



# Functional Bureau Strategy

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## Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI)

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

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## 1. Executive Statement

“By investing in women, we’re investing in families, we’re investing in prosperity, we’re investing in peace.” – President Trump

**Mission Statement: S/GWI seeks to ensure the integration of gender equality and the advancement of women and girls in the formulation and conduct of U.S. foreign policy.**

The advancement of women and girls around the world is integral to achieving our National Security Strategy (NSS) objectives focused on security, prosperity, and American influence. Strengthening the role of women in peace negotiations and security efforts helps to not only prevent conflict, but also leads to more durable peace agreements. When women and men are equally empowered as political and social actors, governments are more effective and representative of their communities. Progress in employment, health, and education for women and girls can lead to greater economic growth and build stronger societies. Countries are more stable, prosperous, and secure when women and girls have equal opportunities as leaders, peace-builders, entrepreneurs, and wage earners. American security, prosperity, and influence advances when women and girls are fully integrated into our foreign policy.

Headed by an Ambassador-at-Large, S/GWI leads the State Department’s (Department) efforts to advance the rights of women and girls in U.S. diplomacy, partnerships, and programs. S/GWI goals are women’s participation, economic empowerment, and gender integration throughout U.S. foreign policy. To achieve these goals, our office will work with the interagency and within the Department to strengthen the integration of gender into U.S. foreign policy and Department practices, including by elevating the voices and perspectives of women within policymaking processes. S/GWI advances U.S. security, prosperity, and influence by empowering women to lead on peace and security, promoting women’s full economic participation, and ensuring women and girls are safe, educated, and healthy so that they can become leaders and active participants in their communities. Across these priorities, S/GWI is committed to preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV), which can impede the achievement of U.S. foreign policy goals and gender equality. We use our program funding to catalyze gender work across the Department to foster public/private partnerships on gender equality and women’s empowerment as well as create program models for gender integration and women’s empowerment, which advances U.S. foreign policy goals and champions American values. We engage in sustained and comprehensive public outreach and work towards enhancing the

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international policy and legal framework undergirding women's rights. In all these areas, we place special emphasis on the parts of the world that both align with our foreign policy priorities and include the most vulnerable women and girls, such as in countries experiencing conflict and transition.

S/GWI will hold an annual strategic review: documenting progress towards indicators and milestones, reviewing and adapting goals and objectives to ensure continued alignment with U.S. policy priorities, and creating an annual list of next steps in implementing the Functional Bureau Strategy (FBS). Risks include, but are not limited to: backlash towards activists and governments from association with the U.S. in fragile states or regions with anti-Western sentiments; resentment towards a focus on women and girls and resentment at addressing gender inequalities; entrenched views of issues related to women as soft policy or not relevant to national security; growing insecurity and instability in priority countries limit engagement and ability to manage and monitor programming.

## 2. Bureau Strategic Framework

**Bureau Goal 1: Support women's participation and leadership in promoting peace, responding to conflict, and building a more secure future.**

**Bureau Objective 1.1: Enhance the effectiveness of U.S.-led peace and security policy initiatives by fostering women's leadership and access to decision making, including participation in security efforts and conflict prevention.**

**Bureau Objective 1.2: Support women and girls' safety from violence and discrimination by strengthening legal and policy frameworks, enhancing accountability, and addressing harmful norms.**

**Bureau Objective 1.3: Leverage partnerships with civil society, academia, think-tanks, governments, and online audiences to signal U.S. leadership and communicate impact/success on WPS.**

**Bureau Goal 2: Strengthen conditions for increased stability, security, and prosperity through the economic empowerment of women and girls.**

**Bureau Objective 2.1: Provide female entrepreneurs and businesswomen with quality training and education to strengthen their business skills, access to resources and participation in the workforce.**

**Bureau Objective 2.2: Promote an enabling environment for women's participation in the economy by reducing legal and policy barriers.**

**Bureau Objective 2.3: Leverage partnerships with civil society, academia, think-tanks, online audiences, and governments to advance the role of women in the economy.**

**Bureau Goal 3: Enhance the effectiveness of our diplomacy through the integration of women and girls in the conduct and formulation of U.S. foreign policy.**

