

Women's Rights at Home and Abroad: A Call to Action

U.S. Civil Society Shadow Report on Beijing+20

September 2015

NGO Report on Gaps in the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Response to the U.S. Government's 2015 Report on U.S. activities related to the Twentieth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and Addressing the Sustainable Development Goals and their Implementation in the United States and Globally



Acknowledgements

“Women’s Rights at Home and Abroad: A Call to Action” is an initiative of the Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and The Leadership Conference Education Fund. The report was coordinated by June Zeitlin, director of human rights policy at The Leadership Conference and The Education Fund, and Serra Sippel, president of CHANGE. Leadership Conference/Education Fund staff assistance was provided by Tyler Lewis, director of messaging and project management; Patrick McNeil, digital communications associate; and Jeff Miller, vice president for communications. CHANGE staff assistance was provided by Joanna Kuebler, director of external affairs; Beirne Roose-Snyder, director of public policy; Bergen Cooper, senior policy research associate; and Preston Mitchum, policy research analyst.

The Center for Health and Gender Equity, The Leadership Conference and The Education Fund would like to thank Robert Gustafson, for his preparation and writing of this report. We also want to thank the additional 20 organizations and experts who contributed their policy expertise, making this comprehensive report possible. These include: 9to5, National Association of Working Women; Advocates for Youth; Black Women’s Roundtable; Center for Reproductive Rights; Communications Consortium Media Center; Family Values @ Work; Feminist Majority Foundation; International Center for Research on Women; International Women’s Health Coalition; Legal Momentum; National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum; National Congress of American Indians; National Network to End Domestic Violence; National Organization for Women; National Partnership for Women & Families; National Women’s Law Center; PAI; The Sierra Club; SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective; US Human Rights Network; and Liesl Gerntholtz.

Layout & Design: Laura Drachsler, design associate for The Leadership Conference and The Education Fund.

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The Leadership Conference Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) organization that builds public will for federal policies that promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States.

The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE) is a 501(c)(3) organization that promotes the sexual and reproductive health and human rights of women and girls globally by shaping the development and implementation of U.S. policies.

Access this material online at www.civilrights.org and www.genderhealth.org.

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Background

In preparation for the 20th Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, the Obama administration released—in November of 2014—a report looking at U.S. activities and accomplishments since that landmark event. Specifically, the report used commitments contained within the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to showcase a broad and impressive set of accomplishments by the Obama administration. Despite the administration’s clear commitment to advancing women’s rights domestically and internationally, the report misses important opportunities to highlight both successes and challenges over the 20-year period since the 1995 world women’s conference in Beijing. More importantly, the report does not provide a robust and detailed agenda for actions moving forward. The United States government should take action to advance women’s rights in both domestic and international policy to further implement the Beijing Platform for Action as well as inform U.S. adoption of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that include a goal on gender equality.

The Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and The Leadership Conference Education Fund convened a group of U.S.-based non-governmental organizations concerned about the need for additional action by the U.S. government to fully implement the Beijing Platform for Action—as well as provide a roadmap for success in the post-2015 agenda and with the SDGs. Those convenings resulted in the coordinated preparation of this shadow report for the 20-year commemoration of the Beijing Platform by the General Assembly in September 2015. This report is also intended to inform the formation of U.S. domestic and global policies moving forward. This shadow report identifies and highlights actions that the U.S. government could and should take, particularly through executive action, to further advance

women’s rights here at home and around the world. The recommendations are intended to outline elements of a substantial—as yet unrealized—agenda for advancing women’s human rights and demonstrate that there are numerous additional gender-specific policy initiatives and issue areas that should be explored and advanced by the Obama administration.

As noted in the Implementation Report, many policy initiatives benefitting women also require the partnership and cooperation of other stakeholders such as business leaders, state and local elected officials, and other stakeholders and we encourage the U.S. government to develop partnerships with these actors and encourage them to embrace these recommendations and work steadily to advance women’s human rights.

Introduction

In the lead up to the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, in 1995, the United States government submitted its report on U.S. Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/Gender/Beijing_20/United_States_Beijing_20_Review.pdf) to the U.N. in November 2014, at the Economic Commission of Europe regional meeting (*United States Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the context of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 2015). The report highlights U.S. activities and accomplishments over the last seven years based on the actions and targets contained in the Platform for Action. It catalogues a broad and impressive set of initiatives in both domestic and international policy and expresses the Obama administration's deep commitment to the principles of gender equality and women's rights at home and abroad.

However, in the context of more than five decades of international declarations, treaties, meetings, advocacy work by NGOs and policy and diplomatic work by governments to advance gender equality and improve the status of women, the report falls short. Rather than reporting on the past 20 years of progress and setbacks, laying out an ambitious plan for future action as is envisioned by the Platform for Action, the bulk of the report catalogues a list of ad hoc, albeit important and welcome, activities that have occurred over approximately the past five-to-seven years. Most concerning, the report dedicates only a few scant pages to laying out a list of potential future activities. Emerging issues, which are essential to maintaining the momentum of positive change for women and girls in the U.S. and globally, are explored in a single concluding paragraph.

The report also fails to place these developments in the context of the ongoing history of advances in women's rights and empowerment, which has become embedded as a core tenet of the post-World War II development and human rights agenda. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action are part of a continuum of international agreements, meetings, actions and activities that have effectively advanced women's rights globally over many decades. This process began after World War II as the United Nations and other international organizations were forming and includes important milestones such as the establishment of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women; the Mexico City, Copenhagen, and Nairobi International Conferences on Women; the 1993 Vienna Human Rights Conference; the 1994 Conference on Population and Development; and the development and ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by 187 member states, to name a few. It needs to be noted here that the United States remains the only industrialized nation that has not yet ratified CEDAW. The U.S. is one of only six U.N. member states—along with Iran, Somalia, Sudan, Palau and Tonga—that has not ratified the treaty. Ratification of CEDAW must continue to be a top priority for the administration.

In short, the report missed important opportunities to:

- Catalogue progress and challenges over the past 20 years;
- Identify a complete, robust, detailed, and aspirational long-term agenda which could guide U.S. government action and inform the discussion on adoption of the SDGs and other pending and future bilateral and multilateral strategies, programs, policies, and resource allocations;
- Elaborate on emerging issues;

- Prioritize future actions; and
- Continue to lead international and domestic action to advance women's rights in the future.

CHANGE, The Leadership Conference, and The Education Fund convened a group of nongovernmental organizations working on domestic and global policy on a wide range of issues. There was a consensus on the need for a shadow report from civil society in the United States that would highlight gaps in the administration's report and recommend additional action items that should be included on the future women's policy agenda, including future U.S. bilateral action and actions under the SDGs and other multilateral policy and funding mechanisms. Since no single organization contributing to this report—including CHANGE, The Leadership Conference, and The Education Fund—is knowledgeable on every thematic area, we asked these and other organizations for recommendations for action in issue areas in which they have knowledge and expertise. Those recommendations are reflected within each issue area. Importantly, all of the organizations that have contributed to this report believe that focusing on a comprehensive set of actions to improve women's rights domestically and globally is essential to ensuring that the momentum of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is maintained and that women and girls remain a core focus of U.S. domestic and international policy and funding priorities in the future.

