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The Deutscher Frauenrat (National Council of German Women's Organizations) hosted the 2022 Women7 Dialogue during Germany's G7 presidency (W7 Germany). In a multi-stage consultation process, W7 Germany 2022 brought together an international network of feminist civil society organizations and advocacy groups with the aim of placing gender equality at the heart of G7 negotiations and formulating powerful demands to G7 leaders. Funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth (BMFSF), the Deutscher Frauenrat is an umbrella organization of 60 nationwide women's associations and organizations. The members include professional and religious associations, women's groups within political parties, trade unions, the German Sports Federation, and non-partisan organizations with a diverse array of social and political objectives.



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Introduction

In 2022, at the invitation of the Deutscher Frauenrat, 64 activists and representatives of feminist and women's organizations from around the world – the Women7 (W7) Advisors – gathered to analyze the most pressing issues relating to gender equality and women's rights. In the fourth year of its existence, the W7 dialogue convened amidst a multitude of spiraling and unprecedented global crises. While the world was dealing with the Co-vid-19 pandemic's virulent socioeconomic repercussions, looming global sovereign debt, and the climate crisis, Russia's war against Ukraine demonstrated once again that gender equality must be placed at the heart of international politics. At the same time, those crises and their impacts underscore the fragility of efforts to achieve a more gender-equal world. Global developments such as a gender backlash, anti-feminist, anti-rights, and anti-democratic movements are on the rise, resulting in the fight against gender-based and intersectional forms of discrimination such as racism being misread as a luxury extra. These important issues have thus failed to be adequately analyzed within most policy fields.

Against this momentous backdrop, in May 2022 W7 handed over the W7 Communiqué and Implementation Plan to German Chancellor and G7 President Olaf Scholz. The Group of 7 (G7) is an informal forum of the world's (formerly) most powerful economies, which still produce nearly half of global GDP. The two documents were developed during a six-month consultation process with the W7 Advisors, initially accompanied by the W7 Think Tank for two months. With an explicit focus on the Global South and guided by an intersectional approach, the documents contain concrete recommendations to G7 leaders on the following six key areas as depicted on the right:

To guide the discussion within these policy fields, W7 Germany defined the following four key demands as prerequisites for achieving progress in gender equality: 1) ensuring meaningful participation and representation; 2) applying gender as a cross-cutting principle; 3) implementing gender-responsive budgeting; and 4) investing in sex and gender-responsive intersectional approaches to data generation. Given the political virulence of the global health crisis and the gender backlash, healthcare and the rights of LGBTIQ* people constitute cross-cutting issues.

Following months of advocacy, several consultative processes in various fora, and a week-long Strategy and Evaluation Meeting in October 2022, W7 is now evaluating the outcomes of the 2022 German G7 presidency, guided by the slogan "Progress towards an equitable world." This Report Card aims to document various voices of the W7. However, the assessment and analysis provided do not necessarily represent the W7 advisors' positions unanimously.



Women's Economic Empowerment, Justice and Rights



Gender-Equitable COVID Recovery



Climate Justice



Feminist Foreign Policy



Ending VAW and Gender-Based Violence



Accountability Mechanisms

¹ The W7 Think Tank is a group of expert representatives from civil society organizations based in Germany. It advised the Deutscher Frauenrat on topics of political relevance for Germany's G7 presidency.

² W7 recognizes that the term "Global South" can reproduce problematic, i.e., colonialist connotations that emerge from and cement global economic and political power imbalances. In this Report Card, the term is used to accentuate the apparent power imbalances that exist between the G7 and non-G7 countries and regions that have been historically exploited by European and "Western" actors, at least some of which are members of the G7.

This analysis follows a two-step approach. In the first step, we looked at a total of thirteen G7 leaders' and ministers' communiqués, declarations, statements, and publications, and compared their rhetorical, political, and financial commitments to W7's demands on the G7. In a second step, the Report Card was discussed at the in-person W7 Strategy and Evaluation Meeting in October 2022, where the Advisors, who were assigned to working groups tackling the six key themes, gave answers to three guiding questions³ in order to evaluate the G7 outcomes.

The results of that process fed into this publication. Each W7 key theme is discussed in a separate chapter. In three tables, we assess each of the themes and give them scores according to what extent the general W7 key demands and specific topic demands have been considered. We also give an overall score with regard to what W7 considers laudable on the one hand and poor/insufficient on the other.

The Report Card thereby builds on similar previous publications that evaluated the G7's commitments towards gender equality (ICRW 2018; 2019). While this Report Card does not claim to be comprehensive, we do believe it will be helpful to NGOs and government bodies both within and outside G7 countries that are working to promote gender equality and women's rights. It should also facilitate continuity across future W7 presidencies and dialogues.

³ Guiding questions:

- 1) What are some of the surprising/promising points that emerged from this year's G7 process?
- 2) What are some of the disappointments/inadequacies, what are key setbacks? Where do you see room for improvement and why?
- 3) What do you consider the most important takeaways regarding your specific key topic? Where do you see potential to develop and establish political continuity in this year's process and the years to come?

