

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3037

To prevent international violence against women, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 12, 2019

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. ISAKSON) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To prevent international violence against women, 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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.—This Act
5 may be cited as the “International Violence Against
6 Women Act of 2019”.

7 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
8 this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings.
- Sec. 3. Statement of policy.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES STRATEGY TO PREVENT AND
RESPOND TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE GLOBALLY

Sec. 101. Global strategy requirement.

TITLE II—OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Sec. 201. Definitions.

Sec. 202. Office of Global Women's Issues.

Sec. 203. Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Sec. 204. Briefing.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress makes the following findings:

3 (1) An estimated 1 out of every 3 women
4 throughout the world will be beaten, coerced into
5 sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.

6 (2) Up to 70 percent of women in some coun-
7 tries report experiencing gender-based violence at
8 some point in their lives.

9 (3) Intimate partner violence is the most preva-
10 lent form of violence against women, preventing
11 them from playing more active roles in the social,
12 economic, and political development of their commu-
13 nities.

14 (4) Sexual violence among adolescents and pre-
15 adolescents is alarmingly high. National surveys in
16 Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Haiti
17 have found that between 28 and 38 percent of girls
18 and between 9 and 18 percent of boys report experi-
19 encing sexual violence before reaching 18 years of
20 age.

1 (5) Adult male respondents in 6 countries who
2 had experienced violence as children were signifi-
3 cantly more likely to report perpetrating intimate
4 partner violence themselves according to the Inter-
5 national Men and Gender Equality Survey dataset.

6 (6) Gender-based violence harms economies and
7 the workers that fuel them. Despite underreporting,
8 striking statistics document prevalent forms of gen-
9 der-based violence globally that affect the world of
10 work. Worldwide, women are concentrated in low-
11 wage, insecure jobs in workplaces where they lack
12 bargaining power, protections against gender-based
13 violence, safe and confidential reporting systems, re-
14 course to justice, or access to legal, medical, and
15 psychosocial services.

16 (7) Women living in poverty are particularly
17 vulnerable to gender-based violence. Lack of eco-
18 nomic opportunities often compels women to use
19 desperate and dangerous means to provide for them-
20 selves and their families, risking significant exposure
21 to labor exploitation and sexual exploitation and
22 abuse for both women and their children.

23 (8) Country studies indicate that the risk of
24 HIV among women who have experienced violence
25 may be up to three times higher than among those

1 who have not experienced violence. The World
2 Health Organization found that women who experi-
3 ence intimate partner violence are at more than 50
4 percent greater risk of HIV infection, and in some
5 instances their risk of HIV infection increases four-
6 fold. Women living with HIV are more likely to ex-
7 perience violence than other women, and fear of vio-
8 lence can prevent women from accessing HIV/AIDS
9 information and receiving treatment and counseling.

10 (9) Addressing gender inequality and gender-
11 based violence is essential to reducing HIV risk and
12 increasing access to HIV prevention, care and treat-
13 ment services for women and men. The President's
14 Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) sup-
15 ports significant work in the field to incorporate ef-
16 forts to prevent and respond to gender-based vio-
17 lence into existing HIV treatment and prevention
18 programs.

19 (10) Prevalence of sexual and physical violence
20 is higher among persons with disabilities, particu-
21 larly for adolescents and intimate partners with dis-
22 abilities, and for men and women with intellectual
23 impairments living in institutions. The World Health
24 Organization reports that rates of gender-based vio-
25 lence are between 4 and 10 times greater among

1 persons with disabilities compared to non-disabled
2 persons.

3 (11) Displaced, refugee, and stateless women
4 and girls in humanitarian emergencies, conflict set-
5 tings, and natural disasters face extreme violence
6 and threats, including—

7 (A) being forced to exchange sex for food
8 and humanitarian supplies; and

9 (B) being at increased risk of rape, sexual
10 exploitation, trafficking, and abuse.

11 (12) Rape and sexual assault against women
12 and girls are used to torture, intimidate, and ter-
13 rorize communities. Rape and sexual assault are
14 used as tools of war in conflict zones, including the
15 Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Syria, Afghani-
16 stan, Colombia, and South Sudan.

