

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6196

To authorize and encourage the United States to pursue a model of locally led development and humanitarian response and expand engagement with local actors and increase its local partner base.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 20, 2025

Ms. JACOBS (for herself and Mrs. KIM) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To authorize and encourage the United States to pursue a model of locally led development and humanitarian response and expand engagement with local actors and increase its local partner base.

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 “Locally Led Develop-
5 ment and Humanitarian Response Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 The purpose of this Act is to encourage the United
8 States to pursue a model of locally led development and

1 humanitarian response and expand engagement and part-
2 nership with local actors.

3 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

4 It is the sense of Congress that—

5 (1) locally led development and humanitarian
6 response is linked to more efficient and sustainable
7 development and humanitarian outcomes, and is
8 vital to building long-term self-reliance;

9 (2) over multiple Administrations, the United
10 States Government has sought to achieve greater de-
11 velopment outcomes through stronger local partner-
12 ships, including through “Country Ownership”,
13 “The Journey to Self-Reliance”, and “Locally Led
14 Development”;

15 (3) the relevant foreign assistance agency
16 should increase the proportion of direct funding to
17 local entities, including by increasing the amount of
18 development and humanitarian assistance to such
19 entities;

20 (4) the relevant foreign assistance agency
21 should ensure its programming enables local commu-
22 nities to exercise leadership over priorities, project
23 design, implementation, and measuring and evalu-
24 ating results of such programs;

1 (5) the relevant foreign assistance agency
2 should ensure most awards, requests for proposals,
3 and requests for applications outline expectations for
4 implementers to elevate local leadership and hold im-
5 plementers to account for elevating local leadership;

6 (6) working with local partners requires more
7 time, staffing, and flexibility of resources than tradi-
8 tional partners, including extended availability of
9 funds and additional staff resources; and

10 (7) increased flexibility is critical to respond to
11 local priorities and leverage local capacities, includ-
12 ing with respect to staffing, availability of funds,
13 program design, and acquisition and assistance proc-
14 esses, among other areas.

15 **SEC. 4. WORKING WITH LOCAL PARTNERS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—To the extent feasible and appro-
17 priate, the head of the relevant foreign assistance agency
18 should localize the development and humanitarian assist-
19 ance partner base by considering—

20 (1) supporting and funding existing effective
21 local projects and initiatives;

22 (2) simplifying and increasing access to United
23 States foreign assistance resources for local partners
24 in humanitarian and development sectors, including
25 local partners who have relations, agency, or power

1 structures in place that have produced, or can
2 produce, strong trust, accountability, and legitimacy
3 in the communities or networks such partners work
4 in;

5 (3) setting realistic goals and timelines for
6 sunseting assistance and adhering to existing agree-
7 ment totals and timelines to incentivize self-reliance
8 and encourage exit plans with appropriate notice;

9 (4) exploring offering matching grants and in-
10 kind contributions to ensure that United States Gov-
11 ernment investments in local partners are helping
12 generate new resources of their own from other do-
13 nors;

14 (5) exploring government-to-government part-
15 nerships with adequate guardrails and oversight, in
16 consultation with local civil society, with select coun-
17 tries where feasible and practical to enhance foreign
18 governments' ability to deliver good governance,
19 service delivery, and public goods that benefit local
20 communities;

21 (6) exploring other types of funding modalities
22 and types of partnerships with local and national ac-
23 tors, including support for pooled funding mecha-
24 nisms and unsolicited projects;

1 (7) diversifying award types to streamline per-
2 formance requirements and working with the Office
3 of Management and Budget to address threshold
4 constraints that pose a barrier to effectively sup-
5 porting local partners;

6 (8) ensuring staff of the relevant foreign assist-
7 ance agency is able and encouraged to conduct reg-
8 ular consultation with local partners in local lan-
9 guages of the host countries relating to policies and
10 programs, including making available solicitations
11 for acquisitions and assistance and accepting sub-
12 missions in local languages, video format, or verbal
13 presentations, including by—

14 (A) investing in translation services;

15 (B) hosting workshop-based engagements;

16 and

17 (C) advertising solicitations in local trade
18 publications, local media including newspapers
19 and radio, local community centers, and local
20 online forums;

21 (9) allowing and promoting multi-year, flexible,
22 tiered and milestone-based funding for new pro-
23 grams and to bring successful programs to scale;

1 (10) utilizing “other transaction authority”
2 through innovation incentive awards for local and
3 national actors;

4 (11) supporting consistent and unimpeded ac-
5 cess to full cost recovery for local partners imple-
6 menting United States foreign assistance activities;

7 (12) undertaking outreach campaigns and en-
8 gaging with local actors, formally and informally, to
9 raise awareness about opportunities, as well as how
10 to apply for and manage awards in compliance with
11 applicable Federal regulations and the relevant for-
12 eign assistance agency policies, and ensuring such
13 engagement is accessible to all entities, including un-
14 registered and informal organizations;

