



BACKGROUND

Contact: Cate Cowan
ccowan@onesharedworld.org

ONE SHARED WORLDSM **Hope is Our Common Language**

On the surface, the life of a woman in the United States may seem worlds away from that of a mother in Haiti, a teacher in Honduras or a seamstress in Vietnam. But whether we realize it or not, American women are not so different from women in cities, towns and villages in every corner of the globe. They share similar struggles, joys and hopes. And they all want to build a safer, more secure and healthier future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Four years ago, Tran Hoang Yen was a shy young disabled woman who rarely left the church-sponsored shelter in Ho Chi Minh City. Then she attended a U.S.-supported leadership training course that taught her how to start a business... and provided grants to get it going. Today, Yen is a successful entrepreneur who employs 17 disadvantaged young people—more than half of them women with disabilities—and her small sewing shop makes products that are distributed throughout Vietnam.

Success stories about women such as Yen are the foundation of a new national campaign—*One Shared World*—that encourages America's working women to think about and support development assistance efforts that improve conditions for people in poor and developing countries. Launched on International Women's Day, *One Shared World* highlights everyday successes of women to overcome poverty, illiteracy and disease.

In Rumilda Torres's hometown in the mountains of Honduras, economic conditions often force children to abandon school to go to work. The retired teacher knew the long-term implications for children who forego their basic studies. So she became a volunteer facilitator with EDUCATODO, a radio-based, U.S.-funded alternative learning program. Thanks to her and 6,000 other volunteers—many of them former program participants—thousands of Hondurans from rural and marginalized areas have the foundation for a better economic future.

Four national women’s organizations have come together in an unprecedented partnership to support *One Shared World*: the American Association of University Women (AAUW), American Women in Radio and Television (AWRT), the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) and the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). The nonprofit Academy for Educational Development (AED) developed and manages *One Shared World* on behalf of the funder, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Madame Fanfan used to sell rice on the side of the road to feed her five children. But through a U.S.-funded program that helps poor Haitian women start their own businesses, she turned things around. She moved to a prime market stall and diversified her wares. Then she opened a small restaurant and plans to open a larger one. To Madame Fanfan, the program was more than a business service. It was the start of a hopeful future.

Women and organizations will find a wealth of information and resources about *One Shared World* and America’s efforts to help tackle world poverty on the campaign’s Web site www.onesharedworld.org.

Additional media resources are available at www.onesharedworld.org/media.