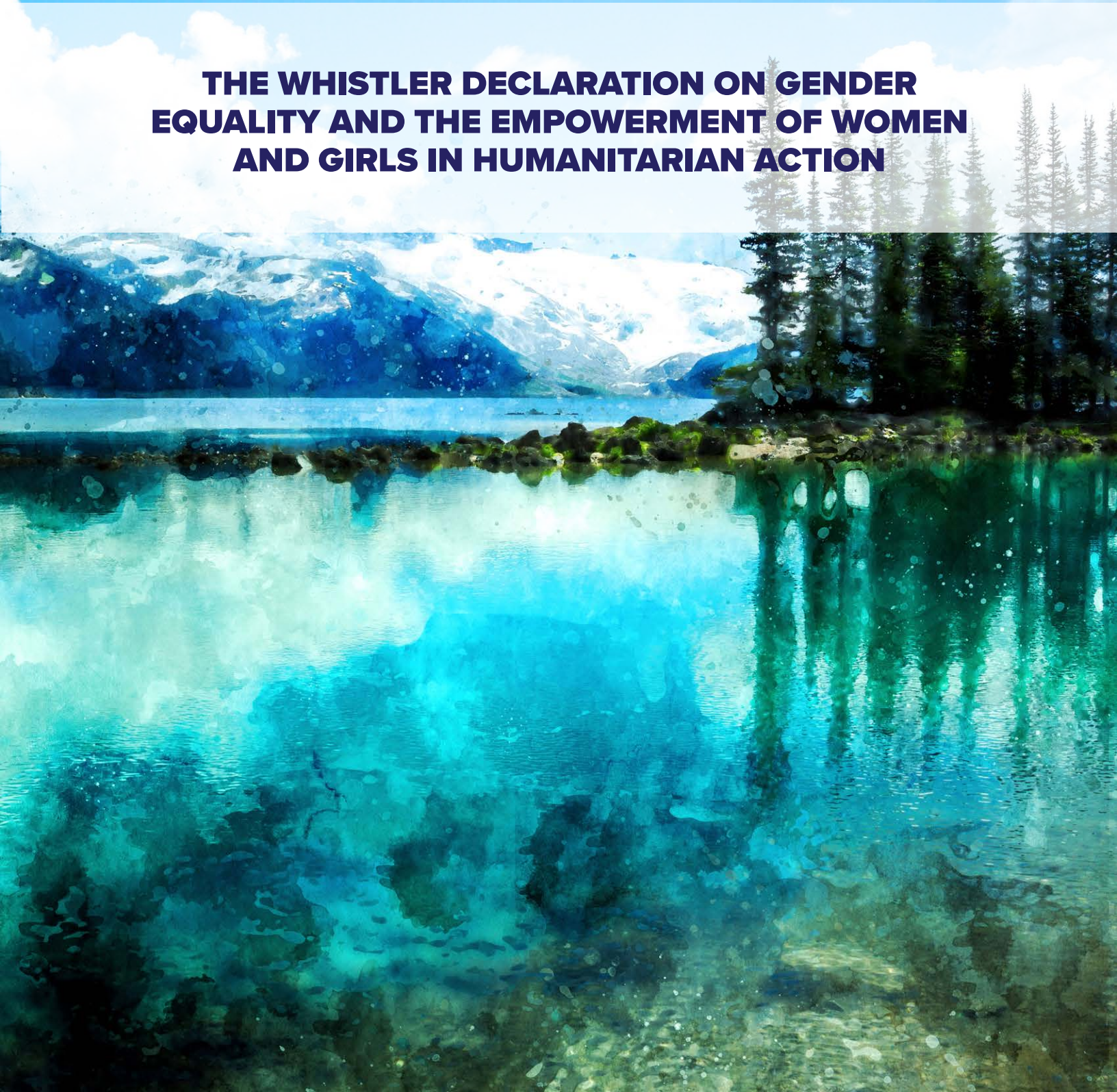




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## **THE WHISTLER DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION**



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# THE WHISTLER DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The specific needs and rights of vulnerable populations still risk being overlooked or unmet in humanitarian responses, and, in particular the voices and leadership of women and adolescent girls have remained undervalued and untapped.

Important steps have been taken by the international community to realize gender equality in humanitarian contexts. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Women Peace and Security agenda, and other efforts supported by the G7, such as the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, and the World Humanitarian Summit outcomes, all include important commitments to working better to address the needs of vulnerable populations in conflict and fragile settings.

But these steps have not yet sufficiently changed the way humanitarian assistance is being delivered to affected populations. We, G7 Development Ministers recognize the importance of advancing gender equality in all our humanitarian activities and actions by specifically addressing the needs of women and girls. We recognize that effectively protecting and reaching the most vulnerable, including persons living with disabilities, requires an understanding of their distinct needs and the capacities of those affected. Women and adolescent girls are powerful agents of change; they are leaders. They must be recognized as such and have an equal voice and representation in making decisions on issues that affect them.

Together we will work with our partners to promote system-level change, and ensure that humanitarian action is principled, evidence-based, and empowering, and recognizes that interventions to meet basic needs include access to education, health care for girls, and the prevention and response to gender-based violence.

Our Governments will:

- Urge humanitarian partners to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment in their programming including by pursuing gender analysis, collecting disaggregated data, and consulting and including affected women and adolescent girls' voices to shape their responses;
- **Work with heads of humanitarian agencies and their executive boards to make gender equality an organisational priority in humanitarian action, through actions such as** establishing senior gender champions; enacting senior level leadership and country-level accountabilities; and leveraging human and financial resources to realise implementation;
- **Strengthen prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV) in crises** by upholding international law and humanitarian principles, and supporting the field implementation of the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies;
- **Strengthen women and girls' access to health care** by funding and monitoring the implementation of the full range of internationally-agreed standards of humanitarian health response in crises;
- **Increase accountability to affected populations** by supporting the meaningful field-level participation, leadership and decision-making of women and adolescent girls, including those living with disabilities, throughout humanitarian action, including