

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5273

To reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility in pilot countries, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 14, 2018

Mr. ENGEL (for himself, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. McCAUL, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. COOK) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To reduce global fragility and violence by improving the capacity of the United States to reduce and address the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility in pilot countries, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Global Fragility and
5 Violence Reduction Act of 2018”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) According to the United Nations, an un-
2 precedented 66 million people around the world are
3 currently forcibly displaced from their homes. This
4 is the highest level of global displacement ever re-
5 corded.

6 (2) According to the World Bank, violence and
7 violent conflict, rather than natural disasters, are
8 now the leading causes of displacement worldwide,
9 driving 80 percent of humanitarian needs. The Bank
10 also notes that the same conflicts have accounted for
11 the majority of forcibly displaced persons every year
12 since 1991.

13 (3) According to the World Health Organiza-
14 tion, preventable forms of violence kill at least 1.4
15 million people each year and cause debilitating phys-
16 ical and mental harm to many others.

17 (4) According to the Institute for Economics
18 and Peace, violence containment costs the global
19 economy \$14.3 trillion a year, or 13.4 percent of the
20 world's GDP. If violence were to decrease uniformly
21 across the world by just 10 percent, the global econ-
22 omy would gain \$1.43 trillion each year.

23 (5) Violence and violent conflict underpin many
24 of the United States Government's key national se-
25 curity challenges. Notably, violent conflicts allow for

1 environments in which terrorist organizations recruit
2 and thrive, while the combination of violence, cor-
3 ruption, poverty, poor governance, and underdevelop-
4 ment often enables transnational gangs and criminal
5 networks to wreak havoc and commit atrocities
6 worldwide.

7 (6) According to new research by the University
8 of Maryland and University of Pittsburgh, exposure
9 to violence increases support for violence and violent
10 extremism. Research increasingly finds exposure to
11 violence as a predictor of future participation in vio-
12 lence, including violent extremism.

13 (7) Since 2002, a body of research has emerged
14 on failed or fragile states. The World Bank defines
15 a fragile state as a low-income country characterized
16 by weak state capacity, weak state legitimacy, or
17 both, leaving citizens vulnerable to a range of
18 shocks.

19 (8) United States foreign policy and assistance
20 efforts in highly violent and fragile states remain
21 governed by an outdated patchwork of authorities
22 that prioritize responding to immediate needs rather
23 than solving the problems that cause them. United
24 States Ambassadors, United States Agency for
25 International Development (USAID) Mission Direc-

1 tors, and commanders of combatant commands do
2 not have the policy framework or tools they need to
3 align United States policy or assistance with an
4 overarching, long-term strategy to reduce and pre-
5 vent global fragility and violence.

6 (9) Lessons learned over the past 20 years, doc-
7 umented by the 2013 Special Inspector General for
8 Iraq Reconstruction Lessons Learned Study and the
9 2016 Fragility Study Group report, show that effec-
10 tive, sustained United States efforts to reduce vio-
11 lence and stabilize fragile and violence-affected
12 states require clearly defined goals and strategies,
13 adequate long-term funding, rigorous and iterative
14 conflict analysis, coordination across the United
15 States Government, including strong civil-military
16 coordination, and integration with national and sub-
17 national partners, including local civil society organi-
18 zations, local justice systems, and local governance
19 structures.

20 (10) United States National Security Strategies
21 over the past 15 years have regularly affirmed that
22 the United States has a national security interest in
23 improving its capacity to prevent, manage, and miti-
24 gate violence and violent conflicts in order to miti-
25 gate the consequences of armed conflict, including

1 humanitarian disasters, terrorism, organized crime,
2 increased risk of mass atrocities, and reversed devel-
3 opment.

4 (11) According to the Small Arms Survey, the
5 extent to which the international community will be
6 able to bring down global levels of violence will de-
7 pend largely on the actions taken by states to imple-
8 ment more tangible multilateral commitments to im-
9 prove governance, promote inclusive development,
10 and protect human rights, among other things.

