



EXPLANATORY NOTES

International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014

Chapter 9

£4.00

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GENDER EQUALITY) ACT 2014

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. These explanatory notes relate to the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014 which received Royal Assent on 13th March 2014. It was introduced as a Private Member's Bill by Mr William Cash, Member of Parliament for Stone. The Explanatory Notes have been prepared by the Department for International Development to assist the reader in understanding the Act. They do not form part of the Act and have not been endorsed by Parliament.

2. The notes need to be read in conjunction with the Act. They are not, and are not meant to be, a comprehensive description of the Act. So where a section or part of a section does not seem to require any explanation or comment, none is given.

BACKGROUND

3. The Act amends the International Development Act 2002 ("the 2002 Act"). The effect of the amendments to the 2002 Act is to require the Secretary of State before providing development assistance to consider whether the proposed assistance will reduce poverty in a way which is also likely to contribute to reducing gender inequality, and similarly to take account of gender-related needs before the Secretary of State provides humanitarian assistance overseas. The Act also introduces an additional reporting duty in the International Development (Reporting and Transparency) Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act").

4. There are no delegated powers in the Act and it does not affect any other delegated powers.

TERRITORIAL EXTENT

5. The Act extends to England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Section 1: Duty to have regard to gender inequality

6. Subsection (1) of section 1 of the 2002 Act allows the Secretary of State to provide development assistance to countries and territories outside the United Kingdom if the Secretary of State is satisfied that such assistance is likely to contribute to a reduction in poverty. Reduction in poverty must therefore be the aim of development assistance given under section 1.

7. *Subsection (2)* of section 1 of the Act provides that, before providing development assistance under section 1 of the 2002 Act, the Secretary of State shall have regard to the desirability of providing development assistance that is likely to contribute to reducing poverty in a way which is likely to contribute to reducing inequality between persons of different gender. Development assistance must still be likely to contribute to a reduction in poverty, and nothing in the Act changes that.

8. Section 3 of the 2002 Act allows the Secretary of State to provide assistance for the purpose of alleviating the effects of a natural or man-made disaster or other emergency on the population of countries outside the United Kingdom.

9. *Subsection (3)* of section 1 of the Act provides that, before providing assistance under section 3 of the 2002 Act, the Secretary of State shall have regard to the desirability of providing assistance in a way that takes account of any gender-related differences in the needs of the affected population. The assistance must still be for the purpose of alleviating the effects on the population of the disaster or emergency.

10. *Subsection (4)* of section 1 of the Act provides that actions taken before the passing of the Act may satisfy the two duties imposed in subsections (2) and (3). The effect is that if, in developing an assistance programme, the Secretary of State has in fact already taken account of the matter as required by the duties imposed by those subsections, then the fact that that was done *before* the Act comes into force does not matter.

Section 2: Annual reporting

11. *Section 2* amends the 2006 Act by adding a duty to report on what steps have been taken as a result of the duties imposed by section 1 in pursuing Millennium Development Goal 3, which is to “promote gender equality and empower women”.

Section 3: Short title, commencement and extent

12. *Subsection (1)* sets out the short title for the Act. *Subsection (2)* provides for the Act to come into force two months after Royal Assent. *Subsection (3)* sets out the extent of the Act (for which see paragraph 5 above).

HANSARD REFERENCES

13. The following table sets out the dates and Hansard references for each stage of the Act's passage through Parliament.

Stage	Date	Hansard reference
House of Commons		
Introduction	19 June 2013	Vol. 564 Col. 940
Second Reading	13 September 2013	Vol. 567 Col. 1347
Committee	11 December 2013	Hansard Public Bill Committee
Report and Third Reading	17 January 2014	Vol. 573 Cols. 1119-1137
House of Lords		
Introduction	20 January 2014	Vol. 751 Col. 456
Second Reading	7 February 2014	Vol. 752 Cols. 375-391
Order of Commitment discharged	25 February 2014	Vol. 752 Col. 832
Third Reading	4 March 2014	Vol. 752 Col. 1223
Royal Assent	13 March 2014	Lords: Vol. 752 Col. 1855 Commons: Vol. 577 Col. 455

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