

G7/G20 ADVOCACY ALLIANCE (U.S.)

G7 GENDER EQUALITY RECOMMENDATIONS

2021 G7 Summit: Carbis Bay, Cornwall, United Kingdom

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This year, the global community will gather at the Generation Equality Forum (GEF) to make commitments and drive urgently needed progress towards achieving gender equality. We urge the U.S. Government to align its commitments at the 2021 G7 with the themes of the GEF's six Action Coalitions (ACs), as follows:

1. Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

- a. Dedicate at least 2% of ODA to GBV prevention, mitigation, and response, including as essential services in all pandemic response plans¹, and at least 25% of GBV funding to women's rights and feminist organizations.² Ensure access to shelters and comprehensive and inclusive support services for all women and girls facing violence.
- b. Ratify ILO Convention 190 on the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work, and incorporate core elements into trade and international assistance programs and policies.³
- c. Urgently increase investments and focus on ending child marriage globally in both humanitarian and development settings.

2. Economic Justice and Rights

- a. Invest at least 2% of GDP into social infrastructure domestically, and 2% of ODA into social infrastructure globally, to reduce women's unpaid care burdens and increase jobs.⁴
- b. Ensure paid, safe, and decent work and work facilities for health and care workers, a majority of whom are women, as part of commitments to COVAX.
- c. Ensure economic empowerment initiatives reach the most marginalized women affected by crisis and conflict, in line with the joint G7/G5 Sahel Communique commitments⁵ and promoting women's entrepreneurship in Africa⁶—as committed to during the G7 in 2019.

3. Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

- a. Safeguard the basic right of and access to essential healthcare, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services and information, for all people.

4. Feminist Action for Climate Justice

- a. Ensure that at least 20% of ‘principal’ and 100% of ‘significant’ climate funding promotes gender equality.⁷
- b. Directly support women’s rights organizations and eco-feminist efforts, including in countries most impacted by the climate crisis, and integrate gender considerations into all climate change plans and initiatives.

5. Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality

- a. Support countries in combating technology-facilitated gender-based violence, protecting women, girls, and LGBTQIA+ persons from online harassment and abuse.⁸

6. Feminist Movements and Leadership

- a. Commit to achieving 20% of ODA for gender equality as a ‘principal’ and 100% as a ‘principal’ or ‘significant objective’ within 5 years.⁹
- b. Announce intention to draft a feminist foreign policy, in line with commitments from other G7 members, Canada, France, and the European Union.
- c. Increase funding and programming in support of adolescent girls’ civic and political participation and skills building.

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated gender, racial, social, and economic inequalities in the United States and worldwide. Women are more likely to be employed in sectors hardest hit by the pandemic, particularly the informal sector, and lack adequate access to social protection.¹⁰ At the front lines of our current health crisis, women make up 70% of the global health workforce and are overwhelmingly responsible for paid and unpaid care work, and often lack access to safe and dignified facilities.¹¹ As health systems strain, so too does women’s and girls’ access to essential services like SRHR. Research finds that in low- and middle-income countries, a 10% drop in reproductive health services due to COVID-19 could result in 15 million unintended pregnancies, 28,000 maternal deaths, and 3.3 million unsafe abortions.¹²

The COVID-19 pandemic has also increased the prevalence of GBV—now recognized as the “shadow pandemic.” Rising rates of intimate partner violence, aggravated by quarantine restrictions, make access to essential services and investing in GBV prevention and response ever more urgent. As schools, workplaces, and everyday in-person interactions move online, unfortunately so does harassment and abuse. Technology-facilitated GBV was already rampant, but becomes even more pressing in this new virtual era. Female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage are already increasing and projected to increase even more.¹³ Experts estimate an additional 13 million child marriages over the next 10 years as a result of the secondary impacts of COVID-19.¹⁴ This is in addition to the 12 million child marriages already occurring each year.¹⁵

Women and girls are critical agents of change in the ongoing climate crisis, but are continually undermined, unrecognized, and excluded from key decision-making. The COVID-19 pandemic has also laid bare the impacts of structural racism, and the overlapping disadvantages facing women and girls of color in the U.S. and worldwide. The G7 and the GEF offer opportunities for the U.S. government to reiterate its commitment to gender equality and human rights, and to implement actionable steps—like those outlined above—to “build back better” toward a more promising future.

