

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 5242

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 13, 2022

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. COLLINS) 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 2022”.

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.

21 (5) Adult male respondents in 6 countries who
22 had experienced violence as children were signifi-

1 cantly more likely to report perpetrating intimate
 2 partner violence themselves according to the Inter-
 3 national Men and Gender Equality Survey dataset.

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

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

21 (8) Country studies indicate that the risk of
 22 HIV among women who have experienced violence
 23 may be up to three times higher than among those
 24 who have not experienced violence. The World
 25 Health Organization found that women who experi-

1 ence intimate partner violence are at more than 50
2 percent greater risk of HIV infection, and in some
3 instances their risk of HIV infection increases four-
4 fold. Women living with HIV are more likely to ex-
5 perience violence than other women, and fear of vio-
6 lence can prevent women from accessing HIV/AIDS
7 information and receiving treatment and counseling.

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

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

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

5 (A) being forced to exchange sex for food
6 and humanitarian supplies; and

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

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

15 (13) Child and forced marriage—

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

20 (B) is projected to affect more than
21 140,000,000 girls around the world who have
22 been or will be forced into marriage between
23 2011 and 2020;

24 (C) can prematurely end girls' education,
25 increase vulnerability to gender-based violence,

and significantly raise the risk of maternal and infant morbidity or mortality, including the risk of obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; and

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

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

(15) World Bank data shows that gender inequality directly corresponds to increased levels of political and economic instability within states. Gender-based violence impedes women's meaningful par-

1 participation in social, political, and economic spheres,
2 which is essential to the stability and democratiza-
3 tion of a country. Since women disproportionately
4 experience gender-based violence during conflict and
5 post-conflict reconstruction, they can play a pivotal
6 role in preventing, mitigating, and resolving conflict,
7 and countering extremism.

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

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

1 dress gender-based violence, such faith-based organi-
2 zations and faith leaders have the standing and au-
3 thority to address harmful practices, such as child
4 marriage, intimate partner abuses, and acid throw-
5 ing.

6 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

7 It is the policy of the United States—

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

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

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

24 (4) to consult, cooperate, coordinate, and col-
25 laborate with a wide variety of nongovernmental

1 partners with demonstrated experience in preventing
2 and responding to gender-based violence, including
3 faith-based organizations and women-led organiza-
4 tions;

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

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

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

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

23 (9) to include the prevention of child and forced
24 marriage as an important part of United States

1 Government efforts to prevent violence against girls
 2 and promote gender equality and global health;

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

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

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

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

17 **SEC. 101. GLOBAL STRATEGY REQUIREMENT.**

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

1 appointed pursuant to section 202 (referred to in this sec-
2 tion as the “Senior Coordinator”), shall—

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

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

13 (3) make the strategy publicly available on the
14 internet.

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

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

22 (1) the heads of relevant Federal agencies;

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

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

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

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

15 **TITLE II—OVERSIGHT AND** 16 **ACCOUNTABILITY**

17 **SEC. 201. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this title:

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

22 (2) AMBASSADOR.—The term “Ambassador”
 23 means the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s
 24 Issues appointed by the President pursuant to sec-
 25 tion 202(a).

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

4 (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of
5 the Senate;

6 (B) the Committee on Appropriations of
7 the Senate;

8 (C) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of
9 the House of Representatives; and

10 (D) the Committee on Appropriations of
11 the House of Representatives.

12 (4) GENDER ANALYSIS.—The term “gender
13 analysis”—

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

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

23 (ii) the influence of gender roles,
24 structural barriers, and norms on the divi-
25 sion of time between paid, unpaid work

(including the subsistence production and care for family members), and volunteer activities;

(iii) the influence of gender roles, structural barriers, and norms on leadership roles and decision making; constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering women; and

(iv) potential differential impacts of development policies and programs on men and women, including unintended or negative consequences; and

(B) includes conclusions and recommendations to enable development policies and programs—

(i) to narrow gender gaps; and

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

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

(6) SENIOR COORDINATOR.—The term “Senior Coordinator” means the Senior Coordinator for Gen-

1 der Equality and Women’s Empowerment at the
2 Agency.

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

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

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

19 (c) DUTIES.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Ambassador—

21 (A) in consultation with the Senior Coordi-
22 nator, shall direct activities, policies, programs,
23 and funding relating to gender equality and the
24 advancement of women and girls internation-
25 ally, including those intended to prevent and re-

1 spond to gender-based violence, for all bureaus
2 and offices of the Department of State;

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

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

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

21 (E) shall conduct regular consultation with
22 civil society organizations working to prevent
23 and respond to gender-based violence inter-
24 nationally;

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

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

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

17 (2) INFORMATION SHARING AND TRANS-
18 PARENCY.—The Office—

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

23 (B) shall produce a full accounting of
24 United States Government spending on such
25 programs, projects, and activities.

1 **SEC. 203. SENIOR COORDINATOR FOR GENDER EQUALITY**
2 **AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT.**

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

7 (1) report to the Administrator of the Agency;
8 and

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

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

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

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

22 (3) shall coordinate Agency resources for gen-
23 der equality and women's empowerment, including to
24 prevent and respond to gender-based violence inter-
25 nationally;

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

6 (5) shall conduct regular consultation with civil
7 society organizations working to prevent and re-
8 spond to gender-based violence internationally;

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

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

18 **SEC. 204. BRIEFING.**

19 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
20 ment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Ambassador
21 and the Senior Coordinator shall provide, to the appro-
22 priate congressional committees—

23 (1) a briefing on international gender-based vio-
24 lence prevention and response strategies, program-
25 ming, and associated outcomes; and

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