**Bureau Objective 3.1: Integrate gender equality and women's empowerment across the Department by building the capacity of personnel and creating systems to address gender: reaching men and women with American diplomacy.**

**Management Objective 1: Strengthen S/GWI's internal capacity to serve as issue-based technical experts for trainings, consultations, policy and program development on gender.**

### 3. Goals, Objectives and Sub-Objectives

#### **1. Bureau Goal 1: Support women’s participation and leadership in promoting peace, responding to conflict, and building a more secure future.**

##### **a. Description and Linkages**

Supporting women and girls during peacetime reinforces stability and resilience to conflict because they offer perspectives and experiences that are uniquely instrumental to achieving resilient policy outcomes with comprehensive community support. In societies impacted by insecurity or conflict, a growing evidence base finds that women’s participation in efforts to resolve conflict and rebuild increases the success of peace agreements, supports long term recovery from conflict, and enables democratic systems of governance. This goal aligns with pillars I and IV of the NSS and goal 1 of the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP).

#### **Bureau Objective 1.1: Enhance the effectiveness of U.S.-led peace and security policy initiatives by fostering women’s leadership and access to decision making, including participation in security efforts and conflict prevention.**

##### **a. Justification**

Enhancing women’s access to civic space and leadership opportunities in civil society ensures their perspectives can inform decisions about the future of their communities and countries. Supporting women’s civil society groups, as advocates around issues that often transcend “gender” issues, is essential to achieving this objective. Furthermore, women’s access to economic opportunity contributes to stabilization and stability in countries recovering from violence and insecurity. Risk(s) include, but are not limited to: failing to incorporate women into efforts to build stable and secure societies can lead to strategic blind spots that limit the effectiveness of U.S.-led peace and security processes.

#### **Bureau Objective 1.2: Support women and girls’ safety from violence and discrimination by strengthening legal and policy frameworks, enhancing accountability, and addressing harmful norms.**

##### **a. Justification**

Women and girls' access to education, economic opportunity, and political space hinges on their safety. Protecting the rights of women and girls therefore supports U.S. policy goals of promoting human rights, while also promoting conditions conducive to global security and prosperity. Risk(s) include, but are not limited to: GBV undermines the security, livelihood, and health of nations when women and girls' are suppressed from participating in civic, social, political, and economic life.

**Bureau Objective 1.3: Leverage partnerships with civil society, academia, think-tanks, governments, and online audiences to signal U.S. leadership and communicate impact/success on WPS.**

**a. Justification**

The Department has an important role to play in communicating U.S. leadership on the global stage. As a global leader on gender equality and women's empowerment, the United States can marshal action and resources to achieve policy victories, including through strategic partnerships that offer platforms to communicate the U.S. commitment and track record. Risk(s) include, but are not limited to: in the absence of partnering with outside entities, we limit the reach and relevance of our message, our ability to call on others to act, and avail potential for misperceptions about the United States' commitment to international policy action on gender issues.

**2. Bureau Goal 2: Strengthen conditions for increased stability, security, and prosperity through the economic empowerment of women and girls.**

**a. Description and Linkages**

Women's economic empowerment cuts across the Department's efforts to promote stability, security, and prosperity. S/GWI will focus on three primary areas: (1) workforce development and skills training; (2) support for women entrepreneurs; and (3) create a robust enabling environment. This goal aligns with pillars II and IV of the NSS and goal 2 of the JSP. It also aligns with other key Department initiatives, such as: the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi), the APEC, the G20, the Summit of the Americas, the Africa Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA), the Young African Leadership Initiative and Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI), as well as each regional bureau's mission statement.

**Bureau Objective 2.1: Provide female entrepreneurs and businesswomen with quality training and education to strengthen their business skills, access to resources and participation in the workforce.**

**a. Justification**

Growing evidence reveals that women's low participation in the labor market can impede economic growth and poverty reduction. When women and girls obtain quality education and market-based skills training, they have better opportunities for higher-paying, middle skill jobs in the formal sector, including high-growth, in-demand occupations, such as those in the STEM fields. Strong workforce development systems widen the opportunity landscape beyond lower-skilled jobs, whether in government or business, and open a path to leadership and management positions at higher levels. Risk(s) include, but are not limited to: burden of unpaid activities by women and lack training or education for women are some factors that reinforce women's economic inequality and leave them vulnerable to victimization in forced labor and trafficking.

