

POLICY *Analysis*

Center for Family and Human Rights

Five Problems with USAID Updated Youth Policy

The *USAID Youth in Development Policy 2022 Update* seeks to bolster United States Agency for International Development (USAID) outreach to young people in conjunction with other USAID policies, including USAID's global water strategy, gender policy, and menstrual health brief. All of these policies streamline progressive gender ideology, promote abortion, and population control mechanisms in a “mutually reinforcing” agenda. The greatest concern in the *Youth in Development Policy*, in which it exceeds the other related strategies, is its exhibition of resources affirming “safe abortion” procedures and USAID-sponsored comprehensive sexuality education (CSE).

The USAID Youth in Development Policy promotes an array of “toolkits” for policymakers, activists, and students to promote gender ideology and “sexual and reproductive rights”.

Many of the toolkits under the USAID youth policy, called *YouthLead*, are created for instructors to use as a curriculum for children and adolescents. One is titled “Children and Adolescents’ Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights Toolkit,” which promotes sex and sex-education that includes a core message that girls have “the right to protection from...unsafe abortion,” including by offering so-called “safe” abortion beginning at age 14¹. Another toolkit for school officials details strategies to create transgender-friendly policies in schools, as well as strategies to approach “non-affirming” parents who disagree with gender ideology or transgender self-identification of their child².

Since the text of the Youth in Development Strategy is not passed through or approved by Congress, it bypasses democratic processes and implements contentious subjects through partnerships with progressive NGOs in target countries.

The document explicitly acknowledges that the youth strategy is “building on a development vision articulated in many other USAID policies and strategies,” including a domestic “gender equity and equality” strategy which is widely understood as promoting abortion access and comprehensive sexuality education³. With NGOs and local organizations and schools as the primary means of implementation, USAID can easily fund and partner with pro-abortion and pro-gender-ideology organizations to use U.S. assistance for their own designs under the guise of humanitarian aid without being subject to recipient countries’ voting or legislative processes.

The Youth in Development Strategy contains controversial gender language and promotes abortion.

The document states that the efforts of the youth strategy will contribute to the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality—even though that is a domestic strategy—and the 2023 USAID Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment policy. Both these documents are replete with language that is associated with abortion, LGBTQ policies, and threats to religious liberty. Even though abortion is controversial both in the U.S. and in countries receiving U.S. aid, the global pro-abortion movement will benefit greatly from U.S. support enabled by these policy documents and in the absence of adequate safeguards, such as the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, formerly known as the Mexico City Policy.

The USAID gender policy—and other USAID materials—contains misleading language, claiming that “lack of access to family planning may lead to unintended pregnancy [and] unsafe abortion.” Not only is *lack of use* falsely equated to “lack of access”⁴, the language of “safe” and “unsafe” abortion treats abortion as an inevitability for unintended pregnancies⁵. Abortion activists never emphasize alternatives to “safe abortion,” but rather treat it as the only option to “unsafe abortion”, which is touted as deadly, though “safe” and “legal” abortions cause similar risks. Thus, abortion advocates and the WHO argue that “safe abortion” must be “readily accessible and available to the full extent of the law.”⁶ The USAID document for women’s empowerment also uses the same language of women’s “health care” and “sexual and reproductive health and rights,” terms understood to promote abortion and gender policy under the Biden administration.

The Youth in Development Strategy enforces the USAID Menstrual Health and Hygiene technical brief, defining women out of existence and replacing them with “menstruators,” while promoting comprehensive sexuality education.

The aforementioned 2023 USAID Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment policy essentially defines women out of existence, stating that gender is chosen by an individual. The document includes definitions reducing biological sex to something “assigned” or “designated” and defining women and girls “in all their diversity” to include biological males and novel categories like “nonbinary” or “gender non-conforming.”⁷ Consequentially, the youth strategy incorporates sex-education on menstrual health needs as something necessary not only for women, but all “genders.” “Menstrual Health and Hygiene is the ability of women, girls, and transgender and gender non-binary individuals who menstruate (“menstruators” or “individuals who menstruate”),” according to the policy. The term “menstruators,” as opposed to women, comes from another USAID supporting document, The USAID Menstrual Health and Hygiene technical brief, which not only includes a confused definition of “women” but also enforces the need for comprehensive sexuality education,” teaching children and youth about gender ideologies and sexual liberty ideals⁸.

As U.S. foreign policy continues to become a medium for sexual ideology, countries partnering with USAID are at risk of cultural-engineering efforts by western leadership and their efforts to subvert educational and cultural norms through young people.

Endnotes

- 1 Save the Children Sweden. Toolkit “Children and Adolescents’ Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights”: Activities Guide for adolescents age 14-17. Accessed February 2023. Available at <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/6137.pdf>
- 2 American Civil Liberties Union. Schools In Transition, A Guide for Supporting Transgender Students in K-12 Schools. Accessed March 2023. Available at https://www.aclu.org/sites/default/files/field_document/schools_in_transition_6.3.16.pdf
- 3 United States Agency for International Development. Youth in Development Policy 2022 Update. Accessed February 2023. Available at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/USAID-Youth-in-Development-Policy-2022-Update-508.pdf>
- 4 For greater further investigation on “lack of access” and “unmet need,” visit <https://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/is-there-an-unmet-need-for-family-planning>
- 5 Oas, Rebecca, Ph.D. UN-safe Abortion: How the Abortion Industry has Used UN Agencies to Legitimize Abortion. 1 August 2020. Available at <https://c-fam.org/definitions/un-safe-abortion-how-the-abortion-industry-has-used-un-agencies-to-legitimize-abortion/>
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 United States Agency for International Development. 2023 Gender Policy. Accessed March 2023. Available at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-03/2023_Gender%20Policy_508.pdf
- 8 Global Waters, USAID. Menstrual Health and Hygiene Technical Brief, May 2022. Accessed March 2023. Available at https://www.globalwaters.org/sites/default/files/usaid_mhh_tech_brief_508_6.1_0.pdf



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