W7 Key Areas

Before considering the separate key areas, it should be noted that generally the documents contain language and rhetoric that suggest a growing awareness of gender equality as a politically relevant issue. This is also demonstrated in the explicit reference to LGBTIQ* rights across the ministerial tracks. However, the level of inclusivity varies, depending on the policy field. For instance, the Finance Ministers' Communiqué acknowledges the role of "women and under-represented groups for the long-term success of economies" (G7 2022e, 3), whereas the Leaders' Communiqué contains a reference to protecting "transgender and non-binary people" from discrimination and violence (G7 2022j). The Gender Equality Minister's Joint Statement goes even further and speaks about strengthening the rights of people regardless of their "gender identity or expression or sexual orientation" (G7 2022i, 1). These kinds of discrepancies are also demonstrated in the degree to which gender equality plays a role in political commitments. While some ministerial declarations, such as the development ministerial track, ascribe a high level of importance to gender equality, other documents include almost no reference to it. In addition, the documents feature several passages containing colonialist language when denoting countries in the Global South as "vulnerable and developing countries" (G7 2022j, 3).

These differences and inconsistencies make it difficult to assess the degree to which the G7 are committed to pursuing the various propositions. Gender equality ministers are in favor of gender equality becoming a "cross-cutting and guiding principle for all policy objectives" and claim to make achieving it their "political priority" (G7 2022i, 1). They also acknowledge and highlight the work of both W7 and the Gender Equality Advisory Council (GEAC). However, they make no commitment to letting the work of those institutions substantially guide future gender equality policy. In the following, the W7's six key themes and related demands will be contrasted with the G7 outcomes, deriving an overall score.



Gender-Equitable Covid-19 Recovery Plan

W7 calls for a Covid-19 recovery plan that is gender-transformative and addresses the structural inequalities – particularly of BIPOC and LGBTIQ* – that the pandemic and other crises have amplified. Those inequalities relate to a severely underfunded healthcare sector, underpaid and unpaid care work, and unequal distribution of and access to vaccinations and medication as well as to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) (W7 2022a). During Germany's G7 presidency, those issues became neglected as the focus shifted from responding to the pandemic's impact on global economies and their recovery to Russia's war against Ukraine.



Rhetorical commitments

In an attempt to find answers to these and other crises, the G7 Finance Ministers promise to drive “a strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive global recovery” (G7 2022e, 3). Almost all G7 publications acknowledge the massive socioeconomic impact of the pandemic but there are remarkable incongruences in the degree to which gendered effects are reflected upon in the proposed pandemic responses. For example, the G7 development ministers emphasize the multiple intersectional inequalities that the pandemic has amplified, while the G7 Employment Ministerial Communiqué (G7 2022d) makes very little reference to gender inequalities. This is particularly surprising given the pandemic's short-term and long-term impact on gender and the unfair division of care work.

Overall, there seems to be a stronger focus on intersectional inequalities in societies outside of G7 states. This is particularly evident in the development minister track's focus on Africa. While W7 welcomes this degree of awareness of the pandemic's impacts in the Global South, this kind of focus constitutes a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it runs the risk of diverting attention from the pre-existing and ongoing structural (i.e. political, economic, and social) inequalities between the Global North and South, for which the former bears much responsibility. On the other hand, this singling out of Africa neglects other regions and countries of the Global South that have been equally impacted upon by the pandemic and other crises. In addition, that approach entails the risk of perpetuating the colonialist narratives of, as the G7 put it, “vulnerable developing countries” (G7 2022j, 3) in need of assistance. Thus, that approach is not in line with a feminist foreign policy critical of power structures, as advocated by W7.



Political commitments

It is laudable that the finance and health ministers plan on engaging in dialogue with each other, as that signals an understanding of the need for trans-sectoral cooperation in tackling the pandemic and other global health crises such as the rise in antimicrobial resistance.

The G7 health ministers have committed themselves to “participatory processes, including a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, in strong cooperation with civil society” that ensure “better health outcomes for all” (G7 2022h, 1). At the same time, the finance ministers have committed to “driving a strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive global recovery” (G7 2022e, 3). However, there is a severe lack of political commitments to make these outcomes guaranteed and measurable. The W7 has thus identified a lack of political and financial commitments to overcoming the massive shortages within global healthcare infrastructures and the severe care work crisis exposed by the pandemic.

First, W7 denounces the austerity politics that have come to the forefront in some G7 countries. Yet there appears to be no commitment to putting an end to those policies that are so damaging in the long term. Instead, strategies such as public service cuts continue to be pursued. This goes hand in hand with a lack of guaranteed universal social care, although the rhetoric continues to suggest ongoing commitment to that (ibid.). In addition, there are insufficient guarantees that essential healthcare services will be upheld during the current and any future pandemic(s). Also, access to SRHR services is severely impaired, which impacts on maternal mobility in particular. These issues remain unaddressed in the G7 Covid response commitments.