17 (13) Child and forced marriage—

18 (A) is a harmful practice that deprives
19 girls and women of their dignity and rights and
20 creates barriers to development for communities
21 and countries;

22 (B) is projected to affect more than
23 140,000,000 girls around the world who have
24 been or will be forced into marriage between
25 2011 and 2020;

1 (C) can prematurely end girls' education,
2 increase vulnerability to gender-based violence,
3 and significantly raise the risk of maternal and
4 infant morbidity or mortality, including the risk
5 of obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted dis-
6 eases, including HIV/AIDS; and

7 (D) is perpetuated by poverty, a lack of
8 educational or employment opportunities for
9 girls, a lack of legal policies and enforcement of
10 laws, and religious, cultural, and social factors
11 related to girls' perceived lack of value, factors
12 which become particularly acute in conflict and
13 disaster settings where fears of sexual violence
14 and overstretched coping mechanisms often
15 drive child and forced marriage.

16 (14) The harmful practice of female genital mu-
17 tilation/cutting (FGM/C) is carried out most often
18 on girls between infancy and 15 years of age and
19 has impacted more than 125,000,000 girls and
20 women around the world who are alive today. FGM/
21 C can cause long-term health problems, including in-
22 fertility, complications in childbirth, and increased
23 risk of newborn deaths.

24 (15) World Bank data shows that gender in-
25 equality directly corresponds to increased levels of

1 political and economic instability within states. Gen-
2 der-based violence impedes women's meaningful par-
3 ticipation in social, political, and economic spheres,
4 which is essential to the stability and democratiza-
5 tion of a country. Since women disproportionately
6 experience gender-based violence during conflict and
7 post-conflict reconstruction, they can play a pivotal
8 role in preventing, mitigating, and resolving conflict,
9 and countering extremism.

10 (16) Gender-based violence is a contributing
11 factor to human trafficking. Experts in the field
12 have reported that women and girls who have experi-
13 enced gender-based violence and live in societies that
14 tolerate severe gender discrimination appear to be
15 more vulnerable to being trafficked. Comprehensive
16 efforts to reduce human trafficking must include ef-
17 forts to prevent and respond to gender-based vio-
18 lence due to the intertwined relationship of the two
19 crimes.

20 (17) Faith-based organizations and faith lead-
21 ers are key partners in the ongoing efforts to pre-
22 vent and respond to gender-based violence. When
23 properly engaged and equipped with knowledge and
24 resources, such organizations and leaders can play a
25 significant part in changing behaviors and norms

1 and reducing gender-based violence. Particularly in
2 countries that lack effective legal frameworks to ad-
3 dress gender-based violence, such faith-based organi-
4 zations and faith leaders have the standing and au-
5 thority to address harmful practices, such as child
6 marriage, intimate partner abuses, and acid throw-
7 ing.

8 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

9 It is the policy of the United States—

10 (1) to take effective action to prevent and re-
11 spond to gender-based violence around the world as
12 a matter of basic human rights and to promote gen-
13 der equality, economic growth, and improved public
14 health;

15 (2) to systematically integrate and coordinate
16 efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based vio-
17 lence internationally into United States foreign pol-
18 icy and foreign assistance programs, including
19 peace-building efforts and humanitarian relief and
20 recovery;

21 (3) to support and build local capacity in devel-
22 oping countries, including the capacity of govern-
23 ments at all levels, nongovernmental organizations,
24 especially women-led organizations, to prevent and
25 respond to gender-based violence;

1 (4) to consult, cooperate, coordinate, and col-
2 laborate with a wide variety of nongovernmental
3 partners with demonstrated experience in preventing
4 and responding to gender-based violence, including
5 faith-based organizations and women-led organiza-
6 tions;

7 (5) to employ a multisectoral approach to pre-
8 venting and responding to gender-based violence
9 internationally, including activities in the economic,
10 education, health, nutrition, legal, and judicial sec-
11 tors;

12 (6) to work at all levels, from the individual to
13 the family, community, local, national, and inter-
14 national levels, to prevent and respond to gender-
15 based violence around the world;

16 (7) to enhance training by United States per-
17 sonnel of professional foreign military and police
18 forces, judicial officials, and other public justice sys-
19 tem officials, including prosecutors, including spe-
20 cific and thorough instruction on preventing and re-
21 sponding to gender-based violence around the world;

22 (8) to engage men and boys as partners, as an
23 essential element of making sustained reductions in
24 gender-based violence;

1 (9) to include the prevention of child and forced
2 marriage as an important part of United States
3 Government efforts to prevent violence against girls
4 and promote gender equality and global health;

5 (10) to require that all United States contrac-
6 tors and grantees establish appropriate policies and
7 take effective measures to prevent gender-based vio-
8 lence and sexual exploitation and abuse, including
9 within the workforce;

10 (11) to exert sustained international leadership
11 to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, in-
12 cluding in bilateral and multilateral fora; and

13 (12) to implement a strategy to prevent and re-
14 spond to gender-based violence globally.

