

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6117

To promote the empowerment, development, and prosperity of women globally,
and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 5, 2020

Mr. McCAUL (for himself, Mrs. WAGNER, Ms. HOULAHAN, and Ms. FRANKEL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To promote the empowerment, development, and prosperity
of women globally, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Women’s Global Devel-
5 opment and Prosperity Act of 2020”.

6 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WOMEN’S GLOBAL DEVEL-**
7 **OPMENT AND PROSPERITY INITIATIVE.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall es-
9 tablish an office for the Women’s Global Development and
10 Prosperity Initiative (W–GDP) under the office estab-

1 lished in section 6(a) to lead and coordinate efforts related
2 to the objectives set forth in subsection (b).

3 (b) OBJECTIVES.—The W–GDP Initiative should be
4 based on the following three pillars:

5 (1) WOMEN PROSPERING IN THE WORK-
6 FORCE.—Advance women in the workforce by im-
7 proving access to quality vocational education and
8 skills training, enabling women to secure jobs in
9 their local economies.

10 (2) WOMEN SUCCEEDING AS ENTRE-
11 PRENEURS.—Promote women’s entrepreneurship
12 and increase access to capital, markets, technical as-
13 sistance, and mentorship.

14 (3) WOMEN ENABLED IN THE ECONOMY.—
15 Identify and reduce the legal, regulatory, and social
16 barriers, including disproportionate burdens of un-
17 paid care, gender-based violence and abuse, and
18 underinvestment in education, that constrain wom-
19 en’s full and free participation in the global economy
20 and promote improved practices.

21 (c) SENSE OF CONGRESS ON ENABLING WOMEN IN
22 THE ECONOMY.—It is the sense of Congress that, recog-
23 nizing the breadth of work necessary to address the overall
24 enabling environment and supporting efforts related to the
25 third pillar set forth under subsection (b)(3), it should be

1 the policy of the United States to ensure that the United
2 States Government promotes the following five types of
3 foundational legal reforms:

4 (1) ACCESSING INSTITUTIONS.—Lifting barriers
5 that prevent women from fully participating in the
6 work force, ensuring women’s authority to sign legal
7 documents such as contracts and court documents,
8 and addressing unequal access to courts and admin-
9 istrative bodies for women, whether officially,
10 through lack of proper enforcement, or through the
11 unequal access of education that may prevent wom-
12 en’s literacy.

13 (2) BUILDING CREDIT.—Ensuring women’s
14 equal access to credit and capital to start and grow
15 their businesses, and prohibiting discrimination in
16 access to credit on the basis of gender or marital
17 status.

18 (3) OWNING AND MANAGING PROPERTY.—Lift-
19 ing restrictions on women’s possessing and man-
20 aging property, including limitations on inheritance
21 and the ability to transfer, purchase, or lease prop-
22 erty.

23 (4) TRAVELING FREELY.—Addressing con-
24 straints on women’s freedom of movement, including

1 restrictions on obtaining passports on the basis of
2 gender.

3 (5) REMOVING RESTRICTIONS ON EMPLOY-
4 MENT.—Eliminating barriers that limit working
5 hours, occupations, or tasks on the basis of gender.

6 (d) POLICY ALIGNMENT.—The Women’s Global De-
7 velopment and Prosperity Initiative shall be closely aligned
8 and coordinated with ongoing United States Government
9 efforts to advance women’s empowerment globally, includ-
10 ing requirements under the Women, Peace, and Security
11 Act of 2017 (Public Law 115–68) and the Women’s En-
12 trepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018
13 (Public Law 115–428).

14 **SEC. 3. LEVERAGING UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE.**

15 The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Am-
16 bassador-at-Large for Women’s Empowerment and the
17 heads of relevant Federal agencies, including those set
18 forth in section 5(b), may work with the private sector
19 and nongovernmental organizations to leverage public and
20 private capital to complement W–GDP Initiative programs
21 and related efforts.

22 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-
24 priated not less than \$200,000,000 for fiscal years 2021
25 through 2025 for a W–GDP Fund, established at the

1 United States Agency for International Development, with
2 a focus on sourcing and scaling the most impactful pro-
3 grams for women’s economic empowerment and ensuring
4 there is not duplication of effort with other departments
5 and agencies.

6 (b) APPROPRIATIONS REQUIREMENT.—Funds au-
7 thorized to be appropriated by this section shall only be
8 made available subject to the availability of appropria-
9 tions.

10 (c) OVERSIGHT.—Funds authorized to be appro-
11 priated by this section shall be jointly overseen by the
12 United States Agency for International Development and
13 the Ambassador for Women’s Empowerment.

