

# FRANCE CALLED FOR A FEMINIST G7, **BUT DID THE G7 DELIVER?**

A Report Card on the 2019 G7 Commitments to Gender Equality







& CENTER FOR DEMOCRATIC CENTER FOR **EDUCATION** 



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Like Canada in 2018, France has pledged to make gender equality a core priority of its 2019 G7 Presidency. The French did honor their commitment to mainstream a focus on gender throughout the entirety of the G7 process. Indeed, the number of declarations, communiques and statements dealing with gender equality in the process is a testament to that: our review cites twenty G7 documents with some reference to gender equality and/or women and girls.1

France also maintained the structures for advancing gender equality in G7 discussions that were established previously: they continued the high-level Gender Equality Advisory Council tasked with advising France on specific actions the G7 should take to advance gender equality, as well as the civil society Women 7 (W7) stakeholder group. It should be noted that unlike Prime Minister Justin Trudeau before him, President Macron did not meet with the W7 nor invite them to the Leaders' Summit. However, Macron did meet with the Gender Equality Advisory Council (GEAC) twice throughout the G7 proceedings.

While many of the G7 statements have extensive references to women's empowerment and gender equality, as is so often the case, these rhetorical commitments greatly outstripped the number of substantive policy commitments, funding pledges or any effort by the G7 to hold itself accountable to its promises, past or present—the four kinds of commitments we track in this report card. A few new initiatives were announced, with limited funding or accountability commitments associated. The was a multimillion-dollar funding commitment to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-initiated G7 Partnership for Women's Digital Financial Inclusion in Africa, with smaller funds pledged by some G7 members to efforts supporting women's entrepreneurship in Africa through Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA). In peace and security, some funding was pledged to support Nadia Murad's and Denis Mukwege's foundations to end sexual violence in conflict, and some countries used the G7 stage to announce renewals of funding commitments to The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and

Malaria—a fund not explicitly gender-focused yet operating on a scale that impacts the health and lives of millions of women and girls around the globe.

As in all years, a key challenge that emerges is how to hold the G7 accountable to its own commitments. While President Macron did state that the G7 would create accountability mechanisms,<sup>2</sup> what form that would take was unspecified. Of all the commitments made, only one included a stated timeline by which it would be achieved: the commitment to increase by one third, by 2030, the share of women who can access Technical and Vocational Education and Training. There were few commitments with associated reporting requirements to publicly track implementation. Specifically, there was a commitment to make sure the Gender at the Center Initiative's main objectives are monitored and to monitor and report on gender responsiveness in education systems—although timelines for each remain unclear.

In order to strengthen the chances for realizing the rhetorical commitments that proliferated throughout the process, robust funding for implementation, specifics on how the commitments will be implemented, deadlines and benchmarks of progress and periodic and public reports on progress will be necessary. As we look ahead to 2020, a year that will find the United States at the helm of the G7 and France marking the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, this exercise will be all the more important.



<sup>1.</sup> Declaration on Gender Equality, G7 Ministers, Paris, May 10, 2019, p. 5.

<sup>2.</sup> G7 Foreign Ministers Communique, April 6, 2019, p. 4.

In that spirit, this report card attempts to review and articulate the universe of G7 commitments under France's leadership in 2019 to advance gender equality, most of which are rhetorical, but which, in some cases, have associated policy, funding or accountability commitments that merit attention and a push for full implementation in the months and years ahead.

For last year's report card on how the Canadian G7 fared in the same categories, please see "Canada Called for a Feminist G7: Did the G7 Deliver?" (https://www.icrw.org/report-card-on-g7-commitments-to-gender-equality/).

