



18 April 2024

Honourable Leaders of G7 Members,

Ahead of the G7 Leaders' Summit, we are writing to urge you to take immediate and long-term action at scale to address the serious and growing gendered and intergenerational impacts of multiple crises that are currently affecting children and young people, especially adolescent girls around the world.

Adolescence is a unique and critical period of transition for girls, when life changing events happen but too often, instead of being supported to help reach their rights and potential, adolescent girls are at risk of being left behind. As a leading coalition on the world-stage, holding over 26% of the world's GDP, the G7 has the power to contribute massively to improvements in the lives of adolescent girls around the world. Now is the time for G7 to take the global lead in designing policies and funding commitments that put girls first, within the principles of intergenerational justice and gender transformative action.

More than halfway into the 2030 agenda, adolescent girls still face discrimination and the denial of their rights. They continue to be largely invisible in global policymaking and development agendas despite challenges affecting them, especially those in developing countries. The world urgently needs to better invest in girls' and adolescents' wellbeing, including for the good of our collective future. The projected cost of inaction over the 2024–2035 period across the following critical areas: food security and malnutrition; mental health; learning; skills and employment; improving the status of women, and preparing adolescents to cope with emerging realities, is staggering, totaling an alarming US\$20.5 trillion.¹

Adolescent girls are disproportionately affected by the global hunger crisis. They often eat less and last resulting in malnutrition that is particularly dangerous for children under five, adolescent girls and young women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Adolescent girls and young women are at increased risks of miscarriage, maternal mortality and giving birth to low birthweight babies, thus passing on the intergenerational effects of malnutrition to their children. Conflicts that urgently require political solutions - such as the war in Ukraine, the crisis in Sudan, and the harrowing violence in Gaza – are now massively contributing to this, with shocking cases of humanitarian access being blocked and hunger being used as a weapon of war.

The outlook for millions of adolescent girls around the world is exacerbated by climate change, the greatest global, intergenerational, gender and social injustice of our time. Children and future generations are bearing or will come to bear the brunt of its impact, with the rights of the most marginalized being badly damaged and gender inequalities being magnified. Ignoring girls' climate rights and leadership also means ignoring their agency and capacity to contribute to effective mitigation and adaptation strategies. In addition, almost a third of the world's population now lives in countries with closed civic space, the highest percentage since 2018 according to Civicus. Anti-rights initiatives are increasingly undermining the gains in gender equality and posing

¹ Sheehan, P., Rasmussen, B., Sweeny, K., Maharaj, N., Symons, J., Davidson, S., Nguyen, H., and Kumnick, M. (2023). Adolescents in a changing world: the case for urgent investment – Executive Summary. Victoria Institute of Strategic Economic Studies, Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia.

a growing threat to the rights and futures of adolescent girls. This backlash means more adolescent girls are being restricted from accessing Sexual Rights and Reproductive Rights (SRHR) services and comprehensive sexuality education; potential rise of harmful traditional practices such as child, early, and forced marriage and unions, and female genital mutilation; higher risks of reprisals when speaking out about their rights, and a disturbing rise in gender discriminatory norms, amongst others.

With the G7 Summit happening before the Summit of the Future, a once in a lifetime opportunity to make the necessary changes to address the challenges faced by the world at present that will have an impact on future generations, it is essential that the G7 reasserts the centrality of international humanitarian law and human rights law and use its diplomatic weight to stand up for the rights of all, especially neglected groups and adolescent girls in all their diversity.

Adolescent girls deserve a fairer future, and we urge G7 Leaders to respond to the pressing challenges they are facing. Plan International therefore calls on G7 Leaders to:

1. **Champion adolescent girls' rights at the Summit of the Future and throughout this year.** G7 Leaders can lead the way in ensuring that adolescent girls are meaningfully included in the Summit of the Future processes and in all policy agreements within the Declaration of the Future Generation, Pact for the Future, and the Global Digital Compact.
2. **Report transparently on previous commitments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and commit to accelerated action and increased financing for people in urgent need, especially adolescent girls.** We welcome G7 Leaders' commitment in the 2023 Leaders' Summit to revitalize international cooperation for the SDGs, but urgently call for increased investment to address the financing gap in achieving the 2030 agenda. Along with strong allocations for policies and programs on gender equality from Official Development Assistance (ODA) of G7 members, there should be sufficient investments that address the SDGs for neglected groups and all those in need. This reform is crucial to fulfil the commitment of leaving no one behind.
3. **Prioritise gender and age sensitive responses to address the gendered impacts of hunger,** including funding specific programs that address child protection, gender-based violence, access to education and sexual and reproductive health services, in food insecure contexts. This includes support for efforts to strengthen disaggregation of food security data by sex, age, and disability.
4. **Report on progress made on the G7 Leaders' announcement in 2023 of \$21 billion investment to humanitarian efforts** focusing on girls and women and those in vulnerable situations. This reporting should include disaggregated data on each G7 member's efforts and reflections on where more progress could be made.
5. **Urgently advance humanitarian diplomacy efforts to facilitate humanitarian access, ensure adherence to international humanitarian law and enhance prospects of peace, especially in conflict-affected hunger hotspots,** with conflict being a major driver of hunger and exacerbating other inequalities. The G7 should help build the resilience of communities living in fragile contexts.
6. **Address the intergenerational and gendered impact of climate change** by:
 - a. Ensuring climate policies include actions to uphold children's rights, recognising the disproportionate impact on adolescent girls. This includes collecting and reporting on age- and gender- disaggregated data with a view to strengthening child- and gender-responsive climate action and policies;

- b. Supporting and resourcing girls' leadership in climate action and policy and establishing opportunities for meaningful engagement in climate change processes nationally and globally;
- c. Increasing grant-based climate finance that is child- and gender responsive, including direct support for adolescent girls and young women. Within this, G7 members should scale up adaptation and loss and damage finance commitments to support those already feeling the impacts of climate change.
- d. Prioritising investments to strengthen the climate resilience of social services through child-responsive interventions, including in education, health, food and nutrition, clean energy, water, sanitation and hygiene, child and social protection services, and disaster risk reduction.
- e. Investing in and implementing climate resilient and gender transformative climate education systems.

7. Report on G7's commitments last year on the following:

- a. Championing, advancing, and defending gender equality and rights of women and girls in all their diversity including LGBTQIA+ through the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, and the promotion of an intersectional approach.
- b. Achieving comprehensive SRHR for all, including adolescent health, especially in vulnerable circumstances, along with more than \$48 billion in support of Universal Health Care.
- c. Addressing unequal sharing of paid and unpaid care-work and eliminating all forms of sexual and gender-based harassment both offline and online.
- d. Continuing support to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and Education Cannot Wait (ECW).

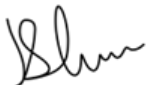
- 8. Implement the Resilient Democracy Declaration of 2022** and ensure that civic space is open and safe for people's participation. The G7 should support youth-led organisations and institutionalise and invest in mechanisms for girls' leadership. The G7 should continue to work more closely with human rights defenders and gender equality advocates in advancing and protecting progress made in gender equality through and beyond the G7 Engagement Groups.

Thank you for your attention to these urgent matters.

Sincerely,



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Founded in 1937, Plan International is a development and humanitarian organization that works together with children, young people, supporters and partners in over 80 countries to strive for a just world, where we are all equal. To do this we tackle the root causes of the challenges and inequalities that children and young girls face. We're there for children from birth until adulthood and we enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity.