

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. GRAHAM) introduced the following bill;
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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 Em-
5 powerment, Development 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 within the Office of Women’s Empowerment an of-
10 fice for the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity

1 Initiative (W-GDP) 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 cul-
16 tural barriers that constrain women's full and free
17 participation in the global economy and promote im-
18 proved practices.

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

1 States Government promotes the following five types of
2 foundational legal reforms:

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

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

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

22 (4) TRAVELING FREELY.—Addressing con-
23 straints on women's freedom of movement, including
24 restrictions on obtaining passports on the basis of
25 gender.

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

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

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

13 The Secretary of State, in coordination with the Am-
14 bassador-at-Large overseeing the Office of Women’s Em-
15 powerment and the heads of relevant Federal agencies, in-
16 cluding those set forth in section 5(b), may work with the
17 private sector and nongovernmental organizations to lever-
18 age public and private capital to complement W-GDP Ini-
19 tiative programs and related efforts, including financing
20 infrastructure investments and supporting capacity build-
21 ing activities, and enter into cost-sharing, cost-matching,
22 and other cooperative agreements to support and finance
23 such programs.

1 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appro-
3 priated not less than \$200,000,000 for fiscal year 2021
4 and for each fiscal year thereafter until 2025 for a W-
5 GDP Fund, established at the United States Agency for
6 International Development, with a focus on sourcing and
7 scaling the most impactful programs for women’s eco-
8 nomic empowerment and ensuring there is not duplication
9 of effort with other departments and agencies.

10 (b) **APPROPRIATIONS REQUIREMENT.**—Funds au-
11 thorized to be appropriated by this section shall only be
12 made available subject to the availability of appropria-
13 tions.

14 (c) **OVERSIGHT.**—Funds authorized to be appro-
15 priated by this section shall be jointly overseen by the
16 United States Agency for International Development and
17 the Ambassador described in section 6.

18 **SEC. 5. INTERAGENCY STEERING GROUP.**

19 (a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The President shall establish
20 a steering group (the “Steering Group”), with representa-
21 tion from appropriate Federal departments and agencies,
22 to carry out the policy goals of this Act. The President
23 shall designate a chair or co-chairs to lead the activities
24 of the Steering Group in coordination with the Amba-
25 sador-at-Large.

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

3 (1) the Department of State;

4 (2) the Department of the Treasury;

5 (3) the Department of Commerce;

6 (4) the Department of Labor;

7 (5) the Department of Defense;

8 (6) the United States Agency for International
9 Development (USAID);

10 (7) the Millennium Challenge Corporation;

11 (8) the Peace Corps;

12 (9) the United States International Develop-
13 ment Finance Corporation (DFC);

14 (10) the Inter-American Foundation;

15 (11) the United States African Development
16 Foundation;

17 (12) the components of the executive offices of
18 the President, including the Office of Management
19 and Budget, and the Office of the United States
20 Trade Representative; and

21 (13) other Federal agencies, as determined ap-
22 propriate by guidelines developed by the co-chairs.

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

24 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of State shall
25 establish in the Office of the Secretary of the Department

1 of State the Office of Women's Empowerment. The Office
2 shall be headed by an Ambassador-at-Large, who shall be
3 appointed by the President, by and with the advice and
4 consent of the Senate. The Ambassador shall report di-
5 rectly to the Secretary and shall have the rank and status
6 of Ambassador-at-Large.

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

14 (c) DUTIES.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Ambassador shall—

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

20 (B) actively promote and advance the inte-
21 gration of gender analysis into the formulation
22 of policy, programs, structures, process, and ca-
23 pacities throughout the bureaus and offices of
24 the Department of State and in the inter-
25 national programs of other Federal agencies;

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

6 (D) design, support, and implement activi-
7 ties regarding—

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

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

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

20 (iv) the reduction of legal, regulatory,
21 and cultural barriers that constrain women
22 worldwide;

23 (E) ensure that programs, projects, and
24 activities designed to promote and empower
25 women internationally are subject to rigorous

1 monitoring and evaluation, and oversee the de-
2 velopment of indicators and standards for such
3 monitoring and evaluation, with the intent of
4 using these across relevant Federal agencies;

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

12 (G) serve as the principal advisor to the
13 Secretary of State regarding gender equality,
14 women's empowerment, and gender-based vio-
15 lence as a foreign policy matter; and

16 (H) undertake other relevant duties that
17 the Secretary of State shall determine, as ap-
18 propriate.

