

## **Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act Reps. Ed Royce (R-CA) and Lois Frankel (D-FL)**

Women around the world face barriers to reach their full economic potential, such as lack of access to education and health care, gender-based violence, discriminatory laws, and exclusion from the financial system. Research shows that achieving global gender equality in economic activity could add as much as \$28 trillion to annual global GDP by 2025. The bipartisan Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act addresses gender-related barriers to economic growth and support women-led businesses by:

- Expanding support for women-owned businesses by requiring that 50 percent of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)'s small- and medium-sized enterprise (SME) resources be targeted to reach enterprises owned, managed and controlled by women.
- Making it USAID policy to reduce gender disparities related to economic opportunity, strive to eliminate gender-based violence, support women's property rights, improve access to education, and increase the capability of women and girls to determine their own future.
- Codifying USAID's practice of shaping policy and activities through a gender analysis. This analysis would examine gender differences in access to resources and opportunities, different impacts of policies and programs on men and women, and provide recommendations to narrow gender gaps and improve the lives of women and girls.
- Mandating that USAID track and measure improvements in women's economic empowerment, including employment, access to financial services, enterprise development, earnings and control over income, and property and land rights.
- Expanding the scope of development assistance from microenterprises to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to reflect changes in the field.