15 (13) strengthening oversight of capacity
16 strengthening components of awards to ensure
17 United States and international awardees are mak-
18 ing good-faith efforts to strengthen local organiza-
19 tions’ capacities, including independent and external
20 evaluations to evaluate the mentorship process and
21 regular feedback loops;

22 (14) ensuring there are sufficient acquisition
23 and assistance personnel;

24 (15) soliciting feedback on and updating, as
25 necessary, performance evaluation criteria to create

1 greater workforce incentives for the relevant foreign
2 assistance agency personnel to champion locally led
3 development;

4 (16) addressing internal delays and recipient
5 organization issues that result in the required exten-
6 sion of provisional Negotiated Indirect Cost Rates
7 (NICRAs);

8 (17) conducting seminars and providing docu-
9 mentation in local languages on NICRA, the de
10 minimis indirect cost rate, and other options for in-
11 direct cost recovery relevant to the award type; and

12 (18) ensuring that acquisition and assistance
13 personnel communicate to awardees who do not sub-
14 mit for a NICRA that they are eligible for the de
15 minimis indirect cost rate.

16 **SEC. 5. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ACTIONS DESCRIBED IN**
17 **SECTION 4.**

18 Not later than 180 days after the date of the enact-
19 ment of this Act, the head of the relevant foreign assist-
20 ance agency shall initiate policy actions, including rule-
21 making if necessary, to institutionalize the actions de-
22 scribed in section 4 to the extent appropriate and feasible
23 within all relevant foreign assistance agency internal rules
24 and regulations, including the Foreign Affairs Manual, the
25 Foreign Affairs Handbook, and the Department of State

1 Acquisition Regulation, as well as other relevant strategies
2 and policies.

3 **SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS, PRO-**
4 **POSALS, AND CONTRACTING AGREEMENTS IN**
5 **LOCAL LANGUAGES AND LOCAL LANGUAGE**
6 **SUPPORT.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
8 sion of law, the relevant foreign assistance agency is au-
9 thorized to accept applications or proposals in languages
10 other than English if such acceptance eases the burden
11 of a local actor working with such agency and such agency
12 is able to effectively evaluate such applications or pro-
13 posals.

14 (b) LOCAL LANGUAGE SUPPORT.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The head of the relevant for-
16 eign assistance agency shall conduct an assessment
17 of options to enable such agency to utilize local lan-
18 guages to support local partners with award solicita-
19 tions, proposals and applications, evaluations, man-
20 agement, close out, and other types of partnerships,
21 including advising local partners on applicable
22 United States regulations and the relevant foreign
23 assistance agency policies and local country rules
24 and regulations common in such activities.

1 (2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the
2 date of the enactment of this Act, the head of the
3 relevant foreign assistance agency shall submit to
4 Congress a report on the assessment described in
5 this subsection.

6 **SEC. 7. MODIFICATIONS RELATING TO THE CODE OF FED-**
7 **ERAL REGULATIONS AND OTHER REQUIRE-**
8 **MENTS.**

9 (a) INCREASE IN THE DE MINIMIS INDIRECT
10 COST.—The head of the relevant foreign assistance agency
11 is authorized to—

12 (1) increase the de minimis indirect cost rate
13 provided for in section 200.414 of title 2, Code of
14 Federal Regulations, or any successor regulations,
15 by 5 percentage points for local partners receiving
16 assistance awards from the agency; and

17 (2) establish a de minimis indirect cost rate at
18 the same rate provided for in paragraph (1) for ac-
19 quisitions awarded under title 48 of the Code of
20 Federal Regulations to local partners, and to in-
21 crease this threshold further should subsequent Of-
22 fice of Management and Budget regulations rec-
23 ommend doing so.

24 (b) EXEMPTION FOR LOCAL ENTITIES.—The head of
25 the relevant foreign assistance agency is authorized to ex-

1 empt local partners, as needed, from the reporting require-
2 ments of the Federal Funding Accountability and Trans-
3 parency Act of 2006 (31 U.S.C. 6106 note; Public Law
4 109–282) to allow for a 180-day delay in obtaining a
5 unique entity identifier and registration in the System for
6 Award Management. This delay shall be no later than 30
7 days prior to the end of the award’s period of perform-
8 ance.

9 (c) LOCAL COMPETITION AUTHORITY.—Notwith-
10 standing any other provision of law, the head of the rel-
11 evant foreign assistance agency (or their designees) may
12 award contracts and other acquisition instruments in
13 which competition is limited to local entities if doing so
14 would result in cost savings, strengthen local capacity, or
15 enable the agency to deliver programs or activities more
16 sustainably or quickly than if competition were not so lim-
17 ited. Such authority may not be used to make acquisition
18 awards in excess of \$25,000,000 and shall not exceed
19 more than 10 percent of the amounts appropriated to the
20 relevant foreign assistance agency each fiscal year.