14 **SEC. 5. INTERAGENCY STEERING GROUP AND ADVISORY**
15 **COUNCIL.**

16 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTERAGENCY STEERING
17 GROUP.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall establish
19 a steering group (the “Steering Group”), with rep-
20 resentation from appropriate Federal departments
21 and agencies, to carry out the policy goals of this
22 Act. The President shall designate a chair or co-
23 chairs to lead the activities of the Steering Group in
24 coordination with the Ambassador-at-Large for
25 Women’s Empowerment.

1 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Steering Group shall
2 include representatives from—

3 (A) the Department of State;

4 (B) the Department of the Treasury;

5 (C) the Department of Commerce;

6 (D) the Department of Labor;

7 (E) the Department of Defense;

8 (F) the United States Agency for Inter-
9 national Development (USAID);

10 (G) the Millennium Challenge Corporation;

11 (H) the Peace Corps;

12 (I) the United States International Devel-
13 opment Finance Corporation (DFC);

14 (J) the Inter-American Foundation;

15 (K) the United States African Develop-
16 ment Foundation;

17 (L) the components of the executive offices
18 of the President, including the Office of Man-
19 agement and Budget, and the Office of the
20 United States Trade Representative; and

21 (M) other Federal agencies, as determined
22 appropriate by guidelines developed by the co-
23 chairs.

24 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The President may establish
2 a W–GDP Advisory Council (in this subsection re-
3 ferred to as the “Council”) to advise the Secretary
4 of State, and others as appropriate.

5 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—Members of the Council
6 should be appointed by the Secretary of State and
7 may consist of up to 16 members that includes rep-
8 resentation from non-governmental organizations,
9 think tanks, advocacy organizations, foundations,
10 the private sector, faith-based organizations, wom-
11 en’s organizations, and other institutions engaged in
12 promoting women’s economic empowerment globally.

13 (3) FUNCTIONS.—The Secretary of State
14 should call upon members of the Council, either col-
15 lectively or individually, to advise the Interagency
16 Steering Group regarding the extent to which the
17 W–GDP Initiative is meeting its objectives and any
18 suggestions for improvements with respect to meet-
19 ing those objectives, including implementation chal-
20 lenges and opportunities.

21 (4) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The
22 Council shall not be subject to the Federal Advisory
23 Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

1 **SEC. 6. OFFICE OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State should
3 establish in the Office of the Secretary of the Department
4 of State the Office of Women's Empowerment. The Office
5 should be headed by an Ambassador-at-Large for Wom-
6 en's Empowerment, who should be appointed by the Presi-
7 dent, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.
8 The Ambassador-at-Large should report directly to the
9 Secretary.

10 (b) PURPOSE.—In addition to the duties described in
11 this Act and duties determined by the Secretary of State,
12 the Ambassador should coordinate efforts of the United
13 States Government as directed by the Secretary regarding
14 approaches that promote equality and advance the status
15 and development of women and girls in United States for-
16 eign policy.

17 (c) DUTIES.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Ambassador should—

19 (A) direct activities, policies, programs,
20 and funding relating to gender equality and the
21 advancement of women and girls internation-
22 ally;

23 (B) work to ensure the integration of gen-
24 der analysis into the formulation of policy, pro-
25 grams, structures, process, and capacities
26 throughout the bureaus and offices of the De-

1 partment of State and in the international pro-
2 grams of other Federal agencies;

3 (C) direct United States Government re-
4 sources, as appropriate, to respond to needs for
5 promoting gender equality and the empower-
6 ment of women in United States Government
7 foreign policies and international programs;

8 (D) design, support, and implement activi-
9 ties regarding—

10 (i) the empowerment of women inter-
11 nationally, including for the prevention of
12 and response to gender-based violence
13 internationally;

14 (ii) the policies and goals of the
15 Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017
16 (Public Law 115–68) and the Women’s
17 Entrepreneurship and Economic Empower-
18 ment Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–428);

19 (iii) the Women’s Global Development
20 and Prosperity (W–GDP) Initiative as de-
21 scribed in section 2; and

22 (iv) the reduction of legal, regulatory,
23 and social barriers that constrain women
24 worldwide;

1 (E) ensure that programs, projects, and
2 activities designed to promote and empower
3 women internationally are subject to rigorous
4 monitoring and evaluation, and oversee the de-
5 velopment of indicators and standards for such
6 monitoring and evaluation, with the intent of
7 using these across relevant Federal agencies;

8 (F) partner, consult, and coordinate with
9 other governments, bilateral and multilateral in-
10 stitutions, nongovernmental organizations, and
11 private-sector partners, and represent the
12 United States in diplomatic and multilateral
13 fora as appropriate, to advance the objectives of
14 this Act;

15 (G) serve as the principal advisor to the
16 Secretary of State regarding gender equality,
17 women’s empowerment, and gender-based vio-
18 lence as a foreign policy matter; and

19 (H) undertake other relevant duties that
20 the Secretary of State shall determine, as ap-
21 propriate.

