



December 21, 2011

Dear Friends,

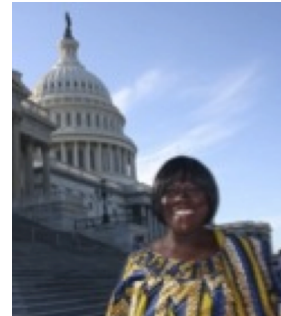
As 2011 comes to a close, I want to wish you and your family a happy holiday season and also share with you what we've been able to accomplish this year in Washington for women and girls worldwide.

We started the year on a positive note: the State Department had just announced a new blueprint for all of U.S. international assistance and diplomacy that recognized that **women and girls are core to effective development**—from hunger and food security to democracy-building and humanitarian assistance. **Women Thrive leapt into action to make sure that the unprecedented rhetoric translated into real change for women and girls in developing countries.**

With your support, we were able to make a difference.

- **We protected life-saving programs** like food aid to 14 million women and children facing hunger in the wake of emergencies.
- **We advocated for more resources for women and children.** For the first time ever, U.S. embassies will budget for women's empowerment, anti-violence programs, and equality. This up-front thinking means more money will be allocated to these important programs and more will be done at the ground level.
- **We made U.S. programs accountable to women and girls.** We know that what gets measured gets done. So we pushed programs to evaluate exactly how programs benefit women and girls at the local level.
- **We strengthened grassroots, rural women leaders.** Women are their own best advocates. We provided training that helped our local partners in Burkina Faso and Ghana establish themselves as the go-to experts on women's issues in their own community and with their own governments.

In looking back over the year, I am extremely proud of the Women Thrive family—including activists and donors like you—for achieving so much in such a challenging political and economic climate.



Your support helped ensure that the voices of women leaders like Lydia Sasu are heard here in D.C.

In March, we hosted Lydia, our dynamic partner, farmer and leader from Ghana, to speak at our annual Capitol Hill event for International Women's Day. She brought alive for policymakers why we must invest in women, who are the majority of the world's farmers, so they can feed their families and help feed the world.

You also helped raise the voices of women so that they were highlighted all over the country through coverage in *The Washington Post*, *The Diane Rehm Show*, *Politico*, *CNN.com*, *FoxNews.com*, and many other medial outlets.

How did we do it? We took some time recently to ask our many stakeholders what makes Women Thrive unique and most effective. Here's what we heard:

- **We're advocates.** We are the voice in Washington, D.C. for women living in poverty worldwide, 24/7.
- **We're independent.** We do not accept any U.S. government funds. All our support comes from private donors—people like you.
- **We're grounded.** We do not cook up solutions to women's problems ourselves. We advocate for priorities that women in developing countries say are best for them. Our job is to help raise their voices in Washington.
- **We have a big vision.** Big change does not come without a game-changing vision and approach. We push for transformative change that will impact women in every corner of the world.
- **It's not just about us.** We lead a diverse and powerful coalition of more than 50 organizations and thousands of individual Americans who want to see their government do what is right for women.

With this in mind, we've created a new vision and mission statement that better captures our added value, positions us to take our work to the next level, and hopefully will inspire more people to join the movement for women and girls.

Our Vision

Women Thrive Worldwide works to create a world in which women and men work together as equals so that they, their families and the communities can thrive.

Our Mission

Women Thrive Worldwide advocates for change at the U.S. and global levels so that women and men can share equally in the enjoyment of opportunities, economic prosperity, voice, and freedom from fear and violence.

Thank you once again for your passion, determination and commitment to advance rights and opportunities for women and girls worldwide. We hope you will continue to partner with us in the upcoming year.

Best wishes,



Ritu Sharma
President and Co-Founder