



ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY
AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

—
PROMOUVOIR L'ÉGALITÉ DES
SEXES ET L'AUTONOMISATION
DES FEMMES

MAKE GENDER INEQUALITY HISTORY

*Recommendations from the Gender Equality Advisory Council
for Canada's G7 Presidency*



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We, the Gender Equality Advisory Council, know that everyone benefits when girls and women¹ are safe, healthy, educated, heard, and empowered to make decisions about their own lives. But gender inequality persists in every society, and progress for girls and women remains too slow, uneven, and subject to reversal. Today, G7 leaders have a unique opportunity to respond to the growing movements of girls and women raising their voices around the world with concrete commitments, new investments and measurable targets to advance gender equality. We call on G7 leaders to adopt and implement the recommendations in our full report, including those set out in the following pages.

MAKE GENDER INEQUALITY HISTORY

Thirteen years ago, responding to massive mobilization and activism, the leaders of the largest advanced economies delivered a bold promise to “Make Poverty History”. Since then, thanks to leadership and investment, life for the world’s poorest people has improved by almost every measure. But violence, insecurity, poverty, and inequality still hold back billions of people and humanity as a whole, risking long-term instability and slowing global growth. At the core of each of these challenges are the undervalued – but powerful – lives of girls and women.

Yet around the world, girls and women are rising. They have come forward to denounce the discrimination, harassment and violence that they experience in their everyday lives. They are determined to claim their rights, show what a more gender equal world would look like, and how all of humanity would benefit. Alongside public and private sector actors, women are joined by growing movements of gender diverse communities, pushing for the same human rights afforded to all.

Never before have the campaigns and voices of girls and women been so visible, so loud, in so many parts of the globe. In communities around the world, grassroots movements like #metoo, #BalanceTonPorc, #MyDressMyChoice and #Cuéntalo signal a new wave of citizen-led activism, shining a spotlight on gender inequality and demanding accountability for all.

Now is the time to listen and learn.

¹ The Gender Equality Advisory Council uses the word woman to include all who self-identify as women including trans and cis women, two-spirit, intersex; and the word man to include all who self-identify as men including trans and cis men, two-spirit, intersex.

Now is the time to act.

Now is the time to transform this formidable momentum into lasting progress and change.

Now is the time for G7 leaders to make gender inequality history.

The evidence is clear: when girls and women are healthy, educated, included, and can make decisions about their own lives and bodies, and lead change in their communities, countries and the world, there is a ripple effect and everyone benefits. Still, gender inequality persists in every society, and challenges are particularly stark for those on the margins—for women living in poverty, women from Indigenous and ethnic communities, LGBTQI2 women, women of color, women living with disabilities, women refugees and migrant women. Their advancement requires specific approaches that take into account the intersecting discriminations they face.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reflect a turning point in global political attention to girls and women: 193 nations have pledged to end gender inequality in all forms by 2030. This reflects a consensus to tackle not just the symptoms, but the underlying drivers of inequality.

We, the members of the Gender Equality Advisory Council for Canada's G7 Presidency, bring together expertise and leadership from G7 countries and beyond. We advise Canada on a bold and ambitious agenda for its G7 Presidency in support of significant advances to achieve gender equality, and empower all girls and women. Together, we want:

- ✓ Safe, healthy, educated, heard and empowered girls and women, supported with the resources and opportunities they need to be agents of change in their own lives and for a better world;
- ✓ Societies in which girls and women are equally represented in decision-making bodies, and are free from harassment and violence;
- ✓ Economies that are prosperous, innovative, inclusive, and more equitable;
- ✓ A healthy and sustainable planet; and
- ✓ A world that is peaceful, just and secure.

Making progress toward gender equality is everybody's business, and it cannot be business as usual. It requires a fundamental transformation of unequal power in gender relations, social roles, gender norms and stereotypes that underpin so many challenges girls and women face. It requires accelerated action, scaling up of good practices and a much higher level of ambition and political and financial commitment. It

requires effort not just by governments, but also by civil society, academia, educators, multilateral institutions, the media, young people and the private sector.