It is important to acknowledge that as this report went to press, the U.S. made significant strides toward realizing the commitments made at the Beijing conference. In September, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued proposed rules implementing the Affordable Care Act titled "Nondiscrimination in Health Programs and Activities" which extends civil rights protections by banning sex discrimination—including based on gender identity—for the first time to health programs and activities, requires effective communications for people with disabilities, and assistance to people with limited English language skills. In addition, President Obama issued an executive order requiring federal contractors to provide up to seven days of paid sick leave for employees. Following years of advocacy by NGOs, the Obama administration also, for the first time, officially recognized sexual rights and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in a statement delivered during a U.N. Women Executive Board meeting. The adoption of the language, which derives from the Beijing Platform for Action, means that sexual rights relating to sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity, and the right to choose if and when to marry—and to whom—will be important in the discussion and crafting of global development policies moving forward.

As the global community finalizes the details of the SDGs and prepares to engage in a new and dynamic global development agenda for the coming decades, it is essential that women be at the center of this effort and that the impacts of the various elements of the SDGs be carefully assessed over time to ensure that they advance and enhance the goals and vision developed by the delegates who met in Beijing in 1995. We look forward to working with the Obama administration and other partners to continue to advance the promise of Beijing and enhance the lives of all.

Current Gaps in the Implementation of the Critical Areas of Concern

The following list of proposed action items and priority issue areas have been developed to illustrate the breadth of issues that remain unresolved 20 years after the 1995 Beijing Conference and to provide policymakers with a more detailed roadmap of actions needed to realize the promise of Beijing than that provided in the U.S. Government's Implementation Report. The list is not exhaustive, but provides an action agenda for the U.S. government in the short and longer-term consistent with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The shadow report is organized around the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action. Recommendations in each area are offered both for domestic U.S. policy and global policy. The recommendations emphasize actions the Obama administration can initiate or make progress on in the short term by executive action. Also included are recommendations that require actions by the Congress or multilateral institutions.

The 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action are:

- A. Women and Poverty
- B. Education and Training of Women
- C. Women and Health
- D. Violence Against Women
- E. Women and Armed Conflict
- F. Women and the Economy
- G. Women in Power and Decision Making
- H. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women
- I. Women and Human Rights
- J. Women and the Media

K. Women and the Environment

L. The Girl Child

A. Women and Poverty

Contributors: 9to5, National Association of Working Women, Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Family Values @ Work, Feminist Majority Foundation, International Center for Research on Women, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The Leadership Conference Education Fund, Legal Momentum, National Partnership for Women & Families, National Women's Law Center

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty.
- Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources.
- Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions
- Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)—Eliminate persistent employment barriers so that TANF recipients are able meet their work and family responsibilities, including:
 - Increase flexibility in welfare rules to help TANF clients obtain the skills they need for jobs that pay better wages and provide greater economic security;
 - Vigorously enforce workplace antidiscrimination laws to ensure that TANF clients are treated fairly when they find a job;
 - Ensure that TANF clients have access to supports such as quality child care and affordable transportation, so they can go to work without putting their children at risk; and
 - Improve access to education, including General Educational Development (GED), English as a Second Language (ESL) and Higher Education, and ensure that survivors of domestic/sexual violence can, if needed, receive TANF and be exempt from work requirements while receiving medical, counseling or legal services.
- ◆ Initiate formal regulatory processes in areas where the administration has already committed to act, including:
 - Issuing regulations on equal opportunity in registered apprenticeships; and
 - Overseeing comments and implementation of new executive order issued September 7, 2015 on provision of paid sick days by federal contractors.
- ◆ Issue a “high-road contractor” executive order that gives preference to contractors who, in addition to complying with the law, pay living wages, offer good health benefits and retirement plans, and observe fair scheduling practices.
- ◆ Full implementation by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of *Young v. UPS* Supreme Court case ensuring that employers provide reasonable workplace accommodations for pregnant and breastfeeding employees.
- ◆ Department of Labor should robustly enforce employment and labor laws and executive orders, including those prohibiting discrimination against workers and job-seekers, requiring a higher minimum

wage and prohibiting discrimination against LGBTQ employees.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Support bills pending in Congress that could have a profound impact on women, the workplace, and poverty. While the administration cannot unilaterally enact these pieces of legislation, we encourage it to support their passage and enactment. We also encourage the administration to review each of these issues and determine where it can act within existing authorities to partially or fully achieve the objectives of these pieces of legislation. These bills include:
 - Child Care, Earned Income Tax Credit, The Pathways out of Poverty Act, provisions of which would increase funding for child care, expand the earned income tax credit, among other anti-poverty policies.
 - Minimum Wage—Increase the national minimum wage to \$12.00 per hour as noted in the Raise the Wage Act, Original Living Wage Act, and Title XV of the Pathways out of Poverty Act, among others. Focus also on indexing the minimum wage and ending the sub-minimum wage for tipped workers, the majority of whom are female, and who have experienced erosion of earning in the past decade.
 - The Paycheck Fairness Act, which makes it more difficult for employers to hide pay discrimination, rewards employers that have good pay practices and helps train women and girls in salary negotiations.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Incorporate provisions of the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act into U.S. foreign policy and practice. Focus resources on preventing child marriage and providing educational and economic opportunities to girls in the developing world. The policy would help protect girls' human rights by:
 - Establishing a multi-year strategy to prevent child marriage in developing countries and promote the empowerment of girls at risk of child marriage; and
 - Integrating child marriage prevention efforts into existing development programs.
- ◆ Food Security and Agriculture—The State Department should fully implement the Feed the Future Initiative, with special focus on fully recognizing and

integrating women in to all elements of the program including integrating gender-based analysis into all of its investments and utilization of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index to overcome traditional and emerging obstacles and constraints.

- ◆ World Bank—In 2013 the U.S. and other World Bank donors concluded the 17th International Development Association (IDA) replenishment. The Replenishment envisions an increased focus on gender equality, as key to shaping the future and a means of encouraging more equitable growth. The U.S. Executive Director at the Bank should make full realization of the gender equity elements of IDA 17 a top priority and prepare to build on these successes when negotiating IDA 18.
- ◆ USAID should improve coordination within the agency and across agencies to ensure anti-poverty programs are linked with education, global health, PEPFAR and human rights programming.