ABOUT INTERACTION

InterAction is a convener, thought leader, and voice for NGOs working to eliminate extreme poverty, strengthen human rights and citizen participation, safeguard a sustainable planet, promote peace, and ensure dignity for all people.

¹ Civil Society FY 2022 Letter to Office of Management and Budget (29 January 2021). <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/wp-content/uploads/OMB-FY2022-FINAL.pdf>.

² W7 (2021). “W7 Policy Asks - Foreign Affairs and Development Track Consultation Document.” <https://gadnetwork.org/w7-summit>.

³ ILO (2019). “C190 - Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190).” https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C190.

⁴ As recommended by the ITUC in ITUC (3 August 2016). “Investing in the Care Economy: A Pathway to Growth.” <https://www.ituc-csi.org/investing-in-the-care-economy-a>.

⁵ G7 France. (2019 July 4). “Joint Paris G7/G5 Sahel Communiqué.” <http://www.g7.utoronto.ca/dev/2019-g7-g5.pdf>.

⁶ G7 France. (2019). “Promoting Women’s Entrepreneurship in Africa.” <https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000510612.pdf>.

⁷ OECD-DAC (2018). “Aid to gender equality and women’s empowerment: An overview.” <https://www.oecd.org/dac/gender-development/Aid-to-gender-overview-2018.pdf>; COP26 Presidency (2021). “Priorities for Public Finance in the Year Ahead.” <https://www.greengrowthknowledge.org/research/priorities-public-climate-finance-year-ahead>.

⁸ Hinson L, Mueller J, O’Brien-Milne L, Wandera N. (2018). “Technology-facilitated gender-based violence: What is it, and how do we measure it?” Washington D.C., International Center for Research on Women. https://www.icrw.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICRW_TFGBVMarketing_Brief_v8-Web.pdf.

⁹ Biglio, J. and Vogelstein, R. (June 2020). “Understanding Gender Equality in Foreign Policy: What the United States Can Do.” Council on Foreign Relations. https://cdn.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/discussion-paper_biglio-and-vogelstein_gender-equality_or_0.pdf.

¹⁰ ILO (25 January 2021). “ILO Monitor: COVID-19 and the world of work.” https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/impacts-and-responses/WCMS_767028/lang-en/index.htm.

¹¹ WHO (2019). “Delivered by women, led by men: A gender and equity analysis of the global health and social force.” https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/nursing/delivered-by-women-led-by-men.pdf?sfvrsn=94be9959_2.

¹² Riley, T., Sully, E., Ahmed, Z., and Biddlecom, A. (2020). “Estimates of the Potential Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Sexual and Reproductive Health in Low-and Middle-Income Countries.” International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health, 46: 73-76. https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/article_files/4607320.pdf.

¹³ Affoum, N. and Santagostino Recavarren, I. (9 October 2020). “Child marriage: the unspoken consequence of COVID-19.” World Bank. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/child-marriage-unspoken-consequence-covid-19>; Plan International. (6 February 2021). “COVID-19 leading to rise in group FGM gatherings in Somalia.” <https://plan-international.org/news/2021-02-06-covid-19-leading-rise-group-fgm-gatherings-somalia>; Szabo, G. and Edwards, J. (2020). “the Global Girlhood Report 2020.” Save the Children. https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/18201/pdf/global_girlhood_report_2020_africa_version_2.pdf.

¹⁴ UNFPA (27 April 2020) “Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Planning and Ending Gender-Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage.” Interim Technical Report. UNFPA. <https://www.unfpa.org/news/millions-more-cases-violence-child-marriage-female-genital-mutilation-unintended-pregnancies>.

¹⁵ UNICEF. (April 2020). “Child marriage.” <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage/#:~:text=Child%20marriage%20among%20girls&text=Still%2C%20the%20total%20number%20of,in%20the%20Sustainable%20Development%20Goals>.