The barriers to gender equality are deeply ingrained, and overcoming them will not be easy. But when we succeed - and we will if we work together - we will all benefit exponentially. Because equality creates something greater for everyone.

The G7 has a significant opportunity to drive change far beyond the borders of its membership. Bound together by shared values of freedom and democracy, peace and security, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, G7 leaders are in a unique position to take concrete steps to advance gender equality at home and abroad. Doing so is central to solving the many economic, development, and security challenges facing the G7, its partners and the world. Indeed, the goals of G7 nations cannot be achieved if half the world's population – girls and women – is left behind.

We call for concrete commitments, paired with meaningful new investments, measurable targets, and robust accountability measures, that build from across the Sustainable Development Goals—including SDG 5 to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment by 2030.

We call for actions that recognize the diversity of girls and women, target multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and disadvantage, stop the roll back of women's rights, and leave no one behind.

We call for the diverse voices of girls and women to shape agendas, and to be present at all negotiation tables.

We endorse the recommendations of the W7 and call for their inclusion in the G7 outcomes and implementation.

We praise Canada for establishing the Presidency's Gender Equality Advisory Council and call on the G7 to institutionalize this practice, making gender equality central to the G7's core business, and to embolden future Presidencies to build on the work advanced in 2018. This includes ensuring that gender equality and women's empowerment is both a stand-alone and a cross-cutting theme in all G7 deliberations. We welcome the commitments to date by the G7 on advancing gender equality.

Building on this work, we call for the full adoption and implementation of our recommendations, including those highlighted here.

GIRLS AND WOMEN: SAFE, HEALTHY, EDUCATED, HEARD AND VISIBLE

Gender inequality remains a pressing moral, economic and social issue. Despite strong international normative frameworks and decades of significant achievements, the economic, political and societal gaps between women and men remain vast and our progress is vulnerable to regression. These inequalities

vary by group and other factors. LGBTQI2 and Indigenous women are particularly vulnerable. For example, Indigenous women are more likely to live in poverty because of colonization, devaluing of Indigenous peoples, and the continuation of societal discrimination based not only on race and gender, but also on class and culture.

The Gender Equality Advisory Council calls on G7 leaders to take concrete actions to ensure that girls and women are safe, healthy, educated, heard and visible. **Among other recommendations, the Council is calling on G7 leaders to:**

- ✓ Commit to spending 0.7% of GNI on ODA and ensure that 20% percent of all aid investments have as their principal focus advancing girls and women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality.
- ✓ Provide policy and funding support to developing and conflict-affected countries to improve access to a minimum of 12 years of free, safe, quality gender-responsive education.
- ✓ Ensure women and girls are safe from violence by committing to provide sufficient funding based on a national costing to support gender-based violence (GBV) essential services, domestically and in foreign aid. This includes funding for frontline and women's advocacy groups working to support survivors of GBV, and leveraging foreign aid, trade and investment to encourage continued domestic investment in addressing GBV.
- ✓ Commit and increase domestic and international public financing for gender-responsive health system strengthening and universal health coverage, with a specific focus on investment in maternal, sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- ✓ Create and deploy mechanisms to mandate that corporations and large public-sector employers in G7 countries increase the number of women on boards and at all managerial and executive levels, with the aim of achieving gender parity by 2030.
- ✓ Provide new and substantial financing for women's rights organizations and movements – including in crisis contexts – that is long-term, predictable and provides core support to build organizational capacity and react to emerging trends, opportunities and setbacks.
- ✓ Increase the percentage of ODA for development data (currently at 0.3%) and mandate the inclusion of better age and sex-disaggregated data production across National Statistical Offices. Require gender data collection and use with all countries receiving bilateral support – specifically, calling for integration of gender data into country data collection, and the use of gender data for evidence-based policymaking at the country level.
- ✓ Commit to instituting a G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council, and to track and report on G7 performance on gender equality actions and commitments, as well as achieving gender parity in G7 country, ministerial, and sherpa delegations by 2025.