B. Education and Training of Women

Contributors: Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Feminist Majority Foundation, International Center for Research on Women, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The Leadership Conference Education Fund, National Women's Law Center

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Ensure equal access to education.
- Eradicate illiteracy among women.
- Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology, and continuing education.
- Develop non-discriminatory education and training.
- Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of educational reforms.
- Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ The Obama administration should advance or develop initiatives, executive orders, and other policy actions that address gender and racial disparities and limitations on girls' and women's education and training by:
 - Adopting strong policies and programs that promote educational and workplace policies to narrow the achievement gap for girls and women in STEM, especially women of color;
 - Addressing persistent sex segregation in technical, vocational, and career education programs in junior and community colleges;

- Strengthening Title IX's protections against sexual harassment, including online harassment, in the schools and continue investigations of schools' handling of sexual assault on college campuses; and
- Addressing gender and racial disparities in use of suspensions in school discipline programs, especially for African-American girls.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Full implementation of Let Girls Learn initiative with focus on increasing access to quality education, reducing barriers, and empowering adolescent girls.
- ◆ Ensure the Let Girls Learn approach is integrated across USAID programs and agencies.
- ◆ Use existing authorities to implement elements of the Education for All Act, including:
 - Develop a comprehensive U.S. strategy to promote quality universal basic education.
 - Provide funds and other assistance to qualifying foreign countries to create the policies, processes, and infrastructure to develop national basic quality education plans.
 - Direct the USAID to designate a Coordinator of United States Government Actions to Provide Basic Education Assistance who shall have primary responsibility for the oversight and coordination of all U.S. government resources and international activities to promote quality universal basic education.
- ◆ Support the Global Partnership for Education with a focus on its objectives relating to girls' education:

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- Increase gender parity and enrollment overall;
 - Provide strong incentives, technical and financial support to include gender strategies in education sector plans;
 - Support the enrollment of out-of-school girls into primary school; and
 - Ensure that girls make the crucial transition from primary to secondary school.
- ◆ Incorporate comprehensive, accurate sexuality education into relevant USAID funded programs.
 - ◆ Improve coordination within USAID and across agencies to ensure girls' education programs are linked with education, global health, aids relief and human rights programming.
 - ◆ Develop research, collaboration with developing countries, and programming to address the issue of school fees as an impediment to education and a driver of intergenerational sex and other transactional sex in some contexts.
 - ◆ Prioritize quality universal basic education as a key element of global development and gender equality with increased support for access to quality secondary education and girls' retention in secondary schools that advance quality learning.

C. Women and Health

Contributors: Advocates for Youth, Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Center for Reproductive Rights, Feminist Majority Foundation, International Women's Health Coalition, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, National Organization for Women, SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services.
- Strengthen preventive programmes that promote women's health.
- Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues.
- Promote research and disseminate information on women's health.
- Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Continue to work to expand access to publicly funded family planning services under Title X, including making robust funding requests for Fiscal Year 2017 and beyond.
- ◆ Support medically accurate, age appropriate sexuality education for every young person in the U.S. Even with teen pregnancy at historic lows, there were about 615,000 teen pregnancies last year, which cost the U.S. economy \$9.4 billion. More importantly, teen pregnancy costs women opportunities and their futures. Request robust funding in Fiscal Year 2017

and beyond for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Adolescent School Health (DASH) and the Department of Health and Human Services' Teen Pregnancy Prevention program (TPP).

- ◆ Take additional measures to make birth control available and accessible—over the counter, at the doctor's office, but always fully covered by insurance with no co-pay just like all other preventive care. The Affordable Care Act is moving the U.S. in this direction saving women \$483 million last year in co-pays and out-of-pocket expenses.
- ◆ Support efforts to strengthen and protect Medicaid so women and families who most need affordable health care can get it. Encourage states to expand Medicaid to more families as permitted under the Affordable Care Act.
- ◆ HHS should expeditiously review comments on the recently issued proposed regulations and finalize these rules on non-discrimination under ACA which for the first time prohibits discrimination based on sex in federally funded health programs; recommend that DHHS investigate complaints in a timely way as well as bolsters language assistance for people with limited English proficiency. The proposed rule requires that women have equal access to the health care they receive and the insurance they obtain. The rule also makes clear that sex discrimination includes discrimination based on gender identity. Among them:
 - Women must be treated equally to men in the health care that they receive. Under Section 1557, women are protected from sex and gender-based discrimination not only in the health coverage they obtain but in the care they receive.
 - Individuals may not be subject to discrimination based on gender identity, which will protect many

transgender women from discrimination. For example, some insurance policies have historically contained exclusions on coverage of all care related to gender transition and transition-related care. Those exclusions would not be banned under the proposed rule.

- Individuals must be treated consistent with their gender identity, including access to facilities.
- Sex-specific health care cannot be denied or limited just because the person seeking such services identifies as belonging to another gender. For example, a provider may not deny an individual treatment for testicular cancer, based on the individual's identification as a transgender woman, where the treatment is medically indicated.
- Prohibits discrimination against any individual—including lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals—on the basis of stereotypical notions of femininity or masculinity.
- ◆ HHS should expand access to Medicaid and health exchanges for immigrant women and their families.
- ◆ Human Papillomavirus Vaccine Mandate—the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services should develop a federal initiative to encourage states to provide this important vaccine and promote public education.
- ◆ Promote federal programs that protect women's right to breastfeed in public.
- ◆ Work to end “conversion therapy” to “cure” sexual orientation and gender identity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) individuals, including youth.
- ◆ Work through appropriate agencies to highlight medical and psychosocial issues associated with immediate surgery on inter-sex children to “correct” gender.
- ◆ Direct the Department of Justice to review federal, state, and local “assault”/“child endangerment” laws that criminalize women for drug use while pregnant.
- ◆ Ensure that individuals' rights to access health care services or commodities are not abridged by service providers who refuse to provide services or commodities based on personal convictions or prejudices.
- ◆ Increase access to health services for LGBTQ people and women that is free from discrimination, stigma, and violence. This will help:
 - Eliminate health inequities especially faced by women of color;

- Call attention to medical and psychosocial issues associated with immediate surgery on intersex children to “correct” gender;
- Ensure access to quality, affordable health care coverage and to women's health providers;
- Ensure access to comprehensive reproductive health care and defend against efforts to undermine access to safe, legal abortion; and
- Improve access to sexual and reproductive health education.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Actively support the Women's Health Protection Act and the Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH Woman) Act which together would ensure that abortion is always safe, legal, and affordable no matter where a woman lives.
- ◆ End U.S. funding for abstinence until marriage programs and redirect funds to comprehensive sex education.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ The administration should immediately direct USAID and all implementing agencies to correctly interpret the Helms Amendment: end the unnecessarily restrictive application of the prohibition on the use of foreign assistance funds to pay for “abortion as a method of family planning” and clarify that the term does not apply to abortions provided, at the very least, in the cases of rape, incest, and to save the life of a woman. This should be done without making any harmful trade-offs or concessions.
- ◆ The U.S. should explicitly acknowledge sexual rights as part of the human rights framework: Sexual rights embrace certain human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights documents and other consensus documents. They rest on the recognition that all individuals have the right, free of coercion, violence and discrimination of any kind: to the highest attainable standard of sexual health; to pursue a satisfying, safe, and pleasurable sexual life; to have control over and decide freely, and with due regard for the rights of others, on matters related to their sexuality, reproduction, sexual orientation, bodily integrity, choice of partner, and gender identity; and to the services, education and information, including comprehensive sexuality education, necessary to do so.

