

2018 G20 Gender Equality Recommendations G7/G20 Advocacy Alliance (U.S.) G20 Buenos Aires Summit

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The Argentinian G20 Presidency has identified empowering women as essential to its key theme, and has committed to mainstreaming gender throughout the entire G20 agenda.¹ Building on past commitments and last year's launch of the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi), the Gender Equality Policy Team of the **U.S. G7/G20 Advocacy Alliance**, a group of 54 non-governmental organizations, calls on the U.S. Government to play a leading role in encouraging the G20 to take the following actions, at home and abroad through its development assistance:

1. Achieve the target to **reduce the gender gap in labor force participation** by 25% by 2025² by investing 2% of GDP in the care economy (agriculture, nutrition, health, child and elder care, social infrastructure, etc.) and increasing investment in quality education and training, land tenure security, financial services, and market access for female entrepreneurs. Ensure these investments reach women and girls in rural areas, and that all women workers – including migrants – are guaranteed decent work and living wages. Publish an accountability report of how countries are progressing in reaching this target.
2. **Launch a Leaders' Initiative on Women's Workforce Development:** The U.S. should champion a leaders' initiative to eliminate barriers to female labor force participation by facilitating workforce development for women and young people for skilled and higher-paying jobs in low- and middle-income countries to help build foundational, transferable, and life skills; facilitate apprenticeships, internships and mentorships; and promote market access for female entrepreneurs.
3. **Ensure schools and workplaces are free of sexual harassment and gender-based violence (GBV)** by supporting a comprehensive and integrated ILO Convention and Recommendation on 'Ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work,' investing in efforts to reduce GBV directed at girls, and promoting girls' access to safe, quality education in all settings, including rural areas, in conflict and crisis.

BACKGROUND

“Building consensus for fair and sustainable development” – the theme of this year’s G20 – requires active engagement with women and girls, and commitments to policies that will advance gender equality. Women and girls are key economic actors, but social vulnerabilities embedded in unfavorable norms and practices constantly undermine their potential. Therefore, G20 countries must make the investments that will be required to level the playing field for them. Investing in women and girls can provide the greatest return for development, supporting greater individual and collective well-being, delaying age at marriage³ and first birth, increasing incomes, reducing hunger, malnutrition, poverty and improving stability and security.

However, secondary educational enrollment and completion rates for girls remain markedly less than boys in some regions of the world,⁴ female labor force participation rates often lag behind and women worldwide struggle to access good-paying jobs.⁵ Furthermore, the responsibility of unpaid care work falls disproportionately on women and girls – particularly those in rural areas.⁶ This limits engagement in market activities, reduces productivity, and leads to concentration in low-paid or part-time, more insecure, informal, and home-based work.

Moreover, 12 of the G20 countries are among the top 20 migrant destinations where women make up a significant proportion of migrants, many of whom end up working in the care and health sectors, often in informal employment and without access to social protection and labor rights.⁷ The consistent application of SDGs 5 and 8 linked to existing labor protections could address care deficits and protect the rights of care workers, while guaranteeing effective implementation of ILO Convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers.⁸

Finally, gender-based violence continues to be a pervasive expression of gender inequality worldwide. Working to eradicate violence, address the social norms that condone and protect aggressors, and uncovering habituation to the status quo can provide the basis for lasting transformation. Addressing violence in schools, universities, and the workplace will prove fundamental to removing one of the most persistent and pernicious barriers to women’s economic empowerment and gender equality worldwide. Support for the ILO standard on “Ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work,” as well as SDGs 5 and 16, will be critical to achieving this.

While the statement is not designed to be a consensus position of the contributors, it has been endorsed by InterAction’s leadership. This set of recommendations was developed by the Gender Equality Policy Team of the G7/G20 Advocacy Alliance, listed below.

Gender Equality Policy Team

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Endorsers:
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End Notes

¹ G20 Argentina. (2017). *Overview of Argentina's G20 Presidency 2018*. <https://g20.argentina.gob.ar/en/overview-argentinas-g20-presidency-2018>.

² G20 Leaders' Summit at Brisbane. (2014). *G20 Leaders' Communique* (2014). Brisbane Summit. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000059841.pdf>

³ Nanda, P., Datta, N., Pradhan, E., Das, P., and Lamba, S. (2016). "Making Change with Cash? Impact of a Conditional Cash Transfer Program on Age of Marriage in India," ICRW.

https://www.icrw.org/wpcontent/uploads/2016/10/IMPACT_Marriage_Webready.pdf, and Girls Not Brides. (2013). "Ending Child Marriage: What Will it Take?"

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/ForcedMarriage/NGO/GirlsNotBrides.pdf>.

⁴ Particularly sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

⁵ World Bank. (2017). "Labor force participation rate, female (% of female population ages 15+) (modeled ILO estimate)." <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS>.

⁶ United Nations. (2017). *Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls*. Report of the Secretary-General E/CN.6/2018/3. <http://undocs.org/E/CN.6/2018/3>.

⁷ UN DESA. (2017). "Twenty countries or areas hosting the largest numbers of international migrants (millions)." International migrant stock: the 2017 revision. <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimatesgraphs.shtml?3g3> and WHO. (2017). *Women on the move: Migration, care work and health*. <http://www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/knowledge/women-on-the-move/en/>.

⁸ ILO. (2011). C189 – *Domestic Workers Convention* http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C189.