19 (2) INFORMATION SHARING AND TRANS-
20 PARENCY.—The Office of Women's Empowerment
21 shall—

22 (A) be the central repository of data on all
23 United States programs, projects, and activities
24 that relate to empowering, promoting, includ-
25 ing, and advancing women worldwide; and

1 (B) produce a full accounting of United
2 States Government spending on such programs,
3 projects, and activities not later than one year
4 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

5 (d) SERVICE OF CURRENT SENIOR OFFICIAL.—A
6 senior official appointed by the President as an Amba-
7 sador-at-Large and confirmed by the Senate for a position
8 that addresses global women's issues may also serve in the
9 Ambassador-at-Large position established under this sec-
10 tion.

11 **SEC. 7. SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR GENDER EQUALITY**
12 **AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT.**

13 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
14 United States Agency for International Development the
15 position of Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and
16 Women's Empowerment. The Senior Coordinator shall—

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

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

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

22 (1) in consultation with the Ambassador-at-
23 Large described in section 6, shall coordinate activi-
24 ties, policies, programs, and funding of the Agency

1 relating to gender equality and women's empower-
2 ment;

3 (2) shall actively promote and advance the inte-
4 gration of gender analysis into the programs, struc-
5 tures, processes, and capacities of all bureaus and
6 offices of the Agency as dictated by the Agency's
7 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy;

8 (3) may design, support, and implement activi-
9 ties led by the Agency regarding gender equality and
10 women's empowerment, including for the prevention
11 and response to gender-based violence internation-
12 ally;

13 (4) shall serve as the principal advisor to the
14 Administrator on gender equality, women's em-
15 powerment, and gender-based violence;

16 (5) shall track and analyze monitoring and eval-
17 uation data and findings on gender equality and
18 women's empowerment programs of the Agency; and

19 (6) shall partner, consult, and coordinate with
20 other governments, bilateral and multilateral institu-
21 tions, nongovernmental organizations, and private-
22 sector partners to advance the objectives of this Act.

23 **SEC. 8. REPORTING TO CONGRESS.**

24 (a) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after
25 the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually there-

1 after until 2025, the President shall submit to the appro-
2 priate congressional committees a report that—

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

7 (2) describes the nature and extent of the co-
8 ordination among the relevant departments and
9 agencies;

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

13 (4) describes partnerships and collaborations
14 with the private sector, including amount of funding
15 leveraged by United States contributions to support
16 the objectives described in section 2; and

17 (5) describes partnerships, consultation, and co-
18 ordination being undertaken with other govern-
19 ments, bilateral and multilateral institutions, and
20 nongovernmental organizations.

21 (b) BRIEFING.—Not later than 180 days after the
22 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
23 the Ambassador and Senior Coordinator shall provide to
24 the appropriate congressional committees a briefing on
25 barriers preventing gender equality and women's inclusion.

1 and empowerment worldwide and response strategies, pro-
2 gramming, and associated outcomes.

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) AMBASSADOR.—The term “Ambassador”
9 means the Ambassador-at-Large overseeing the Of-
10 fice of Women’s Empowerment appointed by the
11 President pursuant to section 6(a).

12 (3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
13 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
14 mittees” means—

15 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
16 the Senate;

17 (B) the Committee on Appropriations of
18 the Senate;

19 (C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
20 the House of Representatives; and

21 (D) the Committee on Appropriations of
22 the House of Representatives.

23 (4) GENDER ANALYSIS.—The term “gender
24 analysis” refers to the definition as outlined in the
25 Women’s Entrepreneurship and Economic Empower-

1 ment Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–428), namely to
2 undertake analysis of “quantitative and qualitative
3 information to identify, understand, and explain
4 gaps between men and women”.

5 (5) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the Of-
6 fice of Women’s Empowerment established by the
7 Secretary of State pursuant to section 6(a).

8 (6) SENIOR COORDINATOR.—The term “Senior
9 Coordinator” means the Senior Coordinator for Gen-
10 der Equality and Women’s Empowerment at the
11 Agency.