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- ◆ President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR): Oversee the full implementation of the PEPFAR DREAMS Initiative to reduce new HIV infections in adolescent girls and young women by supporting a comprehensive, evidence-based package of services that both reduces their risk and increases their agency. Seek additional funding and ways to promote a sustainable response to the HIV prevention needs of young women and adolescent girls beyond the two-year timeframe and 10 current countries. Work to ensure youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services, comprehensive post-violence care, and improved contraceptive method mix are prioritized across the PEPFAR platform and supported directly through PEPFAR funds.
 - ◆ PEPFAR and USAID should promote programming and access to female condoms in all appropriate U.S.-funded programs and encourage their availability in multilateral programs in which the U.S. is a party.
 - ◆ USAID must promote comprehensive sexuality education (CSE): age-appropriate education about human rights, human sexuality, gender equality, relationships, and sexual and reproductive health and rights through the provision of scientifically-accurate, nonjudgmental information and U.S. ambassadors and missions should support and promote comprehensive approaches to sexual and reproductive health and rights on the ground.
 - ◆ Support UNFPA – The U.N. Population Fund — Include robust increases for UNFPA in Fiscal Year 2017 and beyond and seek out opportunities to utilize UNFPA's capacities globally outside of the U.S. government's annual voluntary contribution, such as in emergency situations. The U.S. must also work to remove funding restrictions on UNFPA that bar the agency from providing abortions as a condition of contribution.
 - ◆ Develop and issue joint guidance from the State Department, USAID and OGAC for U.S. missions, ensuring family planning, maternal health and sexual health programs are integrated, and reflect a comprehensive approach.
 - ◆ Strengthen health systems in developing countries to ensure meaningful integration of sexual and reproductive health programs, promotion of rights-based approaches, and access to services and information, particularly for underserved users such as women sex workers, women injecting drug users, youth, women prisoners, and those recently released back into communities. Work to ensure that women get the health care they need by seeking to limit a service provider's ability to deny services or commodities based on personal convictions or to ensure that other providers make the services or commodities available in a timely and high-quality manner.
 - ◆ Direct global health programs for women to include information and program focus on the HIV prevention, family planning, and maternal health needs of women and girls who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C).
 - ◆ Prioritize women's reproductive cancer screening and treatment, including working through multilaterals such as the UNFPA – The U.N. Population Fund. Work with multilaterals and national health systems to facilitate availability and uptake of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine by both boys and girls.
 - ◆ As awareness of the need for assistance for non-communicable diseases in developing countries increases, the administration should make sure that there is appropriate research and program emphasis on women's needs in this area.
- Other Priority Actions:
- ◆ Support passage of legislative measures to ensure that policy restrictions such as the Global Gag Rule cannot be reintroduced by future executive actions.
 - ◆ Support the amendment of PEPFAR legislation to eliminate restrictions such as the Anti-Prostitution Loyalty Oath, and end reporting requirements for abstinence, abstinence-until-marriage, and fidelity programs.
 - ◆ Invest at least \$1 billion in voluntary international family planning programs and services for FY 2016 and thereafter.
 - ◆ Rewrite the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 so U.S. foreign assistance objectives include gender equality and women's empowerment and human rights as principal goals and include a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights framework within U.S. foreign assistance and programs.

D. Violence Against Women

Contributors: Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Feminist Majority Foundation, International Center for Research on Women, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The Leadership Conference Education Fund, Legal Momentum, National Congress of American Indians, National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Organization for Women

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women.
- Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures.
- Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking. (See “Human Rights of Women” section)

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ The Department of Justice should incorporate international human rights standards in federal, state, and local anti-violence policy and programs (advance due diligence standard when formulating state responses to domestic violence, increased dissemination and explanation of human rights principles to U.S. governmental actors).
- ◆ Address gender-biased policing – The Department of Justice should issue guidance that explains how flawed law enforcement responses to domestic violence and sexual assault can violate civil rights law and constitute police misconduct. The guidance should describe the obligations of U.S. law enforcement agencies to fairly and thoroughly investigate cases of domestic or sexual violence and outline the necessary elements of policies, training, supervision, and accountability to ensure effective police response.
- ◆ Implement *Gonzales v. U.S.A.* Recommendations—Implement the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights ruling in the case of *Jessica Gonzales v. U.S.A.* To comply with the commission’s recommendations, the U.S. must: investigate the cause of death of Jessica Lenahan’s (formerly Gonzales) three daughters; conduct an investigation into the systematic failures in the enforcement of Lenahan’s protective order as a guarantee of non-repetition; offer full reparations for the state’s violation of Lenahan’s human rights; adopt or reform legislation to protect victims of domestic violence; adopt public policies and institutional programs to restructure the stereotypes of domestic violence victims and to promote the eradication of discriminatory socio-cultural patterns that impede women and children’s full protection from domestic violence; and design protocols specifying the proper components of the investigation by law enforcement officials of a report of missing children in the context of a report of a restraining order violation.
- ◆ Full implementation of the 2013 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) including:
 - Enhancing judicial and law enforcement tools to combat violence against women;
 - Improving services for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking;
 - Improving services for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking;
 - Ensuring services, protection, and justice for young victims of violence, including students;