ECONOMY: INCLUSIVE, INNOVATIVE AND PRODUCTIVE

Women's economic empowerment and financial inclusion is a prerequisite for inclusive and equitable economic growth. A powerful lever for change, women's economic empowerment can drive gender equality outcomes and broader intergenerational benefits for women, their children, households and communities. Women who are economically empowered not only have greater access to income and economic assets, but enjoy increased control over their own economic gains and more equitable decision-making power. **Among other recommendations, the Council is calling on G7 leaders to:**

- ✓ Recognize, reduce, and redistribute unpaid domestic and care services between families and the public sector, and between girls and women and boys and men, by investing in universal publicly-financed early childhood education and care services; and ensuring that businesses and not-for-profit organizations offering care services are well-regulated.
- ✓ Institute or improve paid parental leave programs to support all eligible families. Set a goal of men doing fifty percent of unpaid domestic and care work within a generation and institute non-transferable parental leave and public education efforts to achieve this goal.
- ✓ Integrate gender-based analysis, gender-responsive budgeting and gender-auditing throughout policy development and implementation. Make gender analysis mandatory to the budget cycle by adopting permanent, participatory and transparent approaches to gender analysis and budgeting; and by introducing legislation to enshrine it in governments' budgetary and financial management processes. Create and fund a global mechanism dedicated to providing short and long-term technical assistance on gender-responsive budgeting.
- ✓ Close the financial inclusion gender gap in financial services and accounts ownership by digitizing Government-to-People social protection welfare transfer payments to women; ensuring these funds are directed into mobile bank accounts held by women; and designing digital payment systems and social protection programs to meet the needs of women.
- ✓ Ensure that women are able to be productive and innovative in the economy by creating enabling conditions for decent work, including for women in the informal sector; ratifying International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 189 on the protection of paid domestic workers; supporting a new ILO standard on ending violence and harassment in the world of work; enacting pay equity legislation that is monitored and enforced; and reducing the gender gap in labor force participation by 25% by 2025.
- ✓ Incentivize the private sector to achieve pay equality for women and men in the company as a whole and at all levels of management by 2030 with penalties for not complying; and adopt a "comply or explain" model of reporting on sex-disaggregated data on pay equity published annually in a public report.

PLANET: HEALTHY AND SECURE

Gender equality is the number one predictor of peace – more so than a state’s wealth or level of democracy. Peace and everyday security for women is the core of building just, peaceful and sustainable societies. A more peaceful and secure world means that girls and women have a life free from abuse, exploitation and violence. And, while climate change impacts everyone, and while girls and women could play a tremendous role in mitigating climate change, girls and women bear the greatest burden and are disproportionately affected due to gender inequalities and discrimination. **Among other recommendations, the Council is calling on G7 leaders to:**

- ✓ Support the robust implementation and continued strengthening of gender policies and action plans of multilateral climate financing mechanisms and pursue a gender-responsive approach to climate financing at the national and global level, including by establishing gender-responsive monitoring frameworks and by advocating for consistent gender impact assessments of all climate financing instruments.
- ✓ Empower women to leverage the benefits of low-carbon and climate-resilient economies, including by ensuring women benefit equally from access to new technologies and by ensuring women’s leadership, agency, participation and voice in global, national and community climate decision-making processes.
- ✓ Ensure that G7 discussions and actions on peace and security reflect human security, and provide adequate and predictable budget resources for frontline grassroots women’s organizations involved in conflict prevention and mitigation, conflict resolution, peace negotiation and post-conflict reconstruction.
- ✓ Allocate 50% of funding to conflict-affected countries specifically for women, peace and security activities, and include budget plans for all National Action Plans on women, peace and security by 2020.
- ✓ Integrate gender advisers into the operational planning processes for G7 military forces and develop international-level guidance on changes to military doctrine so as to ensure that national militaries collaborate with civil society organizations, particularly grassroots women’s organizations.

Make Gender Inequality History

For more information on the Council and its members, please visit:
<https://g7.gc.ca/en/g7-presidency/gender-equality-advisory-council/>