



G7/G20 ADVOCACY ALLIANCE (U.S.)

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G7 POLICY PAPER

2023 G7 Summit Recommendations: Hiroshima, Japan



The 2023 G7 Summit is quickly emerging as a critical moment for G7 countries and the world. The world is at a tipping point for addressing climate change, a crisis that has far-reaching impacts that worsen global inequality, poverty, and humanitarian crises. Meanwhile, Russia’s war in Ukraine has resulted in thousands of deaths and continues to destabilize the region, creating knock-on effects for food and energy security around the globe.

The G7, a venue for addressing political and security challenges, will understandably focus much of its attention on Russia’s war in Ukraine. However, the G7 must not lose sight of the many other issues that require their attention. Tackling the climate crisis, strengthening the global health architecture, enhancing food security—these are just a few of the challenges that require a coordinated response from a strong and united G7.

The 2023 G7 Summit provides G7 leaders an opportunity to lead by example, creating a roadmap for other countries to follow and spurring collective action on global challenges.

This paper contains the recommendations of the G7/G20 Advocacy Alliance (U.S.), a group of more than 40 U.S.-based nongovernmental organizations.* Together, we call for the United States to play a leading role in encouraging the G7 to take the following actions.

CLIMATE

Lead: Adrianna Hardaway, Senior Policy Advisor, Mercy Corps (ahardaway@mercycorps.org)

We are at a critical moment in our global response to the climate crisis. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has underscored our global dependence on fossil fuels and has precipitated an energy crisis. Moreover, climate finance is increasingly driving debt distress in the Global South and not reaching the communities and nations most in need. Despite these challenges, there are opportunities to usher in a just energy transition and support those on the frontlines of climate change. The U.S. should work with other G7 members to:

1. **Develop a roadmap to operationalize the G7 leaders’ commitment to end government support for all fossil fuels through Official Development Assistance, export finance, investment, and financial and trade promotion support and accelerate the transition to renewable energy.**

*The G7/G20 Advocacy Alliance is a large coalition of organizations that work on a wide variety of issues. Given the diversity of issues presented in this policy paper, it is worth noting that each member of the Alliance does not necessarily endorse every recommendation herein.

2. **Support the Bridgetown Initiative to address debt distress and create fiscal space for countries to respond to climate impacts.**
 - a. Provide debt cancellation for all global south countries that need it across public and private creditors.
 - b. Normalize natural disaster and pandemic clauses in all debt instruments to better absorb shocks so countries are not forced to make the difficult choice of paying down their debt or building resilience to climate impacts and cutting emissions.
 - c. Provide significantly more, better-quality, new, and additional climate finance.

3. **Establish Adaptation Partnerships for those most climate-vulnerable countries upholding the following principles such that partnerships:**
 - a. Prioritize countries that are most vulnerable to climate change, including fragile and conflict-affected states.
 - b. Are country-led and designed in a transparent manner with the leadership and participation of people who are commonly marginalized in decision making and left behind when interventions are made, including people living in poverty, women, children, people with disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples.
 - c. Deliver via grants-based finance so countries are not forced into more debt to pay for the climate crisis.
 - d. Center investments in water resource management, multi-use water systems, and climate-resilient water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and services to buffer against extreme weather events and exacerbated water scarcity in programming.

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Lead: Katie LaRoque, Deputy Director for Policy and Advocacy, Freedom House
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The G7 must take the following steps to support Ukraine, blunt the influence of authoritarian states, and renew and revitalize democracy.

1. **Continue strong support for Ukraine in 2023.**
 - a. In addition to ongoing security assistance, provide the following forms of assistance to support Ukrainian victory:
 - i. Continued direct budgetary support to the Ukrainian government, with appropriate oversight, to help Ukraine withstand the economic and social shocks caused by Russia's full-scale invasion.