Second, W7 places progressive taxation at the heart of demands for gender-transformative and feminist macroeconomic recovery packages. Progressive taxation means proportionately higher tax rates for those natural persons and corporate bodies with higher income or more wealth. As proven elsewhere, this approach, in combination with commitments to cancelling all sovereign debt, would not only allow for global reallocation of wealth but also provide countries in the Global South with sufficient fiscal space to pursue inclusive and (gender-)just recovery strategies. As of now, there is a need for tax policy transformation that does not come at the cost of middle-income and low-income countries.



Financial commitments

The G7’s biggest financial commitment of 2022 is the “Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment,” encompassing USD 600 billion in grants, funds, and private corporate money. It is intended to support middle-income and lower-income countries in addressing climate change and promoting gender equity and access to healthcare. While that may sound promising, this counter-project to China’s Belt and Road Initiative barely addresses what W7 has formulated as one of its core demands to G7 leaders. W7 sees the need for an additional two percent of a countries GDP to be invested in fostering structural change that is sustainable and ensuring gender-transformative healthcare services. As part of their infrastructure initiative, the G7 have committed to providing USD 79 million to support the Childcare Incentive Fund , managed by the World Bank. Disappointingly, however, it turns out that this sum is a mere drop in the ocean. It is just 0.002% of Germany’s GDP, for example, and does not constitute a much-needed comprehensive improvement to social infrastructure – including healthcare, education and psychosocial care – and mobility infrastructure that are accessible to all members of society, not just one or two singled-out groups. Universal social protection that follows an intersectional approach would place care work at the heart of Covid-19 recovery plans.

Consideration of W7 **key demands** ⁴

W7 key demands	Included
Ensure meaningful participation of women and girls	X
Apply gender as a cross-cutting principle in domestic and foreign policies	X
Implement gender-responsive budgeting globally and domestically	X
Invest in a sex and gender responsive intersectional approach to data generation	X

Consideration of **specific W7 demands** ⁵

Demand	Included
Enable gender-just Covid-19 recovery, adopting transformative economic policies that address structural barriers to gender equality	X
Commit to the funding of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services as essential services both within and beyond the formal health system by 2030	X

Overall score	
Grade	Area
Laudable	Awareness of some of the effects the Covid-19 pandemic and other crises have had on people's lives
	Trans-sectoral cooperation between health and finance ministers to tackle crises
Poor/insufficient	Lack of concrete political and financial commitments
	Lack of awareness of specific intersectional effects of the pandemic
	Unbalanced focus on the Global South, esp. Africa

⁴ The Women7 Communiqué (W7 2022a, 1) lists all four key demands in the form of general recommendations.

⁵ The Women7 Communiqué (ibid.) lists a total of seven specific demands within the six key themes in the form of general recommendations.



Women's Economic Empowerment, Justice and Rights

The gender pay and pension gap are two of the many ways in which women's economic empowerment and rights and access to economic participation are impaired. W7 have called on G7 leaders to close those gaps once and for all. This will require a significant shift in policy towards ensuring decent work, equal access to education, and the removal of structural barriers and intersectional forms of discrimination.



Rhetorical commitments

The G7 Employment Ministers have declared that they will address labor-market challenges in a needs-based manner, irrespective of a person's "gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation or economic status", ensuring that no one is left behind (G7 2022d, 2). This intersectional perspective is pivotal to ensuring women's economic empowerment and rights. However, there are several inconsistencies that undermine such a universal formulation. For example, as migrants and refugees from regions outside the G7 that have been hit by disaster or conflict face difficult and often discriminating (i.e., racist, and sexist systemic mechanisms that exclude equal access to paid labor), W7 demands prioritization within the world of work of the "needs of women confronted with and affected by conflict and disaster, crisis and displacement, such as refugees and those fleeing from war" (W7 2022b, 5). However, the employment ministers have merely emphasized the need to provide Ukrainian refugees with access to employment and decent work, in line with ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation (No. 205) Focusing on a particular nationality and thereby failing to speak universally for all people fleeing from war and conflict undermines the intersectional perspective that has been asserted. That claim then appears as nothing more than rhetoric, as it is not consistently found across the G7's joint declarations. In addition, the employment ministers have asserted that they aim to pursue a transition to green (i.e., decarbonized, and digitalized) economies (G7 2022d), but they have not expressed any commitment to environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards or shown that they regard care work as a "green job", as advocated by W7 (W7 2022b, 9).



Political commitments

In their joint statement, the G7 Gender Equality Ministers mention advancing women's entrepreneurship as a political focus (G7 2022i, 1). The statement has an entire page dedicated to the obstacles that women entrepreneurs face in the world of business and finance, and it even quotes the W7 Communiqué. However, this section of the text remains highly descriptive. It gives no indication as to how these obstacles are to be overcome, in either political or financial terms. This constitutes a major disappointment for W7.