#### **OUTCOME AREA #1:** Gender Equality **Broadly / Feminist Processes**

#### **RESULTS**

#### RHETORICAL COMMITMENTS

"We understand that our full and meaningful engagement with civil society is an essential pillar of these concepts. We are deeply committed to the values of respect and mutual understanding and are dedicated to the application of equality for every person, including women and children, persons with disabilities, Indigenous people, and members of other minorities including religious minorities who are often marginalized in society."3

"Based on the principles of non-discrimination, gender equality, equity, sensitivity to special needs and social and economic inclusion, these programmes and schemes should provide substantial and adequate coverage of broad categories of the global population by 2030."4

The G7 Leaders adopted a separate declaration, launching the Biarritz Partnership for Gender Equality which includes calls to abolish discriminatory laws, enact and implement progressive legislative frameworks, guarantee necessary funding for implementation and measure and report on the progress of these frameworks.<sup>5,6</sup>

#### **POLICY COMMITMENTS**

""We call for women's fair share and meaningful inclusion in all decision-making processes, from political life to peace processes."7

"We agree to work towards a Partnership for Gender Equality, with support from the Gender Equality Advisory Council, aimed at making individual commitments towards improving the legal and policy framework, with a view toward creating a global coalition committed to the full empowerment of girls and women through the implementation of laws that protect and promote equality and women's rights. This partnership will involve G7 members and partner countries."8

"As Ministers for gender Equality of the G7 and signatories of the 'Paris Declaration on Gender Equality', we therefore

<sup>3.</sup> G7 Social Communique, Ministries of Labour, June 7, 2019, p. 13.

<sup>4.</sup> Biarritz Chair's Summary on Fighting Inequalities, August 26,

<sup>5.</sup> Biarritz Partnership for Gender Equality, August 24, 2019, p. 2.

<sup>6.</sup> G7 Ministers Declaration on Gender Equality, May 10, 2019, p. 3. 7. Ibid, p.5.

<sup>8.</sup> Ibid.

OUTCOME AREA #1 (continued)	RESULTS
POLICY COMMITMENTS	"commit to: Advocate for more laws and effective policies that promote women's human rights and gender equality"
	"By working towards achieving gender equality in practice, we are taking action to boost inclusive and sustainable growth in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."
FUNDING COMMITMENTS	€120m committed by France for women's organizations in their foreign assistance. <sup>11</sup>
ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITMENTS	"The Gender at the Center Initiative's main objectives includes'Supporting the Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in Planning, Implementation and Monitoring', which includes 'Quality, availability and use of sex-disaggregated data and evidence"  12

OUTCOME AREA #2: Economy	RESULTS
RHETORICAL COMMITMENTS	"We fully support existing initiatives in global supply chains, such as Alliance 8.7 on the elimination of child labour, forced labour and modern slavery"  13
	"Women's economic empowerment is central to realizing women's rights and equality with men. Increasing women and girls' access to quality education, learning and vocational training contributes to women's economic empowerment and to economic growth."
	"Gender equality is fundamental to the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights women and girls continue to experience discrimination, violence and harassment in the world of work, as well as persistent gender gaps in employment, participation and pay." 15
	"Women's economic empowerment is central to realizing women's rights and equality with men." 16
	"Improving women's entrepreneurship in Africa requires increased and sustained action aimed at fighting discrimination and creating an enabling environment that better supports women's economic empowerment.

- 9. Ibid, p 5.
- 10. Declaration on Gender Equality, G7 Ministers, Paris, May 10, 2019, p. 2.
- 11. "France Promotes Feminist Foreign Policy" March 8, 2019.
- 12. Joint communique G7, Ministers of Education and International Development, July 5, 2019, Appendix p. 2.
- 13. G7 Social Communique, Ministries of Labour, June 7, 2019,

- p. 10.
- 14. Declaration on Gender Equality, G7 Ministers, Paris, May 10, 2019, p. 4.
- 15. G7 Social Communique, Ministries of Labour, June 7, 2019,
- 16. G7 Ministers Declaration on Gender Equality, May 10, 2019, p. 4.