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- Strengthening the health care system's response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, and cyberstalking;
 - Researching and implementing violence reduction practices;
 - Making available safe homes for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking;
 - Ensuring economic security for victims of violence; and
 - Protecting battered immigrants.
 - ◆ Provide resources to tribes to fully implement the VAWA 2013 provisions relating to the jurisdiction of tribal courts in cases of domestic abuse.
 - ◆ Support legislation that would expand the tribal jurisdiction provisions of VAWA 2013 to cover the full range of domestic and sexual violence experienced by women in tribal communities.
 - ◆ Ensure that tribal governments have equal access to the Crime Victims Fund for providing services to victims of crime in tribal communities.
 - ◆ Ensure that tribal governments are able to participate in the federal criminal information databases for purposes of sharing information across jurisdictions, particularly with regard to protection orders and criminal record information relevant for firearms purchases.
 - ◆ Fully implement VAWA provisions relating to expanding jurisdiction of tribal courts in cases of domestic abuse.
 - ◆ Use existing authority and seek new authority to address sexual assault on campuses, including authorities currently available in:
 - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which mandate penalties for universities that violate student rights in sexual assault cases.
 - The provisions of the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (2014).
 - The recommendations of the First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (April 2014).
 - ◆ Address sexual harassment and threats of sexual assault on campus using social media
 - ◆ DOJ should use existing authority to attain better understanding of, and departmental response to, violence against women in prison and work to end the practice of shackling of pregnant women in prison, especially during labor, and ban it in federal prisons.
 - ◆ Advance gun violence prevention measures to protect both women and the rest of society from gun violence by:
 - Expanding the gun prohibition established by the Lautenberg Amendment to the Gun Control Act of 1968 to prevent dating abusers, stalkers, and people subject to temporary protective orders from purchasing firearms;
 - Enforcing firearm relinquishment requirements;
 - Expeditiously entering all records into the NICS database and flagging all domestic violence crimes and protective orders;
 - Closing loopholes in the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act that allow people to bypass federal background checks by purchasing firearms at gun shows, online, from unlicensed sellers, and through other methods;
 - Extending the period of time the FBI has to process NICS background checks before the default proceed provision takes effect; and
 - Encouraging federal, state and local law enforcement to work together to retrieve illegal guns.
 - ◆ Use existing authorities to draft and implement a national strategy to protect American girls and women from female genital mutilation as envisioned in the Zero Tolerance for FGM Act of 2015.
 - ◆ Create protection for DV survivors who have incurred coerced debt due to domestic violence, similar to IRS Innocent Spouse forgiveness provisions
 - ◆ Change Housing and Urban Development (HUD) policies and practices that discriminate against programs serving victims of domestic violence (because federal law prohibits those programs from entering victim data into HUD's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database), and require that individuals and families that will be homeless if they flee domestic violence not be disadvantaged by HUD in qualifying for housing vouchers and other access to shelter/housing. HUD should issue regulations focusing on sexual harassment as a violation of the Fair Housing Act.
 - ◆ Federal employees, and all state employees funded by federal dollars, should receive annual training on sexual harassment and domestic violence in the workplace.
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- ◆ All federal contractors should be required to have policies in place that prohibit discrimination against any employee because she or he has been a victim of domestic violence, and which provide for reasonable accommodations for the safety of that employee.
- ◆ The Department of Defense should comprehensively address sexual assault in the U.S. military. (see Section E, below)
- ◆ Ensure equal access to disability compensation to veterans who are survivors of military sexual violence.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Full funding for the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) programs, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) and the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) in FY2016 appropriations.
- ◆ Require the Legal Services Administration (LSA) to provide broad-based representation to indigent victims of domestic violence, including orders of protection, child support and custody, and provide adequate funding to LSA for these services.
- ◆ Release the full amount of funding from the Crime Victims Fund that should be made available to victims of crime through VOCA, or alternatively a three-year rolling average of deposits to the fund, without redirecting those funds for other purposes. Create a meaningful allocation for tribal governments through the appropriations or authorization process that will ensure crime victims on tribal lands have equitable access to crime victims' services and compensation funded by the Crime Victims Fund.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Full Implementation of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence
 - Dedicate funds for GBV initiatives, report on where the funding is allocated, assessing impact, provide lessons learned and best practices;
 - Invest in and implement a multi-sectoral approach;
 - Invest more heavily in a comprehensive strategy to prevent GBV and give special attention to the linkages to children exposed to violence;
 - Announce the selection of specific countries or regions for pilot implementation of the strategy;
 - Provide graph of inter-agency approach, showing areas of responsibility for each U.S. government agency (similar to USAID Action Plan on Children in Adversity);

- Scale up successful program initiatives, such as Safe Schools, Engaging Men and Boys; and
- Integrate gender issues and GBV prevention systematically into diplomatic, programmatic, and policy initiatives.
- ◆ Enhance training of U.S. personnel on gender and GBV issues, and encourage appropriate collaboration and empowerment of local groups that work on these issues.
- ◆ Develop programs and partnerships to enable women overseas with access to legal representation and opportunities to pursue justice against perpetrators of violence.
- ◆ Strengthen the U.S. commitment to addressing accountability and justice for sexual violence in conflict by developing relevant benchmarks for all U.S. assistance related to security sector reform, such as visible and clearly defined efforts from the recipient government to investigate and prosecute serious violations of international humanitarian law. This includes prosecuting individuals who were criminally liable because they ordered such crimes or who as a matter of command responsibility failed to prevent or punish them.
- ◆ The secretary of state should provide an update regarding the development and implementation of the multi-year and multi-sectoral strategy to end child marriage, as outlined in the domestic Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act passed in March 2013.
- ◆ Ensure that U.S. funding and programs for services to survivors of violence includes comprehensive post-rape medical care.
- ◆ Maintain a leadership role in global efforts to end Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C), including bilateral and multilateral programming, including working toward full implementation of Phase II of the UNFPA/UNICEF Joint Program on FGM/C, and program-informing research such as that being proposed by the Population Council which:
 - Dramatically expands the body of evidence on the most effective and cost-effective approaches to ending FGM/C in different contexts; and
 - Demonstrably influences strategic investments, policies, and programs to end FGM/C.
- ◆ Contribute to ending FGM/C within a generation and reducing FGM/C by at least 30 percent in 10 countries within five years.

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- ◆ Implementation of the U.S. Action Plan on Children in Adversity.
 - ◆ Instruct USAID to integrate GBV prevention and response into the new Education Strategy.
 - ◆ Allocate funding for a variety of U.N. entities, including: U.N. Trust Fund for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, UNICEF, U.N. Women.
 - ◆ Throughout U.S. initiatives, integrate special consideration of the challenges faced by and needs of girls and women with disabilities and how they might be more vulnerable to violence.
 - ◆ Increase accountability and transparency of funds used to address GBV internationally.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Passage of the International Violence Against Women Act (IVAWA)—IVAWA would streamline and better coordinate anti-GBV programming across various U.S. government agencies, making addressing GBV a cornerstone of U.S. development and foreign policy. Since this legislation is aimed at coordinating and integrating existing programs, it does not require the appropriation of additional funding.

E. Women and Armed Conflict

Contributors: Center for Gender and Health Equity (CHANGE), Feminist Majority Foundation, National Women's Law Center

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
- Reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
- Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
- Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace.
- Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women.
- Provide assistance to the women of the colonies and non-self-governing territories.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Given the widespread nature of sexual violence in the U.S. military and the U.S. government's failure to enact and implement policies and legislation that fully address the shortcomings of the current military justice system, specifically regarding the partiality of command and barriers for survivors to seek redress, the U.S. should:
 - Take all necessary measures to prevent sexual violence in the military and ensure a safe working

environment, including effectively implementing and enforcing the prohibition of retaliation against service members who report unwanted sexual contact;