In a similar vein, the G7 do not reiterate or emphasize the need for international regulations that assure decent work in sectors that have a predominantly female workforce and are structurally underfunded, such as care work, healthcare, and domestic work. While one of W7's aims is to counteract gender stereotypes and norms in any part of society, including gendered and racialized work sectors, binding international conventions such as ILO C189 (Domestic Worker's Convention) and C190 (Violence and Harassment in the Workplace Convention) are crucial to make workplaces safe for women in all their diversity.

As a precondition for decent work, access to quality education and the necessary means for its facilitation is of utmost importance to W7. The Implementation Plan (W7 2022b) demands that global education financing be protected from aid cuts and that ten to 15 percent of ODA funding be directed towards education by 2030.

G7 leaders have expressed their concern about the "global learning crisis": they aim to protect and prioritize girls' education and they underscore key cooperation partners for tackling the crisis, such as the Global Partnership for Education (G7 2022c, G7 2022j). But expressing concerns or listing important partners is not enough. Progressive change that systematically tackles the pandemic-induced learning and education crisis must be gender-transformative and follow an intersectional approach.

When it comes to trade and supply chains, G7 leaders indicate that they wish to strengthen the WTO, but their statements lack any kind of gender and feminist perspective. This weakens the credibility of assertions that trade policies are made in the feminist spirit (G7 2022c, i).



Financial commitments

Tax avoidance and illicit financial flows are of major relevance in the looming sovereign debt crisis, particularly in countries of the Global South. Therefore, W7 recommends applying an intersectional lens to tax policy that is cognizant of the multiple and intersectional inequalities that global finance policy creates, and the cancellation of all outstanding sovereign debt (Women7 2022a, b). The G7 recognize that there remain significant "tax challenges arising from globalization and digitalization of the economy" on a global level (G7 2022j, 9), which are to be tackled by the OECD / G20 Inclusive Framework Two-Pillar Solution⁷. Such commitments will not suffice to contain illicit financial flows and tax fraud and, ultimately, to end the sovereign debt crisis, which plays a key role in impairing equal access to economic participation for women and marginalized groups in particular.

⁷The Two-Pillar Solution will ensure that multinational enterprises (MNEs) will be subject to a minimum tax rate of 15%, and will re-allocate profit of the largest and most profitable MNEs to countries worldwide (OECD 2021).

Consideration of W7 **key demands**

W7 key demands	Included
Ensure meaningful participation of women and girls	X
Apply gender as a cross-cutting principle in domestic and foreign policies	X
Implement gender-responsive budgeting globally and domestically	X
Invest in a sex and gender responsive intersectional approach to data generation	X

Consideration of **specific W7 demands**

Demand	Included
Eliminate discrimination against women in all their diversity in the world of work and entrepreneurship	X

Overall score	
Grade	Area
Laudable	Awareness of some of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic
	Some awareness of intersectional forms of discrimination in access to the labor market and decent work
Poor/insufficient	Lack of awareness of specific intersectional effects of the pandemic on the world of work
	Lack of concrete political, and financial commitments to ending the sovereign debt crisis (Global South) and ensuring economic justice
	Singular focus on refugees from Ukraine and easy access to the labor market
	Lack of concrete measures to tackle the pandemic-induced global learning and education crisis



Climate Justice

Due to its omnipresence in everyday international politics, the ongoing climate emergency and its effects have played a major role in Germany's G7 presidency across all policy fields. Without a doubt, the G7 are some of the biggest drivers of the climate emergency. W7 calls on the G7 to acknowledge that, first, the crisis has a disproportionate effect on countries in the Global South and that this requires, for instance, direct funding to women, women's rights, and gender-justice organizations. Second, some of those countries are already suffering badly from a crisis for which they bear little to no responsibility. Thus, W7 holds the G7 responsible for counteracting the disastrous and life-threatening consequences of climate change that are bound to unfold in the years to come.



Rhetorical commitments

Some of the G7 publications acknowledge the multiple harmful effects of the climate crisis and biodiversity loss on gender equality as well as on peace and security (G7 2022b, g, i). Given the lack of awareness of these intersectional issues demonstrated in previous years, this is a promising signal, suggesting as it does a more holistic approach in climate policy. Yet there appears to have been a setback to some of the goals set in the Paris Agreement of 2015 that address the gendered repercussions of the climate crisis and advocate climate justice, especially regarding indigenous communities and POC.

The G7 Environment, Climate and Energy Ministers' Communiqué includes formulations that "stress the intrinsic value of gender and LGBTQ+ equality, the empowerment of women and girls, disability inclusion, inter-generational justice and diversity" (G7 2022b, 8). What this "intrinsic value" applies to exactly and how it will translate into concrete policy is not indicated. Many of the ministers' goals are strongly linked to economic growth, which is unlikely to ensure gender-transformative and just transitions that mitigate the climate crisis and ensure equal economic participation. W7 stresses the need to meet and surpass the USD 100 billion climate finance goal, which, in the ministers' communiqué, is supposed to be met by 2025. Given that the goal was set in Glasgow in 2021 and that time is running out, it is about time steps were made toward achieving that goal.