### **RESULTS** OUTCOME AREA #2 (continued) "This includes addressing the barriers that limit women's RHETORICAL COMMITMENTS access to financing. Overcoming these obstacles will empower African women entrepreneurs to make the transition from micro businesses to SMEs."17 "We underline the importance of eliminating all barriers related to women owning or inheriting property and businesses, signing contracts, and owning and managing bank accounts."18 "Recognize women's access to financing plays a crucial role in adequately identifying and integrating gender considerations into environment and climate action."19 "It is also important to help women entrepreneurs to make the transition from micro businesses to SMEs, including by increasing access to finance for business growth and putting in place mechanisms for skills development, including for example systems of mentorship."20 "We recognize the need for more investment in human development in the Sahel with a strong focus of empowering women and girls..."21 "Improving women's entrepreneurship in Africa requires increased and sustained action aimed at fighting discrimination and creating an enabling environment that better supports women's economic empowerment. This includes addressing the barriers that limit women's access to financing."22 **POLICY COMMITMENTS** "We therefore reaffirm our support to the work of G7 assisting African countries in their efforts to remove obstacles to women's entrepreneurship, including social, legal and regulatory barriers and discriminatory norms, and to improve women's access to finance through efficient

### 17. Ibid, p. 6.

Entrepreneurs-Finance Initiative (We-Fi).

mechanisms that allow nondiscriminatory and more

effective access to finance and economic opportunities for

"We support the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) initiative including through the Women

all."23

<sup>18.</sup> Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship in Africa, August 26, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>19.</sup> Declaration of Intention of Support for Gender Responsive Environmental Action & Training (GREAT), May 6, 2019, p. 2.

<sup>20.</sup> Promoting Women's Entrepreneurship in Africa, August 26,

<sup>2019,</sup> p. 1.

<sup>21.</sup> Sahel Partnership Action Plan, August 26, 2019, p. 2.

<sup>22.</sup> Declaration on Gender Equality, G7 Ministers, Paris, May 10, 2019, p. 6.

<sup>23.</sup> G7 Ministers Declaration on Gender Equality, May 10, 2019, p. 6.

#### **OUTCOME AREA #2 (continued)**

#### **RESULTS**

#### **POLICY COMMITMENTS**

"We also further encourage the 2X Challenge and bilateral programmes supported by G7 members."<sup>24</sup>

"We... reaffirm our support to the work of G7 assisting African countries in their efforts to remove obstacles to women's entrepreneurship, including social, legal and regulatory barriers and discriminatory norms, and to improve women's access to finance through efficient mechanisms that allow nondiscriminatory and more effective access to finance and economic opportunities for all."

"With a view to increasing the empowerment and employability of individuals, especially women and young people, ... we commit to continuing our efforts to support partner developing countries in technical and vocational education and training (TVET). ... We look to pursue the following objectives with partners in developing countries:

 Providing young people and adults, especially women, with valuable transferable skills which maximize their productive capabilities, fostering their empowerment, inclusion and economic integration;<sup>26</sup>

"Recognize that promoting women's empowerment and notably women's entrepreneurship is a priority. We support the existing initiatives in this area, such as the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) or the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (Afawa) programme launched by AfDB;"<sup>27</sup>

"... we reiterate the fundamental importance of eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment. **We commit to developing and promoting policies** that prevent violence and harassment, responding effectively to violence and harassment, and supporting those affected..."<sup>28</sup>

"G7 Responses to Ensure Effective Gender Equality include comprehensive and cross-cutting policies and measures to:

- identify barriers women face in the labour market, remove these obstacles and combat gender segregation in the labour market;
- invest in skills and apprenticeship programmes...;

<sup>24.</sup> Biarritz Declaration for a G7 & Africa Partnership, August 26, 2019, p. 2.

<sup>25.</sup> Declaration on Gender Equality, G7 Ministers, Paris, May 10, 2019, p. 6.

