

THE WORLD NEEDS WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

A call for action

Our manifesto for the 2018 G7 Summit

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The world needs women's leadership. At a time when we are seeking to overcome disruption and division, create inclusive societies, and drive sustainable growth, women's full participation in our governments, workplaces and communities has the greatest potential to achieve solutions. By some estimates, achieving gender equality globally could add \$28 trillion to global growth and 240 million jobs by 2025. Which is why this year's G7 Summit has embraced gender equality and women's empowerment as one of its key themes.

Which policies should G7 nations adopt in order to contribute to greater equality and empowerment for women, in order to create a stronger, safer and more inclusive world? To find out, the [Women's Forum for the Economy & Society](#) started by asking women leaders from all over the world at this year's Women's Forum Canada meeting. The Forum on the theme of **Bridging the gap: a call to the G7 for inclusive progress**, hosted May 10 and 11 in Toronto, brought together more than 700 delegates from business, government, academia and non-government organisations. This group of global leaders focused on how women's leadership can help shape an inclusive society, focusing in the areas of the role of business; women's economic empowerment; climate resilience and technology; and the future of work.

We call on G7 nations to focus their efforts on the following policy areas, drawing from the insights of female leaders from around the world to inform their priorities, initiatives, and agendas for empowering women. Believing that diverse perspectives, not just gendered approaches, result in the best ideas, we have also included recommendations from more than 100 youth leaders and activists aged 16-24 who attended the Youth Forum held May 9 and co-hosted by Women's Forum and the charity WE.

1. Lead by example in the public sector

We call for the G7 governments to demonstrate their own commitment to gender equality and set the right example, thus increasing their credibility to call on the private sector to follow.

» **Adopt gender mainstreaming**

Mainstreaming involves systematically integrating gender perspectives in policies, programmes and projects.¹

Example | In France, gender mainstreaming is mandatory in the assessment of each new law.

» **Use gender budgeting to heighten the impact of policies on gender equality**

Measuring and analysing the impact of government expenditure and revenue on people of different genders will improve targeting of benefits, social safety nets, public procurement, trade agreements and other government policies, in ways that more equitably benefit women.

Example | Canada's [federal budget](#) measures the impact of policies, taxation and spending on women and men, and proposes that future federal budgets undergo similar analysis.

» **Invest in women**

Women's economic empowerment represents an investment opportunity with multiplier effects on families, industries and the broader economy.

Example | The US government's development finance institution, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, is [directly investing](#) \$350 million in projects that support women-owned businesses, private equity funds, and female entrepreneurs.

» **Mandate women in government and other key decision-making roles**

Women's leadership within governments and state-owned companies will contribute to diversity of ideas, solutions and management styles at work for the public good.

Example | In 2014, the Italian prime minister [named](#) six highly qualified women as presidents of state-owned enterprises such as: the post office, the national grid, electricity and energy systems, public broadcasting, and rail infrastructure and services.

Example | The cabinets of both the Canadian and French prime ministers are fully gender balanced.

¹ World Bank. 2015. World Bank Group gender strategy (FY16-23) : gender equality, poverty reduction and inclusive growth (English). Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/820851467992505410/World-Bank-Group-gender-strategy-FY16-23-gender-equality-poverty-reduction-and-inclusive-growth>

2. Implement and enforce laws and levers for women's safety and security

To achieve equality, women must feel safe in their homes, workplaces, communities and public spaces – and cannot be disadvantaged by violence inflicted upon them.

» **Protect women in public spaces**
Guaranteeing the physical freedom of women in public spaces is a prerequisite for empowering them mentally and intellectually, and enabling them to be economically productive, fully contributing members of society.

» **Enact laws to protect women and girls and criminalise the perpetrators of human trafficking**
Develop and implement laws that protect the safety and security of women, which will support the advancement of women and girls. Human trafficking takes advantage of vulnerable women and girls. Laws should protect these populations – not criminalise them – and hold to account the buyers and purveyors.

Example | In 2016, France made it illegal to pay for sex, in addition to existing laws prohibiting pimping, human trafficking and buying sex from minors.

Example | The UK's Modern Slavery Act (2015) holds companies accountable for ensuring there is no slavery in any part of their business.

» **Adopt policies that support those impacted by domestic violence and other abuse**
More than 1 in 3 (35%) women will experience physical or sexual abuse, with impacts on their emotional and physical health that can affect their contributions to work and family.

Example | New York City allows paid sick leave to be used for recovering from domestic violence, assault, stalking or trafficking.

