

POLICY *Analysis*

Center for Family and Human Rights

USAID Global Water Strategy Prioritizes Gender Ideology

The goal of the *U.S. Government Global Water Strategy 2022-2027* is ostensibly to provide self-sustaining, clean, and reliable water access to people in developing countries—a laudable goal for US foreign assistance. However, the strategy raises concerns by its inclusion of language relating to contentious gender ideology.

As a preliminary matter, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will implement the strategy with the State Department, in conjunction with other international implementing partners, and there is a threat that this policy stream may be used to promote progressive sexual ideology.

While efforts to provide clean water to developing countries appear straightforward and an unlikely vehicle for gender ideology policies, the Biden administration has made clear its efforts to include gender ideology in all foreign policy. The proliferation of these agency-level strategy documents is a legacy of the Obama administration, ensuring that progressive policies outlast presidential administrations with minimal congressional oversight.

The Global Water Strategy is not Congressional policy. It bypasses democratic processes and implements contentious subjects through progressive NGOs in target countries.

The document explicitly acknowledges that the water strategy is positioned “for the advancement of other U.S. government initiatives,” including “gender equality,” by which the Biden administration has demonstrated it means abortion access, the promotion of homosexuality and transgenderism, and comprehensive sexuality education. By placing “local actors at the core of these efforts,”¹ USAID can easily employ pro-abortion and pro-gender-ideology organizations to use foreign assistance for their own designs under the guise of humanitarian aid without being subject to countries’ voting or legislative processes. The strategy’s targeted countries are culturally and politically conservative; those with existing USAID programs are susceptible to cultural engineering efforts overtly expressed by the U.S., the UN, and progressive NGOs.

The Water Strategy implements controversial gender language and promotes abortion.

The document states that the efforts of the water strategy will contribute to the National Strategy on Gender Equity—even though it is a domestic strategy—and the 2023 USAID Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment policy. Both of these documents are replete with language that supports abortion, LGBTQ policies, and threats to religious liberty. Even though abortion policy is met with pushback by domestic politicians, using the strategies as guiding documents on an international scale avoids scrutiny by recipient country governments through its NGO implementing partners. Published in November 2022, after the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the document on Gender Equity states, “[the U.S. Government] will ensure equitable access to high-quality, affordable health care; **protect the constitutional right to safe and legal abortion.**”² While the 2023 USAID document for women’s empowerment does not explicitly cite abortion as an objective, it uses the same language of women’s “barriers” to rights, “health care” and “women’s rights,” terms used by the Biden administration to promote abortion and gender policy.

The Water Strategy defines women out of existence promotes comprehensive sexuality education.

The 2023 USAID Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment policy effectively defines both biological men and women out of existence with the common phrases, “women and girls in all their diversity,” and “men and boys in all their diversity.” The document explains that sex-disaggregated data is a result of the “designation of a person as male,

female, or intersex based on a cluster of anatomical and physiological traits known as sex characteristics,” and promises “comprehensive sexuality education for all,” to enforce these ideologies³.

The USAID water strategy seeks to assist menstrual health needs 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 strategy. The term “menstruators,” as opposed to women of reproductive age, 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 (CSE)⁴,” teaching children and youth about gender ideologies and sexual liberty ideals⁵.

Endnotes

- 1 United States Agency for International Development. Global Water Strategy 2022. Accessed January 2023. Available at <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2022-11/US-Global-Water-Strategy-2022.pdf>
- 2 The White House. National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality. Accessed January 2023. Available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/National-Strategy-on-Gender-Equity-and-Equality.pdf>
- 3 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
- 4 For more information on CSE and its harms, visit: <https://c-fam.org/definitions/why-comprehensive-sexuality-education-is-not-the-answer/>
- 5 Global Waters. Menstrual Health and Hygiene: Technical Brief. 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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