Political commitments

Several of the assessed publications contain fairly concrete commitments addressing the global climate crisis. For example, the initiation of the Climate Club and the explicit commitment to the 1.5-degree goal are crucial steps towards serious action. W7 welcomes the G7's aim to:

“deliver climate, energy and nature policies, plans, finance and actions that advance gender equality, gender empowerment and social inclusion, enabling locally-led adaptation and mitigation as well as conservation and sustainable use activities and addressing the barriers to accessing climate, energy and nature finance faced by local civil society organizations, such as women's rights organizations, and by indigenous peoples” (G7 2022b, 8).

However, it remains unclear how those goals are to be pursued after the end of Germany's G7 presidency. From a W7 perspective, there is not enough commitment to finding “ecosystem-based and community-driven solutions that reject false solutions such as geoengineering, nuclear energy, and corporate ‘greenwashing’” (W7 2022b, 8). Instead, nuclear energy, for instance, remains an acceptable part of energy generation with “the highest standards of nuclear safety and security” (G7 2022b, 32).

Another major demand from W7 is to address climate migration, i.e. migration and displacement caused by climate change, with international human rights law (W7 2022b, 9). While the G7 foreign ministers' statement on climate, environment, peace, and security touches upon the matter of gender equality in the response to the crisis, there is no indication of a shift towards acknowledging climate migration as a human rights law issue.



Financial commitments

W7 lauds the G7 Climate, Energy, and Environment ministers for recommitting “to increasing the gender-responsiveness and inclusivity of our climate and biodiversity finance” (ibid. 3). Unfortunately, no precise figures or indicators are provided. For instance, the issue of gender-transformative carbon pricing, emphasized by W7, is not addressed at all.

Since the sudden invasion of Ukraine took over as a leading topic, the issue of food security was not explicitly addressed in this year's W7 dialogue. However, Russia's blockade of the Black Sea and Ukrainian ports for much of 2022 exacerbated the fragile state of the global food supply, already suffering from unequal distribution of resources and the consequences of climate change. One of the G7's rare concrete financial commitments was a USD 4.5 billion investment in the newly funded Global Food Security Initiative. This will neither suffice to tackle the massive shortages in staple foods and the respective hunger and nutrition crises, nor will it build and support infrastructure in both urban and rural areas or support a civil society that represents the most marginalized and underrepresented groups, including people living with disabilities, LGBTIQ* people, and indigenous people. It also remains unclear how and to what extent those funds will reach grassroots organizations and people on the ground.

Consideration of W7 **key demands**

W7 key demands	Included
Ensure meaningful participation of women and girls	✓
Apply gender as a cross-cutting principle in domestic and foreign policies	✗
Implement gender-responsive budgeting globally and domestically	✓
Invest in a sex and gender responsive intersectional approach to data generation	✗

Consideration of **specific W7 demands**

Demand	Included
Invest in gender-transformative climate action and in biodiversity conservation measures that are ecosystem-based, divest from fossil fuels, and ensure the leadership of women in decision-making	✗

Overall score	
Grade	Area
Laudable	Commitment to 1.5-degree goal
	Awareness of the links between the climate, pollution, and biodiversity crises
Poor/insufficient	Lack of sufficient climate funding that is gender-responsive and needs-based
	Lack of a carbon-pricing system that is socially and gender-just
	Lack of awareness of the systemic, incl. socioeconomic, consequences that the climate crisis is already having and will have



Feminist Foreign Policy

W7 is calling for a radical shift in foreign policy towards a feminist foreign policy (FFP) that is transformative and focuses on the structural inequalities (patriarchal, colonial, and racist power hierarchies) with which women in all their diversity are confronted and which foreign policies can reinforce (W7 2022b). Foreign policy played a particular role in this year's G7 process. On the one hand, the German government followed Canada and France in committing to align its foreign and development policy with feminist principles in 2021 (Bundesregierung 2021). On the other hand, Russia's war of aggression led to an unprecedentedly high number of leaders' meetings and statements in support of Ukraine. In the face of these political changes, it is laudable that, for the first time ever, the G7 Leaders' Communiqué⁸ includes a reference to FFP: the G7 aim to strengthen the "rights, resources and opportunities for women and girls in all their diversity in every sphere [...] in the spirit of feminist development, foreign and trade policies" (G7 2022j, 17). While strong in its message, this announcement raises several points of concern:



Rhetorical commitments

First, this precise formulation is found only once across all of the documents. In addition, most of the ministerial tracks do not even mention a feminist approach within their respective policy field. For example, while the Development Ministers' Communiqué explicitly outlines the scope of a future feminist development policy (G7 2022c), the Foreign Ministers' Communiqué does not include any reference whatsoever to FFP (G7 2022f). Unlike in the Leaders' and Development Ministers' Communiqué, the G7 Foreign Ministers also leave aside LGBTIQ* rights and intersectional forms of discrimination, merely highlighting women and girls as groups particularly affected by e.g., conflict or violence. Overall, this reduces FFP, if it is mentioned at all, down to a women's and girls' issue. Such a stance ignores the structural dimensions that underlie and produce conflict, violence, and discrimination. For example, the Foreign Ministers' Communiqué underscores the need to adhere to agreements made in Doha on the rights of Afghan women. Yet, Afghan women were absent from those consultations. This is contrary to both the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, which all G7 members agreed to further strengthen through the Women, Peace and Security Partnership Initiative (G20 Research Group 2018) and to what W7 is calling for, namely to "prioritize and ensure women's meaningful participation in peace processes at all levels, with at least 50% representation" (W7b, 11). However, there exists a discursive gap between FFP and the WPS. That is, the G7 do not consider the WPS agenda part of a possible FFP.