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Expand access to mental health services

Access to health services today should be extended to mental health challenges, particularly for girls and women. The leading cause of death worldwide for girls aged 15-19 is no longer childbirth but suicide, according to the World Health Organisation. Another special focus should be maternal mental health. Taken together, mental health challenges are major barriers to gender equality, peace, and security.

G7 governments should:

- ▶ Appoint a Special Advisor on mental health to develop a strategic action plan in 2018 that will achieve meaningful progress for women and girls around the globe.
- ▶ Reduce by 50% rates in suicide, psychosis, and mental illness-related disability by 2030.
- ▶ Develop a standard for mental health services on post-secondary campuses, including doctor/counsellor to student ratios; maximum wait times; user feedback surveys; peer support programmes; and easily accessible student education information on mental health.

3. Create the conditions for gender equality in the workforce and employment pipeline

Governments alone cannot achieve key goals for gender equality – although they can help create the right conditions for doing so, working together with the private sector.

- » Use voluntary or regulatory levers to challenge corporates to increase their level of transparency surrounding gender equality in the workforce and employment pipelines
Transparency on gender equality within their organisations can motivate companies to improve.

Example | The UK requires all large companies to publicly report on gender pay gap, which has already prompted some companies to take corrective measures.

- » Consider quotas or targets for women in corporate leadership positions
In countries where the legal environment is conducive, use targets, quotas and penalties to accelerate the numbers of women in private-sector leadership roles. This can be effective: such countries have nearly doubled the percentage of women on boards compared to countries without such regulations.

Example | In 2012 and 2013, Italian publicly listed companies and state-owned firms were required to balance gender representation in new appointments to corporate boards. By the end of June 2015, women accounted for 27.6% of all board of director members (up from 7.4% in 2011) while the percentage of companies with diverse boards rose to 98.7% of the total, up from 51.7% in 2011.²

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Companies should be specific in their targets and transparent

To spur continued improvement in workplace gender equality, companies should report specific targets including:

- ▶ Different types of targets: for example, gender balance rate within a team or employee division; gender balance in nominations, promotions and hires; gender balance among employees identified as high-potential)
- ▶ The timescale involved: annual, multi-year, 3-year or longer
- ▶ The context: objectives and incentives for individuals or teams

Example | In 2011, France passed the Copé Zimmerman law that requires quotas for gender balance on corporate boards by the target compliance date in 2017. Since then, the percentage of women on French boards has risen to 39%, up from 12-14% in 2010.³

² Pastore & Tommaso (2016) 'Women on corporate boards. The case of gender quotas in Italy'. Corporate Ownership & Control, 13(4), Summer 2016.

³ McKinsey (2017) "Women Matter: Time to Accelerate Ten years of insights into gender diversity." October 2017.

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- » **Implement and enforce laws against workplace sexual harassment**
Women need to feel safe and respected in the workplace to do their best work and for society to unlock the economic potential of workplace gender equality.

- » **Adopt and enforce equal pay regulations**
Women's economic empowerment is tied to their ability to earn the same as their male counterparts for comparable work.

- » **Ensure women can choose and access full-time work through childcare and family policies**
Current childcare policy often enables women to work part-time or compensates them only for part of their pay, leaving many women falling short of full-time employment. More comprehensive childcare policy can change this by making full-time work more accessible to women. Family leave policies also foster long-term societal changes, such as caregiving by men, that are conducive to women's full-time work.

Example | Japan mandates companies to provide one year of parental leave, with two additional "use it or lose it" months for the second parent.

Example | In 2007, Germany set aside parental leave that is reserved only for fathers. This radically increased the proportion of men taking parental leave, especially among highly educated men and those on fixed-term contracts.

- » **Leverage technology to prepare women for new ways of working**
Governments and businesses alike must identify, monitor, measure and address the new ways of working that technology enables well before their impact is fully entrenched.

4. Ensure equal access to education and technological training to foster inclusive innovation and equal outcomes for women

Today girls and women do not have equal access to advanced technological training, particularly in communities of diverse incomes. Education and vocational systems must be reformed to provide such training to achieve equal outcomes for women.

IN FOCUS

How to keep girls in school through access to health

In the poorest parts of the world, teenage girls are expected to stay home to care for siblings who are sick, disrupting their schooling. Vaccinating children against childhood illnesses helps ensure that they and their caregivers can continue to attend school.

G7 governments should:

- ▶ Enforce routine immunisation policies.
- ▶ Mobilise funding and support for immunisation programmes and services globally.