**Bureau Objective 2.2: Promote an enabling environment for women's participation in the economy by reducing legal and policy barriers.**

**a. Justification**

The enabling environment for women in the economy encompasses both the regulatory framework and societal norms that enable women to operate in the marketplace and achieve economic empowerment. Policies, laws, regulations, practices, and norms are all aspects of the regulatory framework that contribute to multiple barriers faced by women. When the enabling environment is poorly developed, it often places greater burdens on women. Some of the economic barriers women face arise from foundational limitations such as laws that limit women's rights to inherit, own property, or enter contracts in their own name. Addressing those barriers while ensuring women have the legal and policy protections they need requires deliberate efforts of government, private sector, and civil society. Risks include, but are not limited to: failing to support an enabling environment for women in the economy can lead to weaker economic growth, stability and limit the effectiveness of U.S. prosperity efforts.

**Bureau Objective 2.3: Leverage partnerships with civil society, academia, think-tanks, online audiences, and governments to advance the role of women in the economy.**

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**a. Justification**

U.S. engagement with civil society, academia, think-tanks and other governments on gender equality and women's empowerment provides influential opportunities to develop strategic partnerships, exchange information, and inform effective policy and program development. These sectors include subject-matter experts from around the world on women's economic empowerment globally and are best positioned identify and relay best practices, challenges, and lessons learned on advancing the role of women in the economy. Risk(s) include, but are not limited to: by partnering with outside entities, we expand the reach and relevance of our message, limited negative perceptions about the United States' commitment to women's economic empowerment, and are better positioned to call on others to act.

**Bureau Goal 3: Enhance the effectiveness of our diplomacy through the integration of women and girls in the conduct and formulation of U.S. foreign policy.**

**a. Description and Linkages**

To maximize effectiveness of our diplomacy, the U.S. must be ready and able to engage with all of the members in a given community, country, and/or organization: men and women. S/GWI's mandate is to ensure that the Department is informed by and able to engage with all members of society, so that U.S. foreign policy is able to reach as many people as possible in the most comprehensive and effective manner possible. This goal aligns with pillar IV of the NSS and goals 3 and 4 of the JSP.

**Bureau Objective 3.1: Integrate gender equality and women's empowerment across the Department by building the capacity of personnel and creating systems to address gender: reaching men and women with American diplomacy.**

**a. Justification**

To ensure maximum effectiveness in U.S. diplomacy and development investments, S/GWI provides training, technical support, tools, and guidance on gender integration across the Department. By building the capacity of the Department to engage women and men, and to access multiple perspectives in the conduct and formulation of U.S. foreign policy, S/GWI improves the overall capabilities of the United States to influence and shape events around the

globe. Risks include, but are not limited to: lack of understanding of the importance to include women in foreign policy; lack of support globally for women's human rights as equal to men's; backlash against perceived cultural imperialism in supporting women's human rights.

## 4. Cross-cutting Management Objective

**Management Objective 1: Strengthen S/GWI's internal capacity to serve as issue-based technical experts for trainings, consultations, policy and program development on gender.**

### a. Justification

S/GWI's subject-matter experts lead comprehensive approaches to advancing the status of women and girls in U.S. national security, prosperity and leadership through diplomatic and policy initiatives and partnerships. At full capacity, S/GWI is an office of approximately 30 officers organized into regional, functional, and global program areas. S/GWI develops and disseminates a range of toolkits for Missions globally, which enables them to promote the empowerment and equality of women and girls locally. S/GWI also promotes the education of diplomatic personnel on gender issues through its devoted online and in-person course on gender equality at FSI and for Mission-requested specific trainings. S/GWI engages directly with inter- and intra-agency budget, planning and regional policy colleagues to compliment efforts focused on gender as well as provide consultation on gender integration into office/bureau and Mission strategies, such as the Integrated Country Strategies. Risk(s) include, but are not limited to: we cannot solve the major concerns of security and prosperity and maintain American influence without the full contribution of women and girls at all levels of society, which can be most effectively done through our diplomatic engagement on gender issues as well as gender integrated policy and program development.