- Ensure impartial and effective prosecution and redress of sexual violence allegations by removing the decision whether to prosecute and punish alleged perpetrators from the chain of command;
- Extend the jurisdiction of civil courts in cases involving violations of human rights by the military, including cases of sexual violence perpetrated by military members;
- Ensure that officers and military personnel responsible for human rights violations, particularly sexual violence, receive adequate punishments and are not given the opportunity to resign from the military in lieu of prosecution;
- Ensure equal access to disability compensation to veterans who are survivors of military sexual violence;
- Expand initiatives, like the Special Victim Counsel program, expedited transfers, and nonmilitary options for mental health care and reproductive health care including access to emergency contraception, post-exposure prophylactics and voluntary abortion which give survivors the tools and control to direct their recovery and their future in the military; and
- Fully implement rescission of the ground combat exclusion policy, and allow women to compete on an equal footing for all currently closed military units, occupations, positions, and schools.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Support the Access to Contraception for Women Service-members and Dependents Act or administrative action to implement the relevant provisions—would align Department of Defense TRICARE health coverage with the Affordable Care Act, so that all women who receive health care through the armed services have access to FDA approved contraception and counseling services with no health insurance co-pay.
- ◆ Support the Military Justice Improvement Act or administrative action to implement the relevant provisions—shifts the decision whether to prosecute any crime punishable by one year or more in confinement to independent, trained, professional military prosecutors, with the exception of crimes that are uniquely military in nature.
- ◆ Work with the U.S. Congress to:
 - Reform the Military Whistleblower Protection Act to afford service members the same level of protection as civilians.
 - Establish a prohibition on criminal charges or disciplinary action against survivors for minor collateral misconduct that would not have come to the military's attention but for the victim's report of sexual assault.
- Improve reporting on government implementation efforts;
- Increase the number of women mediators and negotiators by eliminating barriers to their equal and secure participation in peace processes as well as to support partner governments that demonstrate a commitment to recruiting and retaining women in leadership roles;
- Institute comprehensive training modules on the protection, rights, and specific needs of women in conflict; and on the prevention of violence against women and girls for all relevant diplomatic, defense, and development personnel in the U.S. government;
- Call on U.S. government agencies to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health rights and services in conflict prevention programs and relief recovery efforts; and
- Call on U.S. government agencies to evaluate the impact of U.S. foreign assistance on women's meaningful inclusion and participation and revise approaches to ensure improved outcomes.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ The administration should use existing authorities to implement part or all of the provisions in the Women, Peace, and Security Act, which would:
 - Ensure reporting on government implementation efforts;
 - Encourage the U.S. to identify and support women mediators and negotiators;
 - Institute comprehensive training modules on the protection, rights, and specific needs of women in conflict and on the prevention of violence against women and girls for all relevant diplomatic, defense, and development personnel; and
 - Require U.S. government agencies to monitor and evaluate the impact of U.S. foreign assistance on women's meaningful inclusion and participation and revise approaches to ensure improved outcomes.
- ◆ Robust implementation of the U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security:
 - The administration should routinely provide public information on an annual basis regarding its progress in implementing the December 2011 U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.
 - The U.S. government should work with stakeholders to renew this strategy in the very near future.
- ◆ Support legislation and increased appropriations that resource the recruitment, retention, professionalization, and safety of women in military and police forces.
- ◆ Revise the existing incorrect interpretation of the Helms Amendment to allow U.S. support for abortions and abortion services for women and girls raped in conflict.
- ◆ Ensure full implementation of the Safe from the Start Initiative which focuses on reducing the incidence of gender based violence and increasing quality services for survivors at the onset of emergencies.
 - Continue funding Safe from the Start in addition to the \$22 million pledge;
 - Foster accountability through the implementation of the Roadmap for the U.S. commitment to the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies;

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- Improve reporting requirements by partner organizations;
 - Create learning opportunities for grantees to improve grant proposals; and
 - Evaluate and disseminate the results of the Real-Time Accountability Partnership.

F. Women and the Economy

Contributors: 9to5, National Association of Working Women, Black Women's Roundtable, Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Family Values @ Work, Feminist Majority Foundation, International Center for Research on Women, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The Leadership Conference Education Fund, National Partnership for Women & Families, National Women's Law Center

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
- Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade. Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
- Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.
- Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
- Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Executive Orders—The Department of Labor should issue and implement final rules for already-issued executive orders on federal contractors' pay and civil rights and non-discrimination policies and practices, including:
 - Advancing Pay Equality Through Compensation Data Collection presidential memorandum;
 - Discrimination on the Basis of Sex proposed regulations.
 - Issuing final rules updating Fair Labor Standards Act regulations regarding workers' eligibility for overtime pay; and
 - Issuing final rules for the July 2014 Fair and Safe Workplaces Executive Order.
- ◆ Initiate formal regulatory processes in areas where the administration has already committed to act, including:
 - Re-evaluating affirmative action goals for women and minorities in construction;
 - Implementing Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act concerning federal employees and applicants with disabilities;
 - Issuing regulations on equal opportunity in registered apprenticeships; and
 - Overseeing comments and implementation of a new executive order issued September 7, 2015 on provision of paid sick days by federal contractors.
- ◆ Issue a "high-road contractor" executive order that gives preference to contractors who, in addition to complying with the law, pay living wages, offer good health benefits and retirement plans, and observe fair scheduling practices.
- ◆ Full implementation by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of *Young v. UPS* Supreme Court case ensuring that employers provide reasonable workplace accommodations for pregnant and breastfeeding employees.
- ◆ Department of Labor should robustly enforce employment and labor laws and executive orders, including those prohibiting discrimination against

working and job-seeking people, requiring a higher minimum wage and prohibiting discrimination against LGBT employees.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ The administration should work for enactment of the following pieces of legislation. In the meantime, we also encourage the administration to review each of these issues and determine where it can act within existing authorities to partially or fully achieve the objectives of these pieces of legislation. These bills include:
 - The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which assures pregnant women the reasonable accommodations they need to keep working throughout their pregnancies and support their health and the health of their pregnancy;
 - The Working Mothers Act, which expands the Fair Labor Standards Act Nursing Mothers Act provisions to salaried workers;
 - The Healthy Families Act, which guarantees workers the right to earn paid sick days; and
 - The Family and Medical Leave Insurance Leave Act, which creates a national paid family and medical leave insurance program to assure paid leave for pregnancy, childbirth and parental leave purposes, caregiving for a serious family member or leave to address one's own serious health conditions.
- ◆ Work with national social security programs and institutions to implement and enforce social protection to ensure new employment opportunities for women to result in sustainable economic development.
- ◆ Engage women and create incentives for micro-finance programs—involving small-scale credit, savings and insurance to meet the needs of poor producers—to provide skill-based training to enhance productivity and organizational support and consciousness building to empower women.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Expand the Presidential Ambassadors for Global Entrepreneurship (PAGE) Initiative, which is a first-of-its-kind collaboration between American entrepreneurs, the White House, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of State.
- ◆ Include women on global economic empowerment initiatives that include financial inclusion, women and agriculture, enterprise growth, technology access, capacity building, and business leadership.
- ◆ Ensure women have income and assets to contribute to the increase of productivity and national development. Women's control over assets and income is inextricably-linked to improvements in family welfare and child nutrition.
- ◆ Help to combine and integrate interventions to increase women's participation in markets and job creation with broader investment in social infrastructure and safeguards.

G. Women in Power and Decision-making

Contributors: Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Feminist Majority Foundation, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The Leadership Conference Education Fund

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.
- Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ A Fair and Diverse Judiciary—Work to ensure diversity by sex and race on federal district and appellate courts.
- ◆ Women in the Cabinet—Facilitate continued appointment of women to key positions noting there has never been a woman Secretary of Defense or Secretary of the Treasury.
- ◆ Women ambassadors—Increase number of women ambassadors.
- ◆ Women on advisory boards—Strive for equal representation of women and men on government advisory boards.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Encourage political parties to increase number of women candidates to federal and state offices by offering financial incentives to candidates.
- ◆ Work to eliminate voter suppression laws that affect the right to vote by women, people of color, people with disabilities, students, and the elderly.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ As U.S. policy becomes more aligned with promoting women's power and decision-making, such as through the Equal Futures partnership, this kind of evidence should be consulted when crafting our approach.
- ◆ Support capacity building for women seeking public office in the developing world which promote equal representation on both parliaments and national cabinets and ongoing electoral and parliamentary support work by the National Democratic Institute and International Republican Institute.
- ◆ Promote programs that support selection and capacity building for female judges overseas.
- ◆ Increase the number, scope, and participation in women's leadership training programs through the U.S. State Department and U.S. Agency for international Development such as HOPE Fellowships and the Global Women in Management program through Plan USA.

H. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women

Contributors: Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Feminist Majority Foundation, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and The Leadership Conference Education Fund

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies.
- Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects.
- Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation actions to be taken.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ White House Council on Women and Girls should take leadership and monitor agency performance in addressing concerns of women, promoting women's leadership and participation, securing the collection of gender-disaggregated data and including women in decision-making within the administration.
- ◆ White House Council should monitor federal agencies' implementation of recommendations by Human Rights Council and treaty bodies on advancing women's human rights in the U.S.
- ◆ Department of Labor Women's Bureau—strengthen its capacity and role in decision-making in all areas of labor and employment policy.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)—The administration should continue to include CEDAW on the priority list of treaties and

work closely with the coalition of 200 organizations that support U.S. ratification of CEDAW. The administration should actively advocate for ratification with members of the Senate.

- The Human Rights Council urged the United States in 2010 and 2015 Universal Periodic Review to move forward with ratification of CEDAW as well as other human rights treaties that the U.S. has yet to ratify.
- In the meantime, the administration should be compiling a report with the input of all the agencies on how they are already implementing CEDAW and how to better align policies and programs with the principles and objectives of CEDAW.
- ◆ Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)—The administration should actively work to help pass the pending ERA resolutions in Congress and advocate for continued state ratification of the ERA.
- ◆ Seek permanent authorization of the Office of Global Women's Issues at the State Department.

I. Human Rights of Women

Contributors: Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Feminist Majority Foundation, Liesl Gerntholtz, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The Leadership Conference Education Fund, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, US Human Rights Network

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Promote and protect the human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice. Achieve legal literacy.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Human Trafficking—The White House and appropriate departments and agencies within the administration should:
 - Advocate for policies, legislation and services that protect all trafficked persons by recognizing that women are trafficked into labor as well as the commercial sex industry;
 - Increase legal and regulatory protections in labor sectors targeting traditional women's work and sectors where women workers are disproportionately represented including domestic work, health care, the hospitality industry, informal sector work, part time and contract work;
 - Provide care and support for women who have been trafficked. Grant access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, especially emergency

contraception, abortion, management and prevention of sexually transmitted infections, post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent HIV infection, and family planning;

- Support educational outreach to Native American communities to prevent trafficking, especially minors;
- Support educational outreach to LGBTQ and transgender individuals, particularly youth, to prevent trafficking; and
- Support the training of police and prosecutors to recognize that when an adult procures commercial sex with a minor it is rape and perpetrators should be prosecuted accordingly, to refrain from arresting or prosecuting the minor and to refer them to the full range of services needed. There is no "child prostitution."

- ◆ Implementation of the Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States to
 - Enhance diplomacy to monitor and combat human trafficking;
 - Improve prevention and screening efforts;
 - Support stronger regulation of foreign labor recruiters; and
 - Support transparency and accountability in supply chains in government and private sector.
 - ◆ Immigrant rights:
 - Promote family reunification, where this is in the interest of women and eliminate family visa backlogs. Trafficked persons and exploited workers
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face serious safety risks to their family members if they report their exploitation. The current family immigration system is too backlogged to ensure that family members can be swiftly brought to the United States and protected from retaliation in their home country. Long backlogs also increase the vulnerability of family members who may elect to enter unlawfully rather than wait more than 20 years.

- Expand access to protection and services for immigrant women workers. First responders, often due to lack of training and awareness of the specific types of challenges and exploitations faced by immigrant women fail to identify exploited immigrants. They should be trained to screen for all types of victimization and provide victims and other vulnerable workers with early access to benefits and social services, and immigration status.
- End local immigration enforcement schemes. Local enforcement of immigration laws can lead to racial profiling and a chilling effect among the most exploited immigrants. Law enforcement agencies should conduct mandatory screening for victimization and immigration eligibility, particularly focused on relief available to people who are currently undocumented. Enforcement agencies should exercise prosecutorial discretion in cases where immigrants are eligible for humanitarian relief and reprioritize enforcement for the most violent and dangerous immigrants.
- End family detention. Children do not belong in detention centers and mothers and children should not be separated. Every effort should be made to release mothers and children in family detention to family or close friends already residing in the U.S.
- Ensure accountability for abuses by Customs and Border Patrol (CBP); and require CBP to put in place basic standards to ensure the safety of those in custody and create a uniform process to determine familial relationships and ensure that women are not needlessly separated from loved ones. CBP should also put in place a policy that requires staff to screen women for sexual violence and ensure that staff are trained to identify victims of sexual violence and refer them to appropriate services, including emergency health care where necessary.
- Expand access to independent immigration status for immigrant women without forcing them to rely on a male family member's application.

Other Priority Actions:

- ◆ Ratification of Conventions—The administration should continue to make ratification of CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities priorities for Senate ratification. The Administration should designate coordinators for each of these treaties that will be responsible for coordinating with and working closely with the NGO supporters of these treaties. The Administration should undertake the formal review of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, so that it can be submitted to the Senate for ratification. The Administration should also consider approaches to the review of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The administration should actively advocate for ratification with members of the Senate.
- ◆ Immigrant Rights:
 - Continue to pursue legislation to create a broad and accessible path to legalization, including recognizing the kinds of contributions at home and at work of women.
 - Develop legal approaches to allowing families access to travel so they can move between countries; without such mechanisms families suffer long-term or permanent separation, or are forced to risk their lives to return to visit family, often paying thousands of dollars to smugglers to the benefit of the underground economy.
 - Increase funding levels to HHS, DHS, DOJ and other relevant agencies so that adequate resources are available to ensure women and children are receiving proper treatment and services reflecting their unique needs and vulnerabilities.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Implement Bangkok Rules which advance alternatives to incarceration/long distances from family for women in prison
- ◆ The annual Human Rights Reports track the status of Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) in some areas, yet it is unclear if or how this information is used in U.S. strategic engagements with countries where this is an issue. Efforts should be made to ensure that there is systematic tracking of attacks against WHRDs in all areas.
- ◆ The U.S. should pay particular attention to treatment of WHRDs in the U.N. Universal Periodic Review process.

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- ◆ Recognizing U.S.'s growing interest in and leadership on women's and LGBTQ rights, the U.S. should officially support and recognize women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights, both in its own policy and in its participation in relevant multi-lateral processes, such as U.N. Security Council, the U.N. Human Rights Council, U.N. Commission of the Status of Women, Commission on Population and Development, and the post-2015 framework.
 - ◆ End child marriage by:
 - Establishing a multi-year strategy to prevent child and early marriage in developing countries and promote the empowerment of girls at risk of child and early marriage;
 - Requiring the State Department to report on this harmful practice in its annual human rights report; and
 - Integrating child marriage prevention efforts into existing development programs.
 - ◆ Implement programs to end other harmful traditional practices.
 - ◆ The U.S. should exercise enhanced leadership at the U.N. Security Council for following up on resolutions related to women, peace and security.
 - ◆ The administration should routinely provide public information regarding its progress in implementing the December 2011 U.S. National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, including lessons learned and best practices.