11 **SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

12 It is the policy of the United States to—

13 (1) ensure that all relevant United States Gov-
14 ernment departments and agencies coordinate to
15 achieve coherent, long-term goals for programs de-
16 signed to reduce and address the causes of violence,
17 violent conflict, and fragility in fragile and violence-
18 affected countries, including when implementing the
19 Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Initiative
20 described in section 4;

21 (2) seek to improve the global, regional, and
22 local coordination of relevant international and mul-
23 tilateral development and donor organizations re-
24 garding efforts to reduce and address the causes of
25 violence, violent conflict, and fragility in fragile and

1 violence-affected countries, and, where possible, align
2 such efforts with multilateral goals and indicators;

3 (3) expand and enhance the effectiveness of for-
4 eign assistance programs and activities that reduce
5 and address the causes of violence, violent conflict,
6 and fragility in fragile and violence-affected coun-
7 tries, including programs intended to improve the in-
8 dicators described in section 4(g);

9 (4) support the research and development of ef-
10 fective approaches to reduce and address the causes
11 of violence, violent conflict, and fragility in fragile
12 and violence-affected countries; and

13 (5) improve the monitoring, evaluation, learn-
14 ing, and adaptation tools and authorities for relevant
15 United States Government departments and agen-
16 cies working to reduce and address the causes of vio-
17 lence, violent conflict, and fragility in fragile and vi-
18 olence-affected countries.

19 **SEC. 4. GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO REDUCE FRAGILITY AND VI-**
20 **OLENCE.**

21 (a) INITIATIVE.—The Administrator of the United
22 States Agency for International Development (USAID), in
23 coordination with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of
24 Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies
25 and departments, shall establish an interagency initiative

1 to be referred to as the “Global Initiative to Reduce Fra-
2 gility and Violence” relating to reducing and addressing
3 the causes of violence, violent conflict, and fragility, with
4 a focus on ten pilot countries.

5 (b) IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.—Not later than
6 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
7 Administrator of USAID, in coordination with the Sec-
8 retary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the heads
9 of other relevant Federal agencies and departments, shall
10 develop and submit to the appropriate congressional com-
11 mittees an initial interagency strategy for implementing
12 the Global Initiative to Reduce Fragility and Violence re-
13 quired under subsection (a), including the following:

14 (1) Descriptions of the organizational steps
15 each relevant Federal agency or department will
16 take to improve strategic planning, implementation,
17 monitoring, evaluation, and coordination among and
18 within such agencies and departments under such
19 initiative.

20 (2) Descriptions of the initial goals, objectives,
21 and role of each relevant Federal agency or depart-
22 ment under such initiative.

23 (3) Descriptions of the steps each relevant Fed-
24 eral agency or department will take to improve co-
25 ordination and collaboration with international devel-

1 opment organizations, international donors, multilat-
2 eral organizations, and the private sector under such
3 initiative.

4 (4) Descriptions of potential areas of improved
5 public and private sector research and development,
6 including from academic, philanthropic, and civil so-
7 ciety organizations, on more effective approaches to
8 reducing and preventing the causes of violence, vio-
9 lent conflict, and fragility in fragile and violence-af-
10 fected countries.

11 (5) Plans for regularly evaluating and updating
12 on an iterative basis the information described in
13 this subsection.

14 (c) **INDIVIDUAL PILOT COUNTRY PLANS.**—The strat-
15 egy required under subsection (b) shall contain an annex
16 identifying the ten pilot countries designated pursuant to
17 subsection (d), and for each such pilot country contain a
18 mission-led, 10-year pilot country plan establishing initial
19 goals, objectives, and plans of action for United States
20 Government activities, including development, security,
21 and other assistance activities that are relevant to reduc-
22 ing and addressing the causes of violence, violent conflict,
23 and fragility, including the following:

24 (1) Interagency plans for coordination and im-
25 plementation that define the appropriate role of each

1 relevant Federal agency or department and proc-
2 esses for coordinating among and within such agen-
3 cies and departments when carrying out each such
4 pilot country plan.

5 (2) Interagency plans to ensure appropriate
6 local actors, including governance and civil society
7 entities, and organizations led by women, youth, and
8 under-represented communities have roles in devel-
9 oping, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and
10 updating relevant aspects of each such pilot country
11 plan.

12 (3) Clear, transparent, and measurable initial
13 political, diplomatic, security, and developmental
14 benchmarks, timetables, and performance metrics
15 for each such pilot country, with a focus on outcome
16 metrics, including such metrics that capture griev-
17 ances and patterns that cause violence and, where
18 applicable, align with best practice indicators deter-
19 mined by Sustainable Development Goal #16 and
20 the OECD Development Assistance Committee's
21 Fragility Framework.

22 (4) Interagency plans for monitoring and eval-
23 uation, adaptive management, and iterative learning
24 that provide for regular and iterative policy and pro-
25 gram adaptations based on monitoring and evalua-

1 tion findings and other evidence generated in each
2 such pilot country and across such pilot countries.