- ii. Support for Ukrainian civil society and journalists to document the thousands of war crimes committed as a result of Russia's full-scale invasion and provide psychosocial and legal assistance to those impacted by Russia's invasion.
 - b. Prepare for Ukraine's reconstruction and prioritize its democratic strengthening and engagement with civil society and youth leaders in the process.
 - c. Continue to hold Russia and its accomplices accountable:
 - i. Support the creation of a special international tribunal to prosecute Russian leadership for the crime of aggression.
 - ii. Intensify and better enforce sanctions against Russia, Belarus, and their respective regimes' enablers.
 - iii. Leverage confiscated Russian assets for Ukraine's reconstruction.
- 2. Further isolate authoritarian regimes.**
 - a. Increase support for civil society, democratic activists, and independent media operating in authoritarian contexts or in exile.
 - b. Further decrease reliance on authoritarian energy supplies.
 - c. Institute measures to impede authoritarians' access to funds and safe havens abroad.
- 3. Deepen commitments to democratic renewal.**
 - a. Ensure democracy equitably represents and delivers for all citizens.
 - b. Elevate democracy and human rights within G7 foreign policy and international aid, ensuring adequate funding therein.
 - c. Safeguard civic space, including an enabling legal environment, at home and abroad. Moreover, the United States should work to ensure that safeguarding civic space remains a clear and stated priority of the G7.
 - d. Defend the facts-based information sphere by supporting media literacy and free, independent, and pluralistic media, promoting universal internet access, and committing to net neutrality.
 - e. Continue to ensure transparency around elections, political financing, and political advertising.

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

Lead: Eliza Love, Senior Technical Officer, Health Financing, Management Sciences for Health
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At the 2023 G7, we urge the U.S. government to support other G7 countries to:

1. Deliver on debt relief.

- a. Cancel debt payments for all countries that need it.
- b. Extend eligibility to the Common Framework to middle-income countries.
- c. Normalize natural disaster and pandemic clauses that would automatically suspend debt payments in the wake of these systemic shocks.
- d. Immediately integrate standstills on debt service payments for all countries applying to the Common Framework for as long as they negotiate debt restructuring in good faith, requesting the International Monetary Fund (IMF) provide immediate relief by lending into arrears.
- e. Adopt national legislations requiring private creditors grant as much debt relief as official creditors.
- f. Call for multilateral development banks (MDBs) to participate in the debt relief efforts.

2. Fulfill the promise of the Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).

- a. Support the realization of at least \$100 billion rechanneled in SDRs.
- b. Work with Congress to secure authorization to lend at least \$21 billion to the two IMF trust funds: Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT) and the Resilience and Sustainability Trust. Boost subsidy grant contributions to the PRGT.
- c. Support the channeling of SDRs through alternative channels such as MDBs, including supporting donors to pledge SDRs to the African Development Bank.

3. Ensure access to effective and equitable development finance.

- a. Accelerate MDB reform through implementation of the recommendations in the Capital Adequacy Framework, Bridgetown Initiative, and the World Bank Group Evolution Roadmap to adequately scale up financing and accelerate climate action while maintaining focus on critical development goals. Ensure MDB reforms come with increased commitment to strengthening accountability and remedy for any unintended negative impacts from MDB-supported projects.
- b. Increase longer-term investments in universal health coverage, gender equality, food security, climate adaptation and resilience, education, and social protection.
- c. Support locally led development and recoveries by directing financing to local governments and organizations.
- d. Support countries to strengthen equitable domestic resource mobilization and efficient, transparent, and accountable spending.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

**Lead: Sara Nitz Nolan, Senior Manager, Policy and Advocacy, InterAction
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- 1. Immediately respond to emergent global food security needs to save lives now.**
 - a. Provide additional funding to reach communities in crisis.
 - b. Invest in anticipatory action to best scale up assistance, including food and essential lifesaving services, for millions of households facing IPC 3 levels of acute food insecurity and above.
 - c. Invest in proven nutrition treatments for severe acute malnutrition, known as Ready-to-Use therapeutic foods (RUTF), that can save hundreds of thousands of lives, including the most vulnerable—children under 5 and mothers.

- 2. Make food systems more resilient to shocks and stresses through agricultural practices that promote locally-driven solutions, cross-sectoral approaches, and more sustainable diets.**
 - a. Invest in holistic, multisectoral approaches to climate-resilient agricultural development. These investments should include innovation, which give farmers the tools to improve productivity, storage, nutrition and adapt to climate shocks, and can minimize the severity of the next disaster when it strikes, reducing the need for future humanitarian assistance.
 - b. Improve nutrition through integrated health, food, WASH, and social protection responses, and investments in high-impact and affordable nutrition interventions. This includes prenatal vitamins during pregnancy, breastfeeding promotion, vitamin A supplementation, and supporting more diverse and sustainable diets alongside investments in strengthening health systems and community health platforms that expand access to nutrition services.
 - c. Expand large scale food fortification to help reduce micronutrient deficiencies and anemia in girls and women.
 - d. Emphasize co-creation and locally-led development solutions that invest in small-scale producers and center their perspectives and experiences.
 - e. Promote the use of locally accepted nutritious foods to increase accessibility, support local markets, and respect indigenous knowledge of agricultural practices.

- 3. Invest in research to maximize innovation and prepare for food security challenges of the future.**

- a. Enhance partnerships with CGIAR to better develop and disseminate technology to small shareholder farmers.
- b. Utilize local research institutions to empower local experts to help shape sustainable agriculture strategies that are country-specific.
- c. Disaggregate agricultural, food security, and nutrition data by sex to better understand their linkages with gender inequality.

HEALTH

Co-Leads: Philip Kenol, Policy & Advocacy Officer, Global Health Technologies Coalition (pkenol@ghtcoalition.org); Ansley Moore, Manager, Advocacy & Engagement, Global Health Council (amoore@globalhealth.org)

1. **Advance the 100 Days Plus Mission by funding the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) 2.0, FIND, and public health institutes.**
 - d. Invest US\$1.8 billion in CEPI to achieve the US\$3.5 billion target to accelerate research and development of new vaccines and support equitable access to diagnostics through FIND for emerging epidemic and pandemic threats.
 - e. G7 countries should support the capacities of national and regional public health institutes in sub-Saharan Africa, including in the fields of epidemiology, disease detection, and laboratory diagnosis.
2. **Demonstrate commitment to Universal Health Care (UHC) and leave no one behind by:**
 - a. Committing to the highest political level participation at the United Nations High Level Meeting on UHC on September 21, 2023.
 - b. Making ambitious, actionable commitments as outlined in the Action Agenda from the UHC Movement.
 - c. Building synergies across the three High Level Meetings on UHC, tuberculosis, and pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, and promoting coherent, integrated, and action-oriented global health agendas.
 - d. Committing to health system strengthening efforts, including investing in the health workforce (e.g. recruitment, training, and retention of health workers, particularly in community and primary care settings).
3. **Push for the pandemic accord and International Health Regulations (IHR) processes to include strong equity, governance, and accountability provisions.**

- a. Ensure that the pandemic accord addresses the needs of vulnerable populations and health workforces, and guarantees access to medical and non-medical countermeasures, including vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and access to WASH.
- b. Ensure compliance of Member States through specific accountability, enforcement, and oversight mechanisms.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Lead: Sarah Fuhrman, Director of Humanitarian Policy, InterAction
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- 1. Reform or strengthen internal policies and procedures to close the gap between early warnings and early action.**
 - a. Simplify award processes. Drafting and submitting a funding proposal should not require weeks of work.
 - b. Provide unearmarked or, at most, softly earmarked funding so that humanitarian organizations can reprogram according to new and emerging needs.
 - c. Dedicate additional funding toward early action. This should include supporting pooled funds that could quickly fund local or international NGOs to respond.
- 2. Increase the quality and quantity of funding, particularly for local actors.**
 - a. Lead by example in implementing all Grand Bargain commitments and strongly committing to continue work through the Grand Bargain after its current mandate ends in June 2023.
 - b. Recognize the important role that local and national NGOs—particularly women-led organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities—play in meeting humanitarian needs and increase direct funding to these organizations.
 - c. Improve funding quality, increasing the proportion of awards that are flexible and multi-year.
 - d. Increase funding quantity and transparency to ensure that responses to new needs do not divert funding from existing responses.
- 3. Enable and ensure a principled humanitarian response.**
 - a. Publicly message the importance of civil society to allies and non-allies alike, encouraging other governments to see civil society as an important partner and source of support.
 - b. Adopt a principled approach for humanitarian activities through advocacy, funding, and public and private messaging.