⁸ Cf. Otterstein and Standke-Erdmann (2022) for a more detailed analysis of the G7 Leaders' Communiqué.

In addition, the G7 have committed to “free, fair, non-discriminatory, rules-based and sustainable trade” in their “Resilient Democracies Statement” (G7 2022k, 2), omitting any reference to a feminist trade policy. If not backed up by concrete transformative policy measures, statements about feminist trade policies, as lobbied for by the Canadian government in line with its feminist trade initiative, become nothing more than rhetoric, with no substance.

Another point of major concern for W7 pertains to the global fight against rising anti-gender, anti-rights, and anti-feminist movements. The G7 have only rhetorically committed to “counter[ing] the rising tide of authoritarianism and backlash against women’s and girls’ rights across the globe” (G7 2022j, 23). However, tangible commitments to addressing the global backlash against the rights of especially BIPOC and LGBTIQ* are nowhere to be found.



Political commitments

Secondly, these incongruences give little indication of what concrete political steps might be brought in to back up this rhetoric. W7 calls for collective commitment to comprehensive and binding regulations that ensure ethical means of production, such as the ILO C190. Given the lack thereof, a comprehensive and transformative shift in policy seems unlikely. In addition, there is almost no commitment to global efforts towards disarmament, as is called for by W7.

Another major point is limited acknowledgment of structural discrimination like racism, colonialism, and the patriarchy. Overcoming such forms of discrimination is a prerequisite for the implementation of a feminist foreign policy as envisioned by W7. Although the term “feminist” appears occasionally throughout the documents, these formulations are not given adequate context and/or accompanied by political and policy commitments.

In addition, W7 has identified tremendous inconsistencies between aspirational foreign policies that are labelled as feminist and actual domestic policies. Foreign policy can only be comprehensively feminist if it is backed by a feminist domestic policy that also addresses societal conflict and inequalities emerging from racism and the patriarchy.



Financial commitments

Third, given the widespread lack of political commitments, the simultaneous absence of financial commitments is less surprising. There are no concrete financial and political commitments to provide sufficient funds to, for instance, local women’s and feminist organizations that could help ensure an inclusive and participatory foreign policy. The UNSCR Agenda on Women, Peace and Security is mentioned as an important tool for inclusive peacebuilding, but there is no indication that there will be an increase in funding, despite an awareness of the situation of women in Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Yemen. With regards to development policy, the G7 continue to commit to the “0.7% ODA/GNI target” (G7 2022c, 1), and at least some of the G7 members have fulfilled their promises in this regard in recent years. However, this outdated goal from the 1970s lags far behind the current intersecting challenges that require a much higher percentage of national income to be allocated to ODA. In addition, W7 demands that all projects funded by ODA should follow a gender-transformative approach.

Furthermore, military spending has been on the rise. This is partly because of the war against Ukraine, but there are also general increases in national military budgets, especially in NATO member states. Such increased spending is in opposition to a feminist foreign policy as envisioned by W7, which should be an instrument to achieving eventual peace and eschew militarized conflict.

Consideration of W7 **key demands**

W7 key demands	Included
Ensure meaningful participation of women and girls	X
Apply gender as a cross-cutting principle in domestic and foreign policies	X
Implement gender-responsive budgeting globally and domestically	X
Invest in a sex and gender responsive intersectional approach to data generation	X

Consideration of **specific W7 demands**

Demand	Included
Commit to the adoption and effective implementation of a feminist foreign policy, placing gender equality as a central goal across all foreign policy and development areas	X

Overall score	
Grade	Area
Laudable	Foreign, trade, and development policy are referred to as “feminist” for the first time ever in G7 agreements
	Some awareness of the need for meaningful participation of women as well as the protection of rights of non-binary and transgender people / LGBTIQ+ (depending on publication/track)
Poor/insufficient	Lack of concrete political and financial commitments to fund e.g. the WPS Agenda
	Lack of awareness of specific intersectional structural discrimination that are inherent to esp. foreign policy
	Lack of a feminist approach to security policies despite lip service to a feminist foreign policy



Ending Violence against Women and Girls and Gender-Based Violence

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) and gender-based violence (GBV) and their eradication play a recurring yet marginal role in G7 publications. Although the publications refer to “sexual and gender-based violence” (SGBV) in publications, the issue is, primarily raised when speaking about conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) in specific conflict regions or countries. The development ministers and foreign ministers focus particularly on Somalia and Ukraine, with the latter gaining the most attention. This has the effect of missing an important point raised by W7. CRSV as a military tactic and a consequence of conflict and war is unquestionably a major human rights issue, yet the G7’s strong focus on CRSV in specific regions actually diverts attention away from the fact that SGBV is a constant threat that particularly women in all their diversity are likely to encounter at some point during their lives. In other words, the G7’s publications fail to adequately address the continuum of violence in GBV, which must be tackled with an intersectional perspective. In addition, with reference to W7’s demands that FFP must incorporate reduced military spending, no link is made between the massive increase in arms exports and SGBV and the severe lack of accountability when it comes to indirectly supporting militarized conflicts and human-rights violations.