3 (5) Descriptions of the available policy tools to
4 reduce and address the causes of violence, violent
5 conflict, and fragility in each such pilot country.

6 (6) Descriptions of the resources and authori-
7 ties that would be required for each relevant Federal
8 agency or department to best implement each such
9 pilot country plan, as well as evidence-based iterative
10 updates to such plans.

11 (7) Descriptions of potential areas of improved
12 partnership between the United States Government
13 and international development organizations, rel-
14 evant international donors, multilateral organiza-
15 tions, and the private sector regarding efforts to re-
16 duce and address the causes of violence, violent con-
17 flict, and fragility in each such pilot country.

18 (8) Plans for regularly evaluating and updating
19 on an iterative basis the plans described in this sub-
20 section.

21 (d) PILOT COUNTRY DESIGNATION.—The Adminis-
22 trator of USAID, in coordination with the Secretary of
23 State and the Secretary of Defense, shall carry out the
24 following actions:

1 (1) Develop the list of candidate countries
2 under consideration for the initiative required under
3 this section on the basis of the following:

4 (A) Current levels of violence, violent con-
5 flict, and fragility, as determined by empirical
6 data, such as the following, to the extent such
7 data are available:

8 (i) Total levels of deaths due to vio-
9 lence and violence-related deaths per
10 100,000 population in the candidate coun-
11 try under consideration.

12 (ii) Total levels of violent injuries and
13 violence exposure levels in such country.

14 (iii) Violent injuries and violence expo-
15 sure levels per 100,000 population in such
16 country.

17 (iv) Levels of persons forcibly dis-
18 placed, whether internally or internation-
19 ally, due to violence or violent conflict in
20 such country.

21 (v) Total levels of gender-based vio-
22 lence and violence against children and
23 youth in such country.

1 (vi) Prevalence of physical or sexual
2 violence in the last 12 months in such
3 country.

4 (vii) Levels of mortality due to armed
5 group violence in such country.

6 (viii) Levels of citizen support for
7 armed groups in such country.

8 (ix) Such country's ranking on select
9 global fragility lists and select good govern-
10 ance indexes.

11 (x) Such country's ranking on select
12 United States Government conflict and
13 atrocity early warning watch lists.

14 (xi) Such country's vulnerability to
15 current or future transnational threats.

16 (B) An assessment of the potential for
17 United States Government activities to reduce
18 and address the causes of violence, violent con-
19 flict, and fragility in each candidate country
20 under consideration, including the capacity and
21 commitment of relevant entities within each
22 such country to participate in the Global Initia-
23 tive to Reduce Fragility and Violence under this
24 section.

1 (2) Organize such candidate countries under
2 consideration into the categories of “Core Country”
3 and “Prevention Country” such that—

4 (A) a candidate country shall be a Core
5 Country for purposes of pilot country selection
6 where current levels of violence, violent conflict,
7 and fragility are highest in the world, as deter-
8 mined by the data specified in paragraph (1);
9 and

10 (B) a candidate country shall be a Preven-
11 tion Country for purposes of pilot country selec-
12 tion where current levels of violence, violent
13 conflict, and fragility are lower than such levels
14 in a Core Country, as determined by the data
15 specified in paragraph (1), but warning signs
16 for future violence, violent conflict, and fragility
17 are significant and strategic prevention efforts
18 are likely to make a meaningful difference in
19 mitigating or preventing future violence, violent
20 conflict, and fragility.

21 (3) Designate, on the basis of the criteria speci-
22 fied in paragraph (1), 10 pilot countries, organized
23 with not fewer than three countries in each of the
24 Core and Prevention categories described in para-
25 graph (2) and not more than four countries in each

1 geographic region, as determined by the Department
2 of State.

3 (4) Consider when making designations pursu-
4 ant to paragraph (3) designating multiple countries
5 in the same region if the drivers of violence, violent
6 conflict, and fragility are transnational in such re-
7 gion.

8 (e) STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.—In addition to
9 the individuals specified in subsection (a), the initiative
10 required under this section shall be developed in coordina-
11 tion with—

12 (1) the United States Ambassador, USAID
13 Mission Director, geographic Combatant Commands,
14 and relevant inter-agency country teams in each ap-
15 plicable country; and

16 (2) representatives of local civil society and na-
17 tional and local governance entities, as well as rel-
18 evant international development organizations, mul-
19 tilateral organizations, donors, and relevant private,
20 academic, and philanthropic entities, as appropriate.

