

## **“ONE WOMAN INITIATIVE” ANNOUNCES FIRST GRANTS TO WOMEN’S ORGANIZATIONS IN FIVE NATIONS**

***Year-Old USAID/State Department/Private Sector Initiative Unveils Initial Aid to Local Groups; Chair Carly Fiorina, USAID’s Lisa Chiles and CAFAmerica’s Saxon-Harrold Report on Progress.***

**WASHINGTON, D.C. – June 3, 2009** -- The One Woman Initiative (<http://www.OneWomanInitiative.org>), a one-year-old public/private initiative to empower women in countries with significant Muslim populations, today announced its first grants, totaling more than \$500,000 to five grassroots organizations in Azerbaijan, Egypt, India, Pakistan and the Philippines. The OWI grants are being made to locally focused organizations with results-oriented programs providing women access to legal rights, political participation, and economic development.

Reflecting the combined efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. State Department and leading private sector interests, the One Woman Initiative was launched on May 12, 2008. Since its inception, OWI and its leaders have focused on how to raise funds and award grants totaling \$100 million over the course of five years to support organizations that directly assist women in the countries with large Muslim populations. CAFAmerica (<http://www.CAFAmerica.org>), a member organization of the Charities Aid Foundation International Network, is managing funds raised for OWI from individual and corporate contributions.

**“These grants address the unique barriers women face—barriers like gender inequity and lack of economic and political opportunity,”** said One Woman Initiative Fund Chair Carly Fiorina.

**“Investments in women can lift entire families out of poverty, transform communities, and foster peace and prosperity. We are particularly sensitive to the potential of women in Muslim majority countries, at this watershed moment, when family and community stability can contribute to the peace and security we all seek.”**

**“This unique collaboration combines the strengths and expertise of the USG with the perspectives and experience from the private sector,”** said USAID’s Counselor Lisa Chiles.

**“Partnerships such as this one are vital to enable new avenues of social and economic empowerment for women.”**

In her comments, CAFAmerica CEO Susan Saxon-Harrold cited *“Issue Brief: Women’s Leadership in the Muslim World,”* published today by CAFAmerica. Saxon-Harrold said: **“Many Muslim women today face the same barriers to female empowerment that existed a century ago: little access to education, domestic violence, and few or no legal rights. However, in the past five years, due in large part to women’s increasing activism and participation in all sectors of public life, this picture is changing. CAFAmerica is pleased to be part of the important OWI initiative to help encourage further progress in this realm.”**

The details of the five OWI grants announced today are as follows:

- In **Pakistan**, with a grant of \$100,256 the Kashf Foundation plans to step into the rural microfinance market in Pakistan with a purely women-centric approach. Kashf will launch a rural microfinance program developing activities such as agriculture and livestock-related products, crop insurance, and a mobile microfinance service.

- In **Egypt**, the Association for Human and Environmental Development will receive a \$95,000 grant for a Justice Initiative project that will provide leadership training for women, raise awareness about women's constitutional rights and encourage women's political participation.
- In **India**, the Group for Urban and Rural Development will receive a \$106,000 grant to provide women greater access to economic development opportunities through entrepreneurship training and job placement activities.
- In **Azerbaijan**, the Women's Bar Association will receive a \$96,000 grant to provide women access to legal advice and training on issues related to women's rights, including domestic violence, trafficking of women, early marriage, and gender equality.
- In the **Philippines**, Magbassa Kita Foundation, Inc. will receive a \$124,500 grant in 2009 to focus on conflict prevention through skills training, workshops and networking in the areas of conflict management and peace building. MKFI will develop and strengthen a network of women's peace organizations.

For more information about The One Woman Initiative, visit <http://www.OneWomanInitiative.org>.

## **ABOUT THE GROUPS**

### **One Woman Initiative**

The One Woman Initiative is an international women's empowerment fund launched on May 12, 2008, with the Secretary of State and representatives of the diplomatic corps and NGO community at the U.S. State Department. With the pragmatic goals of engaging 10 corporate partners and working with the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of State, OWI's objective is that some \$100 million dollars will be applied to empower women to achieve a local difference and a global impact, in five years. For more information, go to <http://www.OneWomanInitiative.org> on the Web.

### **CAFAmerica**

CAFAmerica was founded in 1992 as a member organization of the Charities Aid Foundation International Network, which provides charitable financial services to nonprofits, individuals and companies. The CAF International Network spans six continents and has over \$4 billion of charitable funds under management. CAFAmerica is dedicated to expanding borderless charitable giving by providing guidance and international grant making options for donors. CAFAmerica's range of innovative charitable solutions for US donors and overseas nonprofits include Donor Advised Gifts, Donor Advised Funds, Matching Donor Advised Fund and most recently, the 'Friends of' Charity Fund. For more information, go to <http://www.CAFAmerica.org> on the Web.

### **USAID**

The U.S. Agency for International Development has been the lead U.S. Government agency providing economic development and humanitarian assistance to people around the world for more than 40 years. USAID is an independent federal government agency that receives overall foreign policy guidance from the Secretary of State. For more information about USAID and its programs go to <http://www.usaid.gov>.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A streaming audio recording of today's news event will be available on the Web as of 6 p.m. EDT/3 p.m. PDT at <http://www.CAFAmerica.org> and <http://www.OneWomanInitiative.org/>.