- » Reform education and vocational systems to ensure equal access for girls, especially in advanced technological training
In the near term, the World Economic Forum estimates automation will have a [disproportionate effect](#) on jobs predominantly held by women. Without advanced technological training, girls and women may lose out.
- » Use technology as a force for inclusion
Technology should be a powerful force for inclusion⁴ - a constructive tool that allows women to accomplish goals that would have been otherwise out of reach. Closing the gender gap in digital fluency — making sure that women and girls have access to digital tools such as smartphones, online education, digital collaboration platforms, and the internet — would [halve the time](#) it takes to achieve gender equality at work.
- » Foster more inclusive technology
Increasing digital fluency enables women to participate more fully and take on leadership roles in the technology industry, which then contributes to the development of more inclusive, less-biased technologies.

Example | Some tech companies that are recognised for diversity and inclusion are also recognised for inclusive design.

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Fostering inclusion-focused innovation through public policy

G7 governments should:

- ▶ Establish platforms and channels for debating the ethics and inclusiveness of innovation.
- ▶ Incentivise inclusive, ethical innovation through a combination of voluntary and legislative measures.
- ▶ Adopt technologies, such as telemedicine, that can help expand women's participation in research and increase its pace.
- ▶ Cultivate stronger funding and support mechanisms specifically for female entrepreneurs. For example, the US requires that at least 5% of federal contracting dollars go to women-owned businesses.

5. Empower women to contribute to solutions to climate change

Climate change impacts men and women differently — for example, according to the UN, 80% of people displaced by climate change are women. And women and children are 14 times as likely as men to die during a natural disaster.⁵ At the international, national, sub-national, and corporate levels, climate-focused action needs to be gender-responsive. This requires women's active involvement at all levels of policymaking.

- » **Provide legal status for people displaced by climate change**
To help balance the burden of climate change on women, governments should work to provide legal status for all of those displaced by its impacts.

- » **Finance and fund gender-responsive climate initiatives**
Deliberate financing and funding of gender-responsive climate initiatives, such as clean energy and climate change adaptability programs can reduce the rate at which women suffer the impact of climate change compared to men.

- » **Enable women leaders in climate policy**
Governments should increase the number of women involved in developing climate policies in government and business, and support and recognise women leaders, activists and entrepreneurs who are on the frontlines of climate action, from local and regional to national and international levels. That will ensure a more diverse approach to climate negotiations as well as consideration of the impacts of climate on women and children.

IN FOCUS

Young people's priorities for the G7 on climate change

- ▶ Implement textile recycling in every city.
- ▶ Lower taxes on electric vehicles to make them cost-competitive with conventional vehicles.
- ▶ Establish and strengthen vehicle emissions standards.
- ▶ Promote car-pooling, public transit, and green buildings.
- ▶ Take steps to reduce the production and consumption of plastic (plastic bags, cutlery, etc).

⁵["Turning promises into action: Gender equality in the 2030 agenda." UN Women.](#)

6. Adopt shared principles in the implementation of policies

As a foundation for all of these recommendations, we call on the governments of G7 nations to adopt the following principles in common. These are not specific policy recommendations, but rather strategies to ensure that recommendations are implemented smoothly and are sustained:

- » Adopt and harmonise with each other's best practices for the advancement of gender equality.
 - » Seek input from business to ensure that public policy and private sector actions on gender equality create a virtuous cycle and challenge each other to higher ambition.
 - » Set clear key performance indicators (KPIs), and continually measure, and report progress in a transparent manner.
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7. Draw on women's leadership

Governments must actively ensure that women's voices, perspectives, expertise and leadership are included equally in decision-making.

Example | Gender budgeting is not automatically participatory, and participatory budgeting is not always gender-just. In several German cities, such as Berlin and Freiburg, gender budgeting activities are combined with participatory approaches that deliberately integrate gender perspectives into the process, such as by inviting and involving women's organisations, community leaders, and advocates to give their views on public spending priorities.

The Women's Forum for the Economy & Society remains committed to representing the diverse voices of women's leadership, and serving as a sounding board for the G7, G20 and other high-level governmental bodies for now and in the future. While this manifesto is not designed to be a consensus statement of all the Women's Forum partners, contributors and delegates, **it is endorsed by the Women's Forum leadership.**

The Women's Forum aims to track the G7's progress on these fronts and continue the conversation as France takes on G7 leadership in 2019, and beyond. Our valued participants have dared to raise their voice; will you dare to listen?

We thank the following participants who have contributed to the development of this manifesto:

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- ▶ Partners, panellists, speakers, and delegates of the Women's Forum Canada

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