Rhetorical commitments

Almost all G7 publications strongly condemn the SGBV and CRSV proven to have occurred in the context of the war in Ukraine. In the foreign and security policy segment of the Leaders’ Communiqué, the G7 commit to “improv[ing] documentation and accountability for human rights violations and abuses, such as sexual and gender-based violence, including in conflict situations” (G7 2022j, 23). However, raising concerns and condemning acts of inhumane violence is not enough to establish the systemic support that women and girls in all their diversity need – through local and women-led organizations, for instance. One of the rare rhetorical commitments in this regard is found in the Development Ministers’ Communiqué. In it, the ministers assert that they “aim to increase work with LGBTIQ[*] civil society and human rights defenders” (G7 2022c, 7).

Another important but severely neglected point is the massive increase in SGBV brought about by the pandemic. The G7 Health Ministers’ Communiqué is the only publication that expresses awareness of this worrying issue, which has been overshadowed by the strong focus on CRSV in Ukraine (G7 2022h).



Political commitments

Overall, the documents' passages on SGBV remain purely descriptive in their accounts of who is particularly affected by it. They offer very little substance when it comes to policy and the political level. G7 Leaders fail to reiterate the importance of multilateral agreements designed to counteract SGBV, such as the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW.

W7 criticizes the regional focus that the G7 take when addressing SGBV and wishes to highlight inconsistencies in political direction. When considering the human rights situation in Libya, G7 leaders state that "progress must be made on justice and accountability for human rights abuses, including conflict-related sexual violence and regarding refugees and migrants" (G7 2022j, 20). Here, W7 directs critical attention at the fact that some of the human rights violations against refugees and migrants in Libya were committed by its coastguard, with which the German foreign office and the EU's coastguard agency Frontex recently decided to continue cooperating. All of this weakens the G7's credibility and the FFP that the G7 claim they aim to pursue.



Financial commitments

W7 clearly emphasizes the urgent need to invest in domestic and international prevention, protection, and response programs. For instance, an additional USD 100 million for UN Women, including the UN Women-managed UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, as well as a fixed percentage of GDP, are required to ensure the maintenance of survivor-centered response services and to make programs affordable and accessible. However, no tangible commitments have been made. The topic of SGBV seems to be given very little political, and thus financial, clout. That constitutes one of the greatest disappointments of this year's G7 process from a W7 and feminist perspective.

Consideration of W7 **key demands**

W7 key demands	Included
Ensure meaningful participation of women and girls	X
Apply gender as a cross-cutting principle in domestic and foreign policies	X
Implement gender-responsive budgeting globally and domestically	X
Invest in a sex and gender responsive intersectional approach to data generation	X

Consideration of **specific W7 demands**

Demand	Included
Ensure long-term, flexible, and sustainable funding for the prevention, mitigation, and redress of gender-based violence (GBV) including comprehensive, integrated, and survivor-centered services particularly for marginalized communities such as BIPOC, LGBTIQ+ people, women and girls in conflict and crisis situations, and people with disabilities	X

Overall score	
Grade	Area
Laudable	Awareness of and willingness to address CRSV
Poor/insufficient	Lack of awareness of the SGBV that women in all their diversity face outside of militarized conflict situations
	Lack of political commitments to ending SGBV
	Lack of financial commitments to strengthening prevention, protection, and response programs



Accountability Framework and Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Equality

Although the G7 are an informal forum of states whose agreements are not legally binding, their economic and political power makes it incumbent upon the members to self-monitor. Also, feminist civil society will closely assess implementation of the promises they make. Accountability mechanisms are one of civil society's most important control mechanisms to ensure that gender equality is followed up on by the G7. Not only are those mechanisms relevant for tracking continuities and potential progress, they are also indispensable for holding the G7 to account for their set and missed goals. There are barely any long-term institutionalized accountability frameworks to track and trace what is decided on during each presidency. One of the rare exceptions is the G7 Accountability Working Group's (AWG) triannual Progress Report (BMZ 2022) which, however, merely covers the outcomes of development policy and does not address domestic policy.