21 (f) CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION.—The Adminis-
22 trator of USAID, in coordination with the Secretary of
23 State and Secretary of Defense (or their respective des-
24 ignees), shall provide briefings to the appropriate congres-
25 sional committees not later than—

1 (1) 45 days after the date of the enactment of
2 this Act regarding the countries selected as pilot
3 countries for the initiative required under this sec-
4 tion;

5 (2) 90 days after such date of enactment re-
6 garding progress on the individual pilot country
7 plans under subsection (c); and

8 (3) 30 days after submission of such initiative
9 regarding plans for implementing such initiative and
10 such individual pilot country plans.

11 (g) MEASURING VIOLENCE, VIOLENT CONFLICT, AND
12 FRAGILITY.—For the purposes of implementing, moni-
13 toring, and evaluating the effectiveness of the individual
14 pilot country plans required under subsection (c), progress
15 towards reducing and addressing the causes of violence,
16 violent conflict, and fragility shall be measured by indica-
17 tors established for each such pilot country by relevant
18 inter-agency country teams in each such pilot country, in-
19 formed by consultations with the stakeholders specified in
20 subsection (e)(2). Such indicators shall be based on the
21 data described in subsection (d)(1)(A), as appropriate,
22 and updated regularly to account for any improvements
23 in the available indicators and to include indicators for
24 additional priority areas, such as:

1 (1) Improving inclusive, transparent, and ac-
2 countable power structures, including effective, le-
3 gitimate, and resilient national and sub-national in-
4 stitutions.

5 (2) Improving effective and respected conflict
6 prevention, mitigation, management, and resolution
7 mechanisms.

8 (3) Reducing levels of citizen support for vio-
9 lence, violent extremism, and adversarial armed
10 groups.

11 (4) Ensuring strong foundations for plurality,
12 non-discrimination, human rights, rule of law, and
13 equal access to justice.

14 (5) Addressing political, social, economic, and
15 environmental vulnerabilities, grievances, and con-
16 flicts.

17 (6) Ensuring inclusive economic development
18 and enabling business environments.

19 (7) Improving resilience to transnational
20 stresses and shocks, including from organized crime
21 and violent extremist organizations.

22 **SEC. 5. IMPLEMENTATION AND UPDATES OF PILOT COUN-**
23 **TRY PLANS.**

24 The Administrator of the United States Agency for
25 International Development (USAID), the Secretary of

1 State, the Secretary of Defense, the heads of other rel-
2 evant Federal agencies and departments, relevant United
3 States Ambassadors, USAID Mission Directors, and other
4 relevant individuals with responsibility over activities in
5 each pilot country designated pursuant to section 4 shall
6 ensure that—

7 (1) the Global Initiative to Reduce Fragility
8 and Violence and each individual pilot country plan
9 required under such section are implemented and
10 updated on a regular and iterative basis;

11 (2) such initiative and individual pilot country
12 plans are used to guide United States Government
13 policy at a senior level and are incorporated into rel-
14 evant strategies and plans across the United States
15 Government and in each such pilot country;

16 (3) detailed and iterative goals, objectives, and
17 plans of action are developed, implemented, updated,
18 and coordinated among and within each relevant
19 Federal agency or department for the duration of
20 each such individual pilot country plan;

21 (4) resources for all relevant activities in each
22 such pilot country are requested and utilized con-
23 sistent with such initiative and individual pilot coun-
24 try plans; and

1 (5) the results of program monitoring and eval-
2 uation under such initiative and individual pilot
3 country plans are regularly reviewed and utilized to
4 determine continuation, modification, or termination
5 of future year programming and that regular and
6 iterative policy and program adaptations are made
7 to each such plan.