<sup>26.</sup> Joint communique G7, Ministers of Education and International

Development, July 5, 2019, p. 2.

<sup>27.</sup> JOINT PARIS G7 / G5 SAHEL COMMUNIQUE, July 4, 2019, p. 3.

<sup>28.</sup> G7 Social Communique, Ministries of Labour, June 7, 2019, p. 20.

#### **RESULTS OUTCOME AREA #2 (continued)** increase women's access to highly paid and **POLICY COMMITMENTS** good-quality jobs... incentives for girls towards science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and jobs; fight gender stereotypes, enhancing women's entrepreneurship and encouraging better sharing of household and care responsibilities ... address the **gender gaps in employment**, participation and pay through policies to promote a better work-life balance through the availability of quality **public** childcare services, ... paid paternity leave and family-friendly working arrangements; close the gender pay gap for women... after maternity or parental leave; foster enterprises' wage transparency and gender equality self-assessments to identify the factors explaining possible gender pay gaps, and possible actions to reduce them; strengthen access to women's representation on corporate boards and in decision-making positions in both public and private sectors; implement systematic evaluation of gender gaps in companies, and where appropriate, with incentives and sanctions to close these gaps."29 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation initiated G7 Partnership **FUNDING COMMITMENTS** for Women's Digital Financial Inclusion in Africa. Pledges totaling \$116 million, towards an initial budget of \$225 million, were committed by the Foundation (\$73 million), France (\$25 million) and the United Kingdom (\$18.6 million).30 G7 leaders support the launching of an initiative to promote women's entrepreneurship in Africa (AFAWA) in partnership with the African Development Bank. France has committed up to \$135 million USD, as well as the United Kingdom at \$36 million the European Union at \$27 million, Canada at \$9 million, Italy at \$11 million and Japan has promised but not specified its own commitment. Most of these commitments have been put forward as loans and guaranty funds rather than donations31 "In reference with the G7 commitment in Elmau increasing ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITMENTS by one third until 2030 the share of women who can access TVET; special attention should be paid to supporting

women's participation in the science, technology,

<sup>29.</sup> G7 Social Communique, Ministries of Labour, June 7, 2019,

<sup>30.</sup> French Minister of the Economy and Finance Press Release on

the G7 Partnership for Women's Digital Financial Inclusion in Africa, July 18, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>31.</sup> G7 NGO debrief with French officials, August 25, 2019.

## **OUTCOME AREA #3:** Peace and Security

#### **RESULTS**

#### RHETORICAL COMMITMENTS

"engineering, and mathematics (STEM) sector and other high-paying male-dominated sectors..."32

"We encourage the efforts such as those by Nobel Peace Prize laureates Nadia Murad and Dr. Denis Mukwege to create a voluntary fund dedicated to survivors and victims of sexual violence."<sup>33</sup>

"We are gravely concerned about violence against women and girls, sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, violations and abuses against children, including the unlawful use and recruitment of child soldiers, and attacks on schools and hospitals and their personnel."<sup>34</sup>

"Urgent challenges still need to be addressed, (in the Sahel) including the lack of economic prospects and employment, especially for young people and women, limited access to resources, health systems and basic services such as justice, nutrition, education and social protection, and weak governance."<sup>35</sup>

"...we recall the importance of supporting inclusive peace processes that enable women's meaningful and equal participation. This includes ensuring that women have a formal place in the decision-making process and that their participation and contributions are fully considered and integrated into all phases of the negotiation and implementation of the agreement. It further requires recognition of important and necessary peacebuilding work that women's organizations and civil society undertake, including at the local level, in times of conflict as well as through prevention mechanisms and in post conflict situations."