J. Women and the Media

Contributors: Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Communications Consortium Media Center

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication.
- Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ The Department of Justice should address discrimination and barriers facing women in Hollywood, including women directors who are shut out of directing in television, narrative features, and commercials and undertake enforcement of non-discrimination laws.
- ◆ Review and enhance enforcement of Federal Communications Commission's Equal Employment Opportunity rules relating to hiring practices, which prohibit discrimination in hiring on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or gender by broadcasters and multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs). The rules specifically for MVPDs also prohibit discrimination in hiring on the basis of age. The recruitment rules include requirements to provide notice of job vacancies and to undertake additional outreach measures to all qualified job candidates, such as holding job fairs and establishing scholarship programs.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Promoting Communication Technology to Benefit Women—Research by the International Center for

Research on Women (ICRW) shows that information and communications technology and new technologies can promote women's economic advancement by improving the productivity and quality of women's work and generating new employment opportunities. Developing and distributing technologies that meet women's needs must focus on key steps of the process that carry the technology from conception through use and widespread adoption in the field. Particular attention should also be paid to existing technologies that haven't been adapted or distributed to the full benefit of women.

- ◆ The administration must work bilaterally and multilaterally to develop and implement programs and awareness to protect women journalists from violence and harassment.
- ◆ The U.S. should work more intensively through the National Endowment for Democracy to advance programs in priority countries that promote women journalists' coverage of policy and politics.

K. Women and the Environment

Contributors: PAI, The Sierra Club

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels.
- Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programs for sustainable development.
- Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Women and Climate Change—Incorporate women and their unique concerns and capacities into the U.S. Global Climate Change Research Program National Climate Assessment.
- ◆ Domestic Health and Climate Week—Women’s concerns were not included in the administration’s report on health and climate change released in April 2015 in conjunction with Domestic Health and Climate Week—future reports must include women’s perspectives.
- ◆ Identify and act on opportunities to incorporate gender into the Climate Change Action Plan and its implementation.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Feed the Future—Strengthen gender indicators used in the Feed the Future program so that they are more targeted, better tracked, and prioritized; develop and work to meet a robust target for women’s participation in Feed the Future programs.

- ◆ Include consideration of sexual and reproductive health and rights issues in discussions on food security and clean energy access.
- ◆ Green Climate Fund—Apply the new gender policy and include strong gender indicators in the metrics for monitoring and evaluation of the fund.
- ◆ At climate negotiations in Paris in December the administration should support the participation of women and a gender perspective.

L. The Girl Child

Contributors: Advocates for Youth, Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), Feminist Majority Foundation, International Center for Research on Women, International Women's Health Coalition

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl-child.
- Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices against girls.
- Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential.
- Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training.
- Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.
- Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labor and protect young girls at work.
- Eradicate violence against the girl-child. Promote the girl-child's awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.
- Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl-child.

Domestic Efforts

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Oppose use of taxpayers' money in the form of school vouchers to private schools that discriminate against LGBTQ students.
- ◆ Conduct research on the incidence and impacts of child marriage in the United States.
- ◆ Engage communities and enforce laws to eradicate female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) in the United States.

- ◆ Support the training of police and prosecutors to recognize that when an adult procures commercial sex with a minor it is rape and perpetrators should be prosecuted accordingly, to refrain from arresting or prosecuting the minor and to refer them to the full range of services needed. There is no "child prostitution."
- ◆ The administration should support the campaign in the United States to eliminate the term "child prostitute."
- ◆ As addressed in "Section B. Girls and Education," the administration must develop and implement broad and targeted initiatives to improve girls' access to education including narrowing the achievement gap for girls and women in STEM, working to end campus sexual assault, and addressing harmful gender stereotypes in education, among other issues.

Efforts Abroad

Recommended Short-Term Obama Administration Actions:

- ◆ Work to ensure that implementation, funding and monitoring and assessment of the 2030 Agenda enables all adolescent girls to:
 - Lead healthy lives. This includes ensuring universal sexual and reproductive health and rights, and guaranteeing access by all adolescents and young people to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights information, education and services;
 - Be free from all harmful practices, especially child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C);
 - Be safe from violence and discrimination and have access to justice;
 - Complete free, equitable and quality secondary education in a safe and supportive learning environment; and

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- Be heard.
 - ◆ Finalize, enact and implement a whole-of-Government Adolescent Girl Strategy providing concrete goals and objectives for how U.S. foreign policy and assistance will undertake to promote the health, education and empowerment of adolescent girls globally, with a special focus on child, early and forced marriage as per the International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act.
 - ◆ Fully implement the USAID Youth in Development Policy.
 - ◆ Fully implement the newly-announced Let Girls Learn initiative, especially elements of the program that promote access to health care.
 - ◆ Ensure access to safe, affordable, and scientifically accurate sexual and reproductive health information and services, including modern contraception, sensitive and nonjudgmental counseling, pre- and post-natal care and delivery, safe abortion and post-abortion services and care, and prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. Such services must respect their sexual and reproductive health and rights and their rights to confidentiality, privacy, and informed consent.
 - ◆ Prioritize comprehensive sexuality education, linked to comprehensive and integrated sexual and reproductive health services for all young people, both in and out of school.
 - ◆ End child marriage by:
 - Establishing a multi-year strategy to prevent child marriage in developing countries and promote the empowerment of girls at risk of child marriage;
 - Requiring the State Department to report on this harmful practice in its annual human rights report; and
 - Integrating child marriage prevention efforts into existing development programs.
 - ◆ The U.S. should support greater disaggregation of data, including by age, gender, race, ethnicity, location, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other factors that contribute to marginalization and health risk.
 - ◆ Promote the elimination of laws, policies, and regulations that criminalize same-sex relations, abortion services, contraception, and parental consent requirements, as well as restrictions on the provision of services to unmarried adolescents and financial and geographic inequities that pose barriers to adolescents' accessing the services they need to fully realize their right to health.
 - ◆ Promote the inclusion of young people, ensuring they are able to meaningfully participate at all levels in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programs and policies.
 - ◆ Fully implement the PEPFAR DREAMS Initiative, and expand efforts to reduce rates of HIV transmission among adolescent girls and young women.
 - ◆ The USAID Vision for Action to end child, early and forced marriage is the most developed and thorough policy mechanism yet developed by the U.S. Government to end the practice. However, while development programs, such as those supported by USAID, are a crucial element of any approach to the issue, the Vision does not represent the whole-of-government, comprehensive strategy necessary to truly tackle the practice. Further, the vision also does not set out specific goals, objectives and benchmarks, and so will need further refining and expansion in order to most appropriately guide the agency. However, with such refinement of targets and fleshed out implementation guidance for relevant bureaus and missions within the agency, the Vision for Action can be used by other agencies as a foundation upon which to build a truly whole-of-government approach which includes both developmental and diplomatic elements.
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This image shows a full page of white paper designed for handwriting practice. It features 20 evenly spaced, horizontal dashed lines that run across the entire width of the page. The lines are thin and light gray, providing a guide for letter height and placement without being distracting. There is no text or other markings on the page.

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