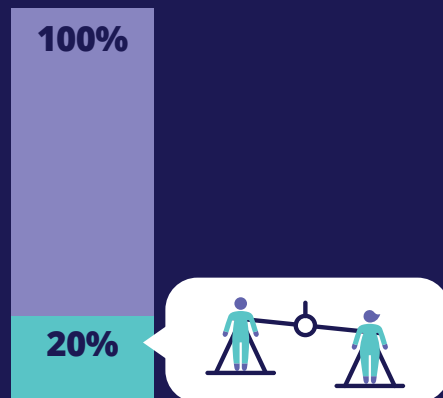


# ALL FOREIGN POLICY SPENDING SHOULD TAKE GENDER INTO ACCOUNT

## ALWAYS CONSIDERING GENDER IS SMART FOREIGN POLICY

Globally, gender plays a significant role in determining the barriers people face and the opportunities they have available to them—including their access to economic opportunities and leadership positions, or protection from violence or climate change impacts. When foreign policy ignores the gendered nature of these barriers and opportunities, policy decisions risk exacerbating inequality, slowing growth, and undermining the durability of peace agreements, among other detriments.<sup>1</sup>

This means **100 percent** of foreign policy funding should consider how the policies and initiatives supported will either promote or hinder gender equality. Of this total, **20 percent** of foreign policy programs should be specifically dedicated to narrowing relevant gender gaps (e.g., in access to finance, benefits from trade agreements).



## GENDER INTEGRATION IS BOTH CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED AND A GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE

This is not a new idea; rather, it is in line with a Congressional mandate that all USAID programs be informed by a gender analysis and that gender be integrated throughout the Agency's program cycle and strategic planning.<sup>2</sup> But foreign assistance cannot achieve gender equality in isolation, so the United States should use its full range of foreign policy tools for this effort.

On the global stage, a number of leading gender equality champions and U.S. allies have made commitments to ensure their foreign policy approaches fully consider gender equality and dedicate significant funding to its promotion. In order to meet Congressional mandates and signal a return of U.S. leadership on gender equality, the U.S. should commit to 100 percent of foreign policy programs considering gender (i.e., be "gender mainstreamed"), and further commit to a benchmark of 20 percent of U.S. international funding having the promotion of gender equality as a primary objective. This would put the United States well ahead of the pack.

<sup>1</sup>See McKinsey Global Institute (2015) and UN Women <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>

<sup>2</sup>See <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/5480>

## INVESTING IN GENDER EQUALITY DOES NOT REDUCE FUNDING FOR OTHER PRIORITIES

Notably, ensuring that 100 percent of U.S. foreign policy programs consider gender and 20 percent specifically aim to promote gender equality does *not* mean taking money away from U.S. investments in other areas of foreign policy. Instead, it means ensuring funding dedicated to these purposes is spent more effectively—that it is inclusive in its reach and benefits, and therefore accelerates progress towards global security and prosperity.

## PROMISING PRACTICES

These examples demonstrate how the implementation of a feminist foreign policy can be approached in concrete terms, though in isolation do not reflect a fully feminist approach to foreign policy. The first example illustrates a “mainstreaming” approach to the promotion of gender equality and broader inclusion (i.e., an example of how the US would reach a target of 100 percent of foreign policy funding considering gender). The second reflects an approach to dedicating funds to the promotion of gender equality (i.e., a means through which the US would reach a target of 20 percent of foreign policy funding being dedicated to gender equality as a primary objective).



### Gender Mainstreaming: Promoting Gender Equality through Trade Agreements

In 2020, Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Catherine Cortez-Masto (D-NV) [introduced legislation](#) to expand consideration of issues affecting gender equality in all trade agreements. Through the US Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), this bill would establish enforceable standards with respect to women’s equal rights and protection under the law, human rights, violence and harassment in the workplace and non-discrimination—encouraging current and potential partner countries to remove legal barriers to gender equality. House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee Chairman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) [introduced a bill](#) that would extend the GSP program while adding new requirements on human rights, rule of law, and governance—and mandating a review of the laws related to women’s and workers’ rights in beneficiary countries.



### Dedicated Financing: Support to Women’s Rights Groups

The United States can draw upon the models presented by Canada’s [Equality Fund](#), the Netherlands’ [Leading from the South Fund](#), and a variety of philanthropic foundations—to increase its support to women’s rights groups. By supporting women’s rights networks and funds (e.g., regional women’s development funds, the Global Fund for Women, Mama Cash, and Prospera), the United States can work through these intermediaries to support local organizations with otherwise limited access to US foreign assistance. If the US were to match the Netherlands’ 0.8 percent allocation of official development assistance to local women’s organizations, this would mean allocating \$270 million to local women’s organizations in low- and middle-income countries. If it were to match Canada’s, this figure would be \$1.7 billion.