- c. Strengthen humanitarian diplomacy within donor governments and the U.N. system to facilitate safe, unimpeded access for humanitarians to people in need and vice versa.
- d. Ensure that intermediary donors have the flexibility and support they need to partner responsibly with local and national NGOs.
- e. Prioritize humanitarian programming that accounts for the intersectional needs of traditionally marginalized groups and help strengthen appropriate protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) mechanisms.

GENDER EQUALITY

Co-Leads: Foteini Papagiotti, Senior Policy Advisor, International Center for Research on Women (fpapagiotti@icrw.org); Kelsey Harris, Senior Global Policy Advocate, International Center for Research on Women (kharris@icrw.org)

We urge the U.S. government to take up the following recommendations to promote gender equality:

1. **Advance economic justice for women, girls, and gender nonconforming people by addressing structural barriers through an intersectional lens, with a focus on unpaid care work.**
 - a. Invest an additional 2% of Official Development Assistance in principal gender equality funding that supports the reduction and redistribution of women and girls' unpaid care work, including financing for care services and infrastructure.
 - b. Invest in health and care workers, ensuring decent working conditions and wages, social protections, and their rights to collective bargaining.
 - c. Integrate gendered impact assessments into macroeconomic, trade, and investment policies, including in multilateral fora where the U.S. holds influence.
2. **Strengthen accountability to past and current commitments on gender equality and work with feminist civil society organizations to complement existing mechanisms with analysis on progress and gaps.**
 - a. Advocate for core gender data systems to support evidence-based policymaking and evaluation, and fill the [\\$500 million annual gender data financing gap](#).
 - b. Uphold U.S. and G7 gender equality commitments, including reducing the labor force participation gap by 25% by 2025, closing gender infrastructure gaps through the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment, and increasing gender-sensitive climate financing.

3. **Embrace a transformative and rights-based approach to U.S. foreign policy and multilateral engagement for sustainable and inclusive development by integrating gender equality as a key consideration.**
 - a. Ensure that 100% of all foreign policy funding integrates gender equality objectives and at least **20% of foreign aid** promotes gender equality, using an intersectional lens, as a primary objective.
 - b. Invest through and engage meaningfully with women's rights, women-led, girl-led and feminist organizations and movements, particularly locally and in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

URBANIZATION

Lead: Amanda Entrikin, Director of Global Affairs and Advocacy, Habitat for Humanity International (AEntrikin@habitat.org)

The U.N. projects that urban populations will grow by more than 2 billion people by 2050 and that close to 90% of this increase will be in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Increasingly, people and their economic activities, cultural interactions, and basic needs are concentrated in cities, which impacts housing, basic services, food security, health, education, and climate resilience. Rapid urbanization requires attention and coordination to develop new solutions for complex and interlinked challenges.

1. **Recognize that rapid urbanization requires urgent solutions to ensure no one is left behind.**
 - a. Recognize that in order to effectively address poverty globally, especially in rapidly urbanizing contexts, improved understanding of needs for vulnerable populations, especially those living in informal settlements, is urgently needed.
 - b. Recognize that urban settings are the nexus of climate mitigation and adaptation, especially through the built environment and housing, including water and sanitation services, land rights, energy consumption, transportation, and economic growth.
2. **Commit to addressing urbanization in international development priorities within G7 dialogues and communiqués.**
 - a. Establish a permanent dialogue mechanism to ensure international cooperation on sustainable urban development between the international development ministries of the G7.