#### **POLICY COMMITMENTS**

The G7 Leaders adopted a separate declaration... supporting the International Fund for Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.<sup>37</sup>

"We commit to strengthening the G7 and G5 Sahel partnership, which is key as the G7 provides half of the total annual ODA received by the G5 Sahel countries. We also recognize the importance of other stakeholders, such as civil society and diasporas that can play an important role for the overall development of their communities in countries of origin." 38

- 32. Joint communique G7, Ministers of Education and International Development, July 5, 2019, p. 2.
- 33. G7 Foreign Ministers: Dinard Declaration on Women, Peace and Security, April 5, 2019, p. 2.
- 34. G7 Foreign Ministers Communique, April 6, 2019, p. 4.
- 35. JOINT PARIS G7 / G5 SAHEL COMMUNIQUE, July 4, 2019, p. 1.
- 36. G7 Foreign Ministers: Dinard Declaration on Women, Peace and Security, April 5, 2019, p. 1.
- 37. Biarritz Chair's Summary on Fighting Inequalities, August 26, 2019, p. 2.
- 38. JOINT PARIS G7 / G5 SAHEL COMMUNIQUE, July 4, 2019, p. 1.

OUTCOME AREA #3 (continued)	RESULTS
FUNDING COMMITMENTS	G7 leaders will support the Nadia Murad's and Denis Mukwege's fund for survivors of sexual violence. France has committed up to €6,2 million, the European Union has committed up to €1 million, and some financial commitments have been made by Canada and Germany. <sup>39</sup> "We underline in particular the significant role played by the World Bank Group, the United Nations Development System, the African Development Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. We express our strong support for a successful nineteenth Replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA) and fifteenth Replenishment of the African Development Fund, with an enhanced focus in both funds on addressing fragility, including in the G5 Sahel States." <sup>40</sup>
ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITMENTS	Public statements have been made that the G7 expects to raise €45 million for Nadia Murad's and Denis Mukwege's foundations by 2022. <sup>41</sup>
OUTCOME AREA #4: Health	RESULTS
RHETORICAL COMMITMENTS	"We intend to take stock of, reaffirm and make new actions in developing countries to support positive results for all girls by: Promoting and protecting adolescent health and well-being through evidence-based health care and health information learning and ending discriminatory policies and practices of excluding pregnant or married girls from schools"
POLICY COMMITMENTS	None identified.
FUNDING COMMITMENTS	"Several leaders called for further investments to strengthen health systems, with a strong focus on the replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Several G7 members already announced a substantial financial contribution with a view to the Global Fund's replenishment conference" <sup>43</sup> • Italy announced a contribution of €161 million, Germany announced a contribution of \$930.4 million CAD. <sup>44</sup>

<sup>39.</sup> President Macron Press Conference, August 26, 2019.

<sup>40.</sup> JOINT PARIS G7 / G5 SAHEL COMMUNIQUE, July 4, 2019, p. 2.

<sup>41. 2019</sup> G7 Official Instagram Account.

<sup>42.</sup> Joint communique G7, Ministers of Education and International

Development, July 5, 2019, p. 2. 43 Biarritz Chair's Summary on Fighting Inequalities, August 26, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>44. 5</sup> Days, 5 Pledges, The Global Fund, 28 August 2019.

## OUTCOME AREA #5: Adolescent Girls / Education

#### **RESULTS**

#### RHETORICAL COMMITMENTS

"We are strongly committed to addressing and eliminating gender biases, inequality, stereotypes and gender discrimination. Far too many girls around the world, especially in the context of crises, continue to face barriers related to poverty, deep-rooted gender discrimination; school related gender-based violence including sexual violence, child, early and forced marriage, child and early pregnancy, and restrictive social norms and attitudes."