8 **SEC. 6. BIENNIAL REPORTS AND CONGRESSIONAL CON-**
9 **SULTATION.**

10 (a) BIENNIAL REPORTS.—Not later than two years
11 after the date of the enactment of this Act and every two
12 years thereafter until full implementation of the 10-year
13 individual pilot country plans required under section 4, the
14 Administrator of the United States Agency for Inter-
15 national Development (USAID), in coordination with the
16 Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the
17 heads of other relevant Federal agencies and departments,
18 shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees
19 a report on progress made and lessons learned with re-
20 spect to the Global Initiative to Reduce Fragility and Vio-
21 lence and each individual pilot country plan required
22 under section 4, including—

23 (1) descriptions of steps taken to incorporate
24 such initiative and such individual pilot country

1 plans into relevant strategies and plans that affect
2 such pilot countries;

3 (2) accountings of all funding received and obli-
4 gated to implement each such individual pilot coun-
5 try plan during the past two years, as well as fund-
6 ing requested, planned, and projected for the fol-
7 lowing two years;

8 (3) descriptions of progress made towards the
9 goals and objectives established for each such indi-
10 vidual pilot country, including progress made to-
11 wards achieving the specific targets, metrics, and in-
12 dicators described in section 4; and

13 (4) descriptions of updates made during the
14 past two years to the goals, objectives, plans of ac-
15 tion, and other elements described in section 4(c) for
16 each such individual pilot country plan, as well as
17 any changes made to programs based on the results
18 of monitoring and evaluation in accordance with sec-
19 tions 4 and 5.

20 (b) CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION.—The Adminis-
21 trator of USAID, the Secretary of State, the Secretary
22 of Defense, and the heads of other relevant Federal agen-
23 cies and departments shall jointly consult with the appro-
24 priate congressional committees not less often than annu-
25 ally regarding progress made on the initiative and indi-

1 vidual pilot country plans required under section 4. The
2 consultation requirement under this subsection shall ter-
3 minate upon full implementation of the 10-year individual
4 pilot country plans required under such section.

5 **SEC. 7. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING ASSISTANCE FOR**
6 **THE GLOBAL FRAGILITY AND VIOLENCE RE-**
7 **DUCTION INITIATIVE.**

8 It is the sense of Congress that the President, to-
9 gether with the Administrator of the United States Agency
10 for International Development (USAID), the Secretary of
11 State, the Secretary of Defense, and the heads of other
12 relevant Federal agencies and departments, should—

13 (1) support the creation of a “Global Fragility
14 and Violence Reduction Fund” to help support
15 USAID and Department of State activities under
16 the Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Initia-
17 tive and individual pilot country plans required
18 under section 4;

19 (2) work with Congress to provide funding that
20 allows for more adaptive program planning and im-
21 plementation under such initiative and individual
22 pilot country plans, including through exemptions
23 from specific and minimum funding levels when such
24 exemptions would make programs better able to re-

1 spond to monitoring and evaluation or changed cir-
2 cumstances in relevant countries;

3 (3) work with Congress to provide funding that
4 better integrates conflict and violence reduction ac-
5 tivities into other program areas where appropriate;
6 and

7 (4) support the creation of a multilateral fund
8 and other international initiatives to improve global
9 public and private support for coordinating and
10 funding efforts to reduce and address the causes of
11 violence, violent conflict, and fragility.

12 **SEC. 8. GAO REVIEW.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than five years after the
14 date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
15 of the United States shall conduct an independent review
16 of all United States Government activities in each pilot
17 country designated pursuant to section 4.

18 (b) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—The review re-
19 quired under subsection (a) shall include the following:

20 (1) An assessment of the extent to which
21 United States Government activities in each pilot
22 country designated pursuant to section 4 are being
23 implemented in accordance with the relevant indi-
24 vidual pilot country plan required under such sec-
25 tion.

1 (2) Descriptions of all activities that are being
2 implemented in accordance with each such individual
3 pilot country plan, including, with respect to each
4 such activity, the role of each relevant Federal agen-
5 cy or department, the entities responsible for imple-
6 mentation, and the funding level.

7 (3) Assessments of the processes and proce-
8 dures for coordinating among and within each rel-
9 evant Federal agency or department when imple-
10 menting each such individual pilot country plan.

11 (4) Assessments of the monitoring and evalua-
12 tion efforts under each such individual pilot country
13 plan, including assessments of the progress made
14 and lessons learned with respect to each such plan,
15 as well as any changes made to activities based on
16 the results of such monitoring and evaluation.

17 (5) Recommendations for changes necessary to
18 better implement United States Government activi-
19 ties in accordance with such individual pilot country
20 plans, as well as recommendations for any changes
21 to such plans.

22 **SEC. 9. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-**
23 **FINED.**

24 The term “appropriate congressional committees”
25 means—

1 (1) the Committees on Foreign Relations,
2 Armed Services, and Appropriations of the Senate;
3 and

4 (2) the Committees on Foreign Affairs, Armed
5 Services, and Appropriations of the House of Rep-
6 resentatives.

○