21 (d) USE OF NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL GEN-
22 ERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES.—The head
23 of the relevant foreign assistance agency, in consultation
24 with the Administrator of the General Services Adminis-
25 tration, the Secretary of Defense, and the Administrator

1 of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, is
2 authorized to allow foreign entities to use national or
3 international generally accepted accounting principles in-
4 stead of United States Generally Accepted Accounting
5 Principles (GAAP) for contracts or grants awarded under
6 the chapter 7 of title 48, Code of Federal Regulations or
7 chapter 7 of title 2, Code of Federal Regulations.

8 **SEC. 8. REVIEW OF LOCALLY-LED DEVELOPMENT IN PUB-**
9 **LIC INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.**

10 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment
11 of this Act, the head of the relevant foreign assistance
12 agency shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
13 mittees a review of public international organizations' sup-
14 port for locally-led development, to include the following
15 elements:

16 (1) An assessment of how such organizations'
17 approaches and financing structures support locally-
18 led development and humanitarian response.

19 (2) An action plan for how the United States
20 will use its position in such organizations to encour-
21 age greater focus on locally-led approaches.

22 **SEC. 9. ANNUAL REPORT.**

23 Not later than 1 year after the end of the first fiscal
24 year following the date of the enactment of this Act, and
25 annually thereafter, the head of the relevant foreign assist-

1 assistance agency shall submit to the appropriate congressional
2 committees and publish on the agency's website a report
3 on the agency's progress to advance locally led develop-
4 ment and humanitarian response, to include the following
5 elements:

6 (1) The amount of funding implemented di-
7 rectly and indirectly by local partners, including to
8 local and national nonprofit organizations, local and
9 national governments, and local and national private
10 sector entities, in the previous fiscal year, including
11 all development and humanitarian assistance pro-
12 grams.

13 (2) An assessment of how the agency is ena-
14 bling more local leadership of foreign assistance pro-
15 grams, including recipients of direct funding, sub-
16 recipients and subcontractors to an international im-
17 plementing partner, participants in an agency pro-
18 gram, or members of a community affected by such
19 programming.

20 (3) An assessment of how the relevant foreign
21 assistance agency is using new authorities granted in
22 sections 6 and 7 and an assessment of the impact
23 of these authorities on such agency's ability to work
24 with local partners and communities.

1 (4) An assessment of how many organizations
2 with a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) cog-
3 nizant to the relevant foreign assistance agency are
4 utilizing provisional NICRAs for over 48 months
5 without a final NICRA and steps that such agency
6 can take to reduce the extension of provisional
7 NICRAs beyond 12 months.

8 **SEC. 10. REPORT ON CONTRACTING OFFICERS.**

9 Not later than 180 days after the enactment of this
10 Act, the head of the relevant foreign assistance agency
11 shall provide a report to the appropriate congressional
12 committees on the recruitment and retention of con-
13 tracting officers and grant officers at such agency and rec-
14 ommendations to improve contracting/agreement officer
15 recruitment and retention.

16 **SEC. 11. DEFINITIONS.**

17 In this Act:

18 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
19 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
20 mittees” means—

21 (A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and
22 the Committee on Appropriations of the House
23 of Representatives; and

1 (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations
2 and the Committee on Appropriations of the
3 Senate.

4 (2) LOCAL PARTNER.—The term “local part-
5 ner” means—

6 (A) an individual who is a citizen or law-
7 fully admitted permanent resident of and have
8 his or her principal place of business in the
9 country or region receiving United States for-
10 eign assistance with which the individual is or
11 may become involved;

12 (B) a sole proprietorship that is owned by
13 such an individual that meets the requirements
14 of subparagraph (A); or

15 (C) an entity that—

16 (i) is incorporated or legally organized
17 under the laws of, and have its principal
18 place of business in, the country served by
19 the program with which the entity is in-
20 volved or in a country within the same re-
21 gion as the program with which the entity
22 is involved;

23 (ii) determines its own autonomous
24 leadership and governance structures, sets
25 its own strategic direction, priorities, and

1 programmatic focus, and makes inde-
2 pendent financial decisions separately from
3 an international organization;

4 (iii) if it has a Board of Directors, has
5 51 percent or more board directors who
6 are citizens or lawfully permanent resi-
7 dents of such country or a country within
8 the same region; and

9 (iv) if it is a corporation, is 75 per-
10 cent beneficially owned at the time of ap-
11 plication by individuals who are citizens or
12 lawfully admitted permanent residents of
13 that same country.

14 (3) RELEVANT FOREIGN ASSISTANCE AGEN-
15 CY.—The term “relevant foreign assistance agency”
16 means the department or agency designated as pri-
17 marily responsible for implementing the United
18 States foreign assistance under part I of the Foreign
19 Assistance Act of 1961.

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