Rhetorical commitments

The subchapter on Gender Equality in the Leaders' Communiqué mentions W7 and GEAC as points of reference and includes formulations that suggest a higher awareness of the need to tackle the various challenges that women and girls in all their diversity are currently facing (G7 2022i). The development ministers commit to "supporting the implementation of the UN LGBTI Inclusion Index as a central tool to create disaggregated data and to improve the development outcomes of LGBTIQ* persons" (G7 2022c, 8). These rather technical formulations categorize LGBTIQ* people and their rights as measurable markers and units and suggest an ignorance of the political and violent realities that LGBTIQ* people face around the world. In addition, the focus on accountability mechanisms for LGBTIQ* rights in regions outside the G7 is another example of the one-sided emphasis on the Global South mentioned previously and the attendant lack of focus on the shortcomings and political challenges in domestic policy (see part 1). That means that both documents fall short when it comes to outlining the control mechanisms that states can apply in the monitoring of policy developments towards gender equality on both a domestic and a global level, as these are irrevocably intertwined. This, in turn, leaves questions unanswered about how the G7 envision genuinely improving women's and marginalized groups' rights in the long term.



Political commitments

W7 calls for rigorous implementation and monitoring of “all GEAC and W7 recommendations since 2018” and the creation of “an annually updated dashboard.” In this regard, W7 applauds the recently launched G7 Dashboard on Gender Gaps. In general, the data presented on the Dashboard presents a first step towards domestic accountability on gender equality. For future dashboards, there is the need for more transparency. In its current state, the dashboard lacks validity as the graphs presented give no indication of the research design, the origin of the data and explanation thereof. In addition, despite the leaders’ and development ministers’ emphasis on strengthening LGBTIQ* rights, the Dashboard contains a merely binary view on equality between men and women, neglecting an intersectional perspective that would include people who identify as transgender or non-binary. In these times of the anti-rights, anti-democratic and anti-gender backlash, promoting and improving the rights of LGBTIQ* and BIWOC is of crucial importance if we are to shine a light on the multiple and intersectional inequalities confronting individuals who identify as such. Apart from the G7 Dashboard, there is little demonstration of political will to establish or commit to new accountability mechanisms. In addition, accountability for algorithmic decision-making systems remains entirely unaddressed.



Financial commitments

Overall, the G7 have made very little financial commitment to long-term institutionalized mechanisms that might ensure gender equality in all spheres of life. A large gap has become apparent between the comparatively progressive language on the one hand and financial commitments for which G7 states can be held accountable on the other. For example, there are no national or international indicators or markers that would allow for coherent tracking of financial flows within G7 countries and to the Global South, let alone show how much of this money actually reaches its intended target. As of now, there are more concrete commitments that depend on the investments of private individuals and that benefit very specific fields such as healthcare or that in many cases reinforce gendered norms due to a lack of inclusion of women’s and grass-roots projects.

Consideration of W7 **key demands**

W7 key demands	Included
Ensure meaningful participation of women and girls	✗
Apply gender as a cross-cutting principle in domestic and foreign policies	✗
Implement gender-responsive budgeting globally and domestically	✗
Invest in a sex and gender responsive intersectional approach to data generation	✓

Consideration of **specific W7 demands**

Demand	Included
Report annually on progress towards gender equality and accountability within the G7	✓

Overall score	
Grade	Area
Laudable	Commitment to the UN’s LGBTI Index
	First steps towards domestic accountability through G7 Dashboard on Gender Gaps
Poor/insufficient	Lack of concrete political and financial commitments
	Lack of awareness of specific intersectional effects of the pandemic

This report card analyzes to what extent the outcome of this year's German G7 presidency shows tangible commitments to delivering on gender equality. Overall, there are three major positive developments.

First, the language has become more progressive. W7 applauds the shift towards more inclusive language. While acknowledging that the G7 forum was never meant to be a beacon of progressive politics (G20 Research Group 2018), it is worth reflecting upon the political signals sent by this development. Second, there is substantial acknowledgment of the massive sociopolitical and economic repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic. Third, there appears to be heightened awareness of the interrelatedness of the multiple crises that are shaping people's daily lives.

However, important questions remain unanswered. It is still unclear to what extent we will see a continuation of this rhetoric during Japan's presidency. At the same time, the year 2022 has revealed unprecedented discrepancies between the G7 and G20 on the political and economic levels. While navigating the various problems such as the food and energy crises, war and militarized conflict, it will be difficult for the upcoming G7 and G20 presidencies to uphold these commitments in the months to come. The wording "developing and vulnerable countries" recalls colonialist attitudes to development policy when the term commonly used in policy and NGO contexts is "Global South" (see Footnote 1 on problematic language use).

Another recurring and pressing question is what exactly "feminist" policies entail, be they in foreign, trade, or development policy. How will these differ in substance from previously pursued policies? In this regard there is a lack of analysis that adequately takes into account factors such as racism and the patriarchy as structures of oppression. Finally, there is a severe lack of financial commitment in all the policy fields addressed. The question remains of who can and will be held accountable and who will monitor those processes. In a time of unprecedented crises, this year's G7 slogan is unquestionably fitting. But W7 is worried by the lack of concrete political and financial commitments that would demonstrate a genuine awareness of these crises and the need to tackle them right now, because it is time to deliver on a gender-just future.

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