22 (2) INFORMATION SHARING AND TRANS-
23 PARENCY.—The Office of Women’s Empowerment
24 should, as appropriate—

1 (A) be the central repository of data on all
2 United States programs, projects, and activities
3 that relate to empowering, promoting, includ-
4 ing, and advancing women worldwide; and

5 (B) produce a full accounting of United
6 States Government spending on such programs,
7 projects, and activities not later than one year
8 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

9 (d) SERVICE OF CURRENT SENIOR OFFICIAL.—A
10 senior official with experience in promoting gender equal-
11 ity and the empowerment of women and girls, appointed
12 by the President as an Ambassador-at-Large and con-
13 firmed by the Senate for a position that addresses global
14 women’s issues, shall also serve in the Ambassador-at-
15 Large position established under this section.

16 **SEC. 7. SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR GENDER EQUALITY**
17 **AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT.**

18 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There should be established
19 in the United States Agency for International Develop-
20 ment the position of Senior Coordinator for Gender Equal-
21 ity and Women’s Empowerment. The Senior Coordinator
22 should—

23 (1) report to the Administrator of the United
24 States Agency for International Development; and

1 (2) conduct duties as directed by the Adminis-
2 trator to promote the purposes of this Act.

3 (b) IN GENERAL.—The Senior Coordinator should—

4 (1) in consultation with the Ambassador-at-
5 Large for Women’s Empowerment described in sec-
6 tion 6, coordinate activities, policies, programs, and
7 funding of the Agency relating to gender equality
8 and women’s empowerment;

9 (2) work to ensure the integration of gender
10 analysis into the programs, structures, processes,
11 and capacities of all bureaus and offices of the
12 Agency as mandated by the Women’s Entrepreneur-
13 ship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018
14 (Public Law 115–428);

15 (3) design, support, and implement activities
16 led by the Agency regarding gender equality and
17 women’s empowerment, including for the prevention
18 and response to gender-based violence internation-
19 ally;

20 (4) serve as the principal advisor to the Admin-
21 istrator on gender equality, women’s empowerment,
22 and gender-based violence;

23 (5) track and analyze monitoring and evalua-
24 tion data and findings on gender equality and wom-
25 en’s empowerment programs of the Agency; and

1 (6) partner, consult, and coordinate with other
2 governments, bilateral and multilateral institutions,
3 nongovernmental organizations, and private-sector
4 partners to advance the objectives of this Act.

5 **SEC. 8. REPORTING TO CONGRESS.**

6 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
7 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter until 2025, the
8 President shall submit to the appropriate congressional
9 committees a report that—

10 (1) summarizes and evaluates the implementa-
11 tion of United States diplomatic efforts and foreign
12 assistance programs, projects, and activities to ad-
13 vance the policy objectives set forth in section 2;

14 (2) describes the nature and extent of the co-
15 ordination among the relevant departments and
16 agencies;

17 (3) describes the monitoring and evaluation
18 tools, mechanisms, and common indicators to assess
19 progress made on the policy objectives of this Act;

20 (4) describes partnerships and collaborations
21 with the private sector, including amount of funding
22 leveraged by United States contributions to support
23 the objectives described in section 2; and

24 (5) describes partnerships, consultation, and co-
25 ordination being undertaken with other govern-

1 ments, bilateral and multilateral institutions, and
2 nongovernmental organizations.

3 **SEC. 9. DEFINITIONS.**

4 In this Act:

5 (1) AGENCY.—The term “Agency” means the
6 United States Agency for International Develop-
7 ment.

8 (2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
9 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
10 mittees” means—

11 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
12 the Senate;

13 (B) the Committee on Appropriations of
14 the Senate;

15 (C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
16 the House of Representatives; and

17 (D) the Committee on Appropriations of
18 the House of Representatives.

19 (3) GENDER ANALYSIS.—The term “gender
20 analysis” refers to the definition as outlined in the
21 Women’s Entrepreneurship and Economic Empower-
22 ment Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–428), namely to
23 undertake analysis of “quantitative and qualitative

- 1 information to identify, understand, and explain
- 2 gaps between men and women”.

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