’s groups. These groups call for changes to policies and service delivery and promote reforms needed to end poverty and discrimination against women.

“We are a representation of rural women from Kitui and we believe we have what it takes to improve livelihoods among the poor in our country, enable them to understand their rights as Kenyans and make our government accountable to them,” says Grace Mutisya, Chair for Women’s Association of Kitui County.

In agriculture, distributing seeds and fertilizer to Farmer Field Schools involves more than 10,000 smallholder farmers, including women and men with disability. Women farmers were also supported to improve their quality of life by earning additional income. Support through village savings and loans associations under the program is essential to strengthening women’s business while diversifying their incomes.

“There was no way I was going to put up fish ponds and a hatchery without proper skills and enough capital,” says Rhoda Mwende, a single mother of three from Kambiti village in Embu County. “But from our groups table banking initiative, I have been able to do that, and now, I have become a trainer for dry-land fish farming,” Rhoda added.

The Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) is implemented in Kenya by ActionAid International Kenya, Mothers Union of the Anglican Church, World Vision Kenya, Plan International Kenya and Marie Stopes Kenya.

The AACES Annual Report is available at <http://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/aaces-annual-report-2013-14.aspx>

Notes to Editors

About AACES

AACES is a partnership of the Australian Government, ten Australian Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and their Africa-based partners. The 90 million Australian dollar program is funded by the Australian Government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The program focuses on marginalised communities, with particular attention to women, children, people with disability and people vulnerable to disaster. It is being implemented in 11 African countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

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