15 **TITLE I—UNITED STATES STRAT-**
16 **EGY TO PREVENT AND RE-**
17 **SPOND TO GENDER-BASED VI-**
18 **OLENCE GLOBALLY**

19 **SEC. 101. GLOBAL STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
21 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 4 years there-
22 after, the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s
23 Issues at the Department of State appointed pursuant to
24 section 201 (referred to in this section as the “Ambas-
25 sador-at-Large”), in consultation with the Senior Coordi-

1 nator for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment at
2 the United States Agency for International Development
3 appointed pursuant to section 202 (referred to in this sec-
4 tion as the “Senior Coordinator”), shall—

5 (1) develop or update, in consultation with civil
6 society, including service providers, a United States
7 global strategy to prevent and respond to gender-
8 based violence, using evidence-based interventions
9 and standards that address the root causes of, and
10 provide comprehensive responses to, gender-based vi-
11 olence;

12 (2) submit the strategy under paragraph (1) to
13 the appropriate congressional committees for com-
14 ment and review; and

15 (3) make the strategy publicly available on the
16 internet.

17 (b) INITIAL STRATEGY.—For the purposes of this
18 section, an existing United States strategy to prevent and
19 respond to gender-based violence may be deemed to fulfill
20 the initial requirement under subsection (a).

21 (c) COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION.—In devel-
22 oping the strategy under subsection (a), the Ambassador-
23 at-Large and the Senior Coordinator shall consult with—

24 (1) the heads of relevant Federal agencies;

1 (2) the Senior Policy Operating Group on Traf-
2 ficking in Persons; and

3 (3) representatives of civil society, including
4 nongovernmental organizations, faith-based organi-
5 zations, multilateral organizations, local and inter-
6 national civil society groups, and local service pro-
7 viders and beneficiaries with demonstrated experi-
8 ence in addressing gender-based violence or pro-
9 moting gender equality internationally.

10 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts appropriated or oth-
11 erwise made available to carry out the activities under this
12 section shall be subject to all applicable restrictions under
13 Federal law.

14 (e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
15 tion may be construed to authorize any additional appro-
16 priations to carry out the strategy under subsection (a).

17 **TITLE II—OVERSIGHT AND**
18 **ACCOUNTABILITY**

19 **SEC. 201. DEFINITIONS.**

20 In this title:

21 (1) AGENCY.—The term “Agency” means the
22 United States Agency for International Develop-
23 ment.

24 (2) AMBASSADOR.—The term “Ambassador”
25 means the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s

1 Issues appointed by the President pursuant to sec-
2 tion 202(a).

3 (3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
4 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
5 mittees” means—

6 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
7 the Senate;

8 (B) the Committee on Appropriations of
9 the Senate;

10 (C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
11 the House of Representatives; and

12 (D) the Committee on Appropriations of
13 the House of Representatives.

14 (4) GENDER ANALYSIS.—The term “gender
15 analysis”—

16 (A) means a socioeconomic analysis of
17 available or gathered quantitative and quali-
18 tative information to identify, understand, and
19 explain gaps between men and women, which
20 typically involves examining—

21 (i) differences in the status of women
22 and men and differential access to and
23 control over assets, resources, education,
24 opportunities, and services;

1 (ii) the influence of gender roles,
2 structural barriers, and norms on the divi-
3 sion of time between paid, unpaid work
4 (including the subsistence production and
5 care for family members), and volunteer
6 activities;

7 (iii) the influence of gender roles,
8 structural barriers, and norms on leader-
9 ship roles and decision making; con-
10 straints, opportunities, and entry points
11 for narrowing gender gaps and empowering
12 women; and

13 (iv) potential differential impacts of
14 development policies and programs on men
15 and women, including unintended or nega-
16 tive consequences; and

17 (B) includes conclusions and recommenda-
18 tions to enable development policies and pro-
19 grams—

20 (i) to narrow gender gaps; and

21 (ii) to improve the lives of women and
22 girls.

23 (5) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the Of-
24 fice of Global Women’s Issues established by the
25 Secretary of State pursuant to section 202(a).

1 (6) SENIOR COORDINATOR.—The term “Senior
2 Coordinator” means the Senior Coordinator for Gen-
3 der Equality and Women’s Empowerment at the
4 Agency.

5 **SEC. 202. OFFICE OF GLOBAL WOMEN’S ISSUES.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State shall
7 establish in the Office of the Secretary of the Department
8 of State the Office of Global Women’s Issues. The Office
9 shall be headed by an Ambassador-at-Large for Global
10 Women’s Issues, who shall be appointed by the President,
11 by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The
12 Ambassador shall report directly to the Secretary and
13 shall have the rank and status of Ambassador-at-Large.