"... end violence in schools and other educational and learning institutions to ensure girls' safety in and on the way to school creating safe learning environments and encouraging existing global initiatives in this field..."<sup>46</sup>

"Promoting stronger transformational education institutions and a vision of empowered women and youth, while developing and supporting qualified female teachers in the classroom and in leadership positions..."<sup>47</sup>

"We recognize that improving gender equality in education remains an overarching need..."48

"Developing digital literacy and skills, particularly in the field of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), in order to equip young people, especially young women and girls, with the skills necessary to take advantage of the growth and prosperity promised by the digital economy, whilst protecting against online risks and harms, and promoting inclusion, notably for women."<sup>49</sup>

#### **POLICY COMMITMENTS**

"The G7 Gender at the Center Initiative (GCI) is a chance to mobilize the necessary political leadership and expertise at country level to rapidly step up progress in gender equality, in and through education." <sup>50</sup>

"G7 members will support advocacy for incorporation of gender equality at all stages of the sectoral dialogue within countries and specifically make the case for girls' education at global level when relevant." <sup>51</sup>

"In reference with the G7 commitment in Elmau increasing by one third until 2030 the share of women who can access TVET; special attention should be paid to supporting women's participation in the science, technology,

<sup>45.</sup> Joint communique G7, Ministers of Education and International Development, July 5, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>46.</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>47.</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>48.</sup> Sahel Partnership Action Plan, August 26, 2019, p. 3.

<sup>49.</sup> Digital Transformation in Africa, August 26, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>50.</sup> Joint communique G7, Ministers of Education and International Development, July 5, 2019, Appendix, p. 1.

<sup>51.</sup> Ibid, Appendix, p. 2.

OUTCOME AREA #5 (continued)	RESULTS
POLICY COMMITMENTS	"engineering, and mathematics (STEM) sector and other high-paying male-dominated sectors"52
	"We intend to make new actions in developing countries to support positive results for all girls by:
	<ul> <li>"Continue to support 12 years of quality education for all children with a focus on the hardest to reach girls, including girls in situations of conflict, crisis and fragility, rural girls, married girls, and girls with disabilities;"53</li> <li>"Promoting gender-responsiveness in education systems to address the barriers girls face, to incorporate gender-responsive education policies into planning, budgeting, implementing, monitoring and reporting"54</li> </ul>
FUNDING COMMITMENTS	The United Kingdom, France, Germany and the European Commission have committed to funding the Gender at the Center Initiative for a total of 6 million USD. <sup>55</sup>
ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITMENTS	None identified.

*We recognize the need to mobilize further implementation of concrete local solutions equality for example, the financing of properties workshops to train women in climate negotians.	
building) and to address barriers to access women actors."56  "We recognize the vulnerability of women climate change and environmental degrace their vital role in environmental management catalysing sustainability. We reiterate our empowering women and girls"57  "Complex and pressing global issues (in the climate change, desertification, environment and lack of energy access, may also deepen of the population, as 83% of total employr countries is related to the food economy (West Africa Club)."58	es for gender rojects such as rojects such as rotiations (capacity ress to funding for and girls to relation, as well as rent and in rommitment to re Sahel), including rental degradation ren the vulnerability ment in the G5

<sup>52.</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>53.</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54.</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55.</sup> G7 Public Announcements, August 26, 2019.

<sup>56.</sup> Declaration of Intention of Support for Gender Responsive Environmental Action & Training (GREAT), May 6, 2019, p. 3.

<sup>57.</sup> G7 Environment Ministers' Communique, May 5, 2019, p. 1.

<sup>58.</sup> JOINT PARIS G7 / G5 SAHEL COMMUNIQUE, July 4, 2019, p. 1.

OUTCOME AREA #6 (continued)	RESULTS
POLICY COMMITMENTS	None identified.
FUNDING COMMITMENTS	In a rare moment of solidarity, the G7 committed \$22 million USD to fight the outbreak of fires currently taking place in the Amazon. <sup>59</sup> None of this funding was offered with a gender lens and it was rejected by Brazil. However, this is worth noting as a starting point for civil society to push for gender-transformative commitments as part of future G7 actions on climate change.
ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITMENTS	None identified.

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**Questions or comments?** Contact Lyric Thompson at Ithompson@icrw.org





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