- b. In a formal statement, reflect the importance of urban solutions for development progress, climate adaptation, and poverty reduction in emerging economies and developing countries.
3. **Allocate resources to integrated planning and finance for urban settings.**
 - a. Each donor government must review current strategies to address the challenges posed by rapid, uncoordinated urbanization and commit to implementing urban solutions and the supporting financial and technical resources to tackle them.
 - b. Prioritize climate mitigation and adaptation funding to urban settings.
 - c. Commit resources to improving data of and for vulnerable populations, including weather and hazard projections.
 - d. Commit to addressing the systemic barriers that prevent equitable and sustainable development in urban settings, including barriers to accessing land tenure, water and sanitation services, empowered political engagement, adequate housing, and equitable access to nutritious and resilient food systems.

BACKGROUND

CLIMATE

Decisive action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and keep global temperatures below 2.7° F (1.5° C). G7 Leaders committed to ending government support for coal in 2021 and all fossil fuels in 2022. This year's G7 Summit is an opportunity for leaders to translate these commitments into reality through an implementation roadmap.

Climate finance, a lifeline for countries already experiencing climate impacts, is increasingly becoming a driver of debt distress in the Global South, particularly for small island nations and African countries. In 2020, for example, over 70% of climate finance was provided as loans. As a result of debt distress, the countries which have done the least to create the climate crisis are stuck paying the most. As major shareholders to multilateral development banks like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, G7 leaders are uniquely positioned to champion reforms to the international financial architecture that will provide developing countries the fiscal space they need to build resilience.

Adaptation only represents 20% of climate finance flows and only a tiny fraction of this reaches the most climate-vulnerable places, particularly those that are also fragile. The Just Energy Transition Partnerships under implementation in South Africa, Vietnam, and Indonesia provide a useful framework for aligning finance to developing country priorities. Similar partnerships are needed to scale up and support adaptation and resilience building efforts in the Global South to ensure that those that have done the least to cause the climate crisis are not left to weather its worse effects alone. Given the threats that climate change poses to water security, special attention must be paid to prioritizing climate-resilient WASH services through these partnerships.

DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022 is a dramatic escalation in aggression against a democratic and sovereign nation. The outcome of President Vladimir Putin's war will undoubtedly reverberate throughout the 21st century and dramatically shape the global struggle of democracy versus autocracy—for this reason, it is imperative that G7 members help Ukraine win in 2023 and put an end to the devastation and suffering the unprovoked war has caused. How the war ends will have significant ramifications for other democratic states around the world and the G7 cannot let this harmful precedent be set.

Beyond Ukraine, the G7 must continue to lead among democracies to aggressively counter authoritarianism by isolating autocrats and eliminating the enabling environments they exploit, whilst strengthening democracy at home and abroad. Democratic governments with the support and leadership of the G7 should lessen their economic exposure to authoritarian states, including by decreasing their reliance on these states for energy, critical resources, and the manufacturing of key technologies. Democracies should also take steps to protect their residents from transnational repression. They should further cooperate more effectively to resist authoritarian efforts to capture multilateral institutions and weaken universal human rights norms.

At the same time, G7 members must double down on their commitments to democratic renewal at home, ensuring that democracy equitably delivers for all people. Collective measures must be taken to defend the facts-based information sphere, guarantee transparency around political campaigns and elections, safeguard civic space, fight corruption, meaningfully address climate change, deepen outreach to the private sector to defend liberal values, and more.

Democracy cannot be taken for granted. The G7 must take bold action now to support Ukraine, blunt the influence of authoritarian states, and renew and revitalize democracy.

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

The funding needs created from the compounding crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, humanitarian emergencies, extreme inequality, and unprecedented rise in food and energy costs are immense and increasing. Simultaneously, many countries face rising and unsustainable debt and have veered further off-track of the SDGs.

Just as the poorest within societies are being hit hardest by rising costs, low-income nations that were already under pressure from historically high debt levels are even further constrained by the dramatically rising costs of financing imports of basic commodities. Debt-servicing for the world's poorest countries is [projected to exceed \\$62 billion](#) in 2022, an increase of more than 35% from 2021. With 60% of the poorest countries already at high risk of or in debt distress in 2021, urgent relief is needed to unshackle debt distressed countries and to decelerate the growing global financing crisis.

Despite desperate need for increased financing, nearly a year after the G20 pledged to recycle \$100 billion in SDRs [only \\$66 billion have been pledged](#) and [no vulnerable country has received a single recycled SDR](#). Channeling SDRs through existing and alternative channels will be critical to bolstering the ability for low-income nations to recover from and respond to compounding crises.

As major shareholders to MDBs like the World Bank and the IMF, the G7 is uniquely positioned to champion the reforms and objectives outlined in the Capital Adequacy Framework, Bridgetown Initiative, and the World Bank Evolution Roadmap in building a more sustainable, agile, and progressive global financial architecture. These reforms should come with an increased commitment to accountability and remedy for any unintended negative impacts to project-affected communities.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

While progress has been made toward eliminating global hunger, the world is now facing an unprecedented global food security and malnutrition crisis. Over 800 million people do not know where their next meal will come from. Over [1 billion adolescent girls and women suffer from undernutrition](#) with devastating consequences for their lives and well-being, while along with millions of pregnant and breastfeeding girls and women. This poses dangerous and irreversible consequences for their children's survival, growth and development, as over [30 million children](#) are already suffering from acute malnutrition. Meanwhile, [900,000 people face famine-like conditions](#), a ten-fold increase from just five years ago. In short, the situation is dire.

Hunger is rising globally due to the increasing intensity and frequency of extreme weather events and changing climates, entrenched conflicts, economic crises, and disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. For many communities, especially those already marginalized, compounding shocks have eroded the resilience of their food systems and pushed them to their breaking point. The global effects of the conflict in Ukraine could be the final blow. The intensity and persistence of the food crisis are also straining local responders and humanitarian actors, forcing painful decisions about where to pull away much-needed aid to account for new hunger hot spots.

We encourage the United States to continue to lead the G7 members in providing a robust, collective response to addressing food insecurity and agriculture development. This includes building on existing initiatives launched by the G7 in prior years. Responses must not only address immediate needs but tackle long term root causes that drive hunger and poverty. This includes prioritizing political and diplomatic responses to prevent and manage conflict and complex crises. Strategic investments in food security, agricultural research and development, and nutrition are proven ways to build resilience and reduce vulnerability to food shocks and stresses while addressing chronic poverty and hunger.

HEALTH

As the world shifts its focus beyond COVID-19, it must prioritize the proactive strengthening of the global health architecture at the national, regional, and global levels to build a more cohesive and resilient system. Robust and sustainable mechanisms must be in place, particularly financing for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. Key investments must be made to realize the 100 Days Mission, first outlined by the U.K. G7 presidency in 2021, to boost the rapid development of quality assured medical countermeasures that can quickly be deployed to all who need them, particularly to those in LMICs, and create a more fit-for-purpose global health architecture with equity and human rights at its core.

While COVID-19 has dominated global health programming and dialogues for three years, global leaders must recalibrate their efforts to advance universal health coverage and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Addressing these challenges will require investments in the long-neglected foundational elements of good health and well-being, such as strong and resilient health systems underpinned by a robust health workforce. G7 leaders must recognize universal health coverage and health security as two intertwined goals to be planned and implemented together through the same health system strengthening efforts, based on a foundation of primary health care.

Lastly, the future of the global health architecture needs sustainable financing that is additive, including from Official Development Assistance, other innovative global financing, and domestic resources in LMICs. As processes such as the amendments to the International Health Regulations and deliberations around a new pandemic instrument advance and reduce fragmentation of the global health architecture, sustainable financing will be a key component to ensure countries can ultimately develop the capacities necessary to uphold the new frameworks that will govern global health security.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Humanitarian need continues to rise around the world. Driven by the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, new and protracted conflicts, and social injustices, the number of people estimated to require life-saving assistance skyrocketed more than 100% between 2020 and 2023. This precipitous increase, which shows no signs of slowing, makes clear that we cannot continue to expect “business as usual” to work. Now is the time for bold action, for decisive and insightful leadership.

In some instances, this will require the G7 to adopt a new focus—for example, to shift from funding early warning mechanisms to better supporting humanitarian organizations to act on those early warnings. In other instances, it will require the G7 to accelerate the rate of progress they’re making on long-standing

initiatives, such as Grand Bargain commitments toward localization and quality funding. In all instances, G7 members must urgently support humanitarian organizations to operate safely and effectively, including in countries where space for civil society is shrinking, so that humanitarians can address today's needs before they multiply and become tomorrow's.

GENDER EQUALITY

The COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the war in Ukraine on energy and food security have reversed decades of progress toward gender equality, particularly for those facing the greatest structural exclusion.

Aging populations and cuts to public services have contributed to a [global care crisis](#) disproportionately affecting [poorer and racialized women](#) and keeping almost [42% of working-age women](#) outside the paid labor force. Investments in care-supporting [physical infrastructure](#) and [services](#) can reduce the time and intensity of unpaid care work, [improve wellbeing, create jobs for women](#), and [improve women's labor force participation](#) and overall [productivity and economic growth](#).

The [availability of gender-disaggregated and intersectional data](#)—such as that disaggregated for age, sex, and disability status—guide policy development, inform monitoring and evaluation, and can reveal systemic inequities, particularly for young and aging populations, which often have the least say in decision making fora. Yet, in 2020, funding for gender data [decreased by over 50%](#). Advocating for [gender data collection](#) and increasing financing for core gender data systems can strengthen evidence-based policies and support increased accountability to gender equality commitments.

In 2022, G7 leaders committed to strengthening rights, resources, and opportunities for women and girls, in the spirit of [feminist development and foreign and trade policies](#). G20 leaders [also committed](#) to centering gender equality in an inclusive recovery and sustainable development. The U.S. government has committed to [advancing women and girls' climate action, preventing and responding to gender-based violence, strengthening women's economic security, and increasing funding for gender equality in foreign assistance](#). However, even at a historic high of \$2.6 billion, funding for gender equality remains a fraction of overall foreign assistance and lags behind the commitments of G7/G20 partners. Matching policies with adequate financial commitments can accelerate progress toward a more feminist approach to U.S. foreign policy and multilateral engagement.

URBANIZATION

Over half of the world's population currently lives in cities and over 70% of the world's population will be living in cities by 2050. In spite of falling poverty rates, more poor people live in cities than ever before. Rapid urbanization is proving increasingly to be an exceptional challenge for cities and municipalities to fulfill their core functions of providing infrastructure, basic services, safety and security, and adequate and affordable housing. This places cities at the forefront of key global challenges shaping the 21st century—migration, displacement, climate change, and rapidly expanding informal settlements.

Within the world's cities and human settlements, informal settlements represent one of the most extreme forms of deprivation and remain a critical factor for the persistence of poverty and exclusion globally. Informal settlements are defined by lack of tenure; lack of basic services, such as water and sanitation; lack of political representation; and being frequently located in hazard prone areas. These can be classified as systemic barriers to quality of life, and negatively impact an individual's health, education, livelihood, and resilience.

As human needs amass in urbanizing centers, so do the needs for integrated solutions for sustainable and resilient development for all. This includes greater consideration of integrated slum upgrading approaches, including improving housing for people living in informal settlements. Housing is where learning, work, care, access to water and sanitation, and nutrition converge, and improving adequacy of housing has direct correlations to improved health, education outcomes, and economic growth.

Donors in the global north must tackle rapid urbanization head-on and need to orient their attention and investments to where people need support the most.

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. Learn more at [InterAction.org](https://www.interaction.org).