14 (b) PURPOSE.—In addition to the duties described in
15 subsection (c) and duties determined by the Secretary of
16 State, the Ambassador shall coordinate efforts of the
17 United States Government as directed by the Secretary
18 regarding approaches that promote equality and advance
19 the status of women and girls in United States foreign
20 policy.

21 (c) DUTIES.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Ambassador—

23 (A) in consultation with the Senior Coordi-
24 nator, shall direct activities, policies, programs,
25 and funding relating to gender equality and the

1 advancement of women and girls internation-
2 ally, including those intended to prevent and re-
3 spond to gender-based violence, for all bureaus
4 and offices of the Department of State;

5 (B) shall actively promote and advance the
6 integration of gender analysis into the pro-
7 grams, structures, processes, and capacities of
8 bureaus and offices of the Department of State
9 and in the international programs of other Fed-
10 eral agencies;

11 (C) shall direct United States Government
12 resources, as appropriate, to respond to needs
13 for promoting gender equality and the em-
14 powerment of women in United States Govern-
15 ment foreign policies and international pro-
16 grams, including to prevent and respond to gen-
17 der-based violence internationally;

18 (D) may design, support, and implement
19 activities regarding empowerment of women
20 internationally, including for the prevention of
21 and response to gender-based violence inter-
22 nationally;

23 (E) shall conduct regular consultation with
24 civil society organizations working to prevent

1 and respond to gender-based violence inter-
2 nationally;

3 (F) shall ensure that programs, projects,
4 and activities designed to prevent and respond
5 to gender-based violence internationally are sub-
6 ject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, and
7 that there is a uniform set of indicators and
8 standards for such monitoring and evaluation
9 that is used across all Federal agencies;

10 (G) shall serve as the principal advisor to
11 the Secretary of State regarding gender equal-
12 ity, women's empowerment, and gender-based
13 violence as a foreign policy matter; and

14 (H) is authorized to represent the United
15 States in diplomatic and multilateral fora on
16 matters relevant to the status of women and
17 girls, including gender-based violence inter-
18 nationally.

19 (2) INFORMATION SHARING AND TRANS-
20 PARENCY.—The Office—

21 (A) shall be the central repository of data
22 on all United States programs, projects, and ac-
23 tivities that relate to prevention and response to
24 gender-based violence around the world; and

1 (B) shall produce a full accounting of
2 United States Government spending on such
3 programs, projects, and activities.

4 **SEC. 203. SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR GENDER EQUALITY**
5 **AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
7 Agency the position of Senior Coordinator for Gender
8 Equality and Women's Empowerment. The Senior Coordi-
9 nator shall—

10 (1) report to the Administrator of the Agency;

11 and

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

14 (b) IN GENERAL.—The Senior Coordinator—

15 (1) in consultation with the Ambassador, shall
16 coordinate activities, policies, programs, and funding
17 of the Agency relating to gender equality and wom-
18 en's empowerment, including those intended to pre-
19 vent and respond to gender-based violence;

20 (2) shall actively promote and advance the inte-
21 gration of gender analysis into the programs, struc-
22 tures, processes, and capacities of all bureaus and
23 offices of the Agency as dictated by the Agency's
24 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy;

1 (3) shall coordinate Agency resources for gen-
2 der equality and women’s empowerment, including to
3 prevent and respond to gender-based violence inter-
4 nationally;

5 (4) may design, support, and implement activi-
6 ties led by the Agency regarding gender equality and
7 women’s empowerment, including for the prevention
8 and response to gender-based violence internation-
9 ally;

10 (5) shall conduct regular consultation with civil
11 society organizations working to prevent and re-
12 spond to gender-based violence internationally;

13 (6) shall serve as the principal advisor to the
14 Administrator regarding gender equality, women’s
15 empowerment, and gender-based violence; and

16 (7) shall track and analyze monitoring and eval-
17 uation data and findings on international prevention
18 and response programs of the Agency, consistent
19 with Agency-wide monitoring and evaluation activi-
20 ties, to assist in the preparation of the comprehen-
21 sive strategy developed under section 101(a).

22 **SEC. 204. BRIEFING.**

23 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
24 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Ambassador

1 and the Senior Coordinator shall provide, to the appro-
2 priate congressional committees—

3 (1) a briefing on international gender-based vio-
4 lence prevention and response strategies, program-
5 ming, and associated outcomes; and

6 (2) an assessment of human and financial re-
7 sources necessary to fulfill the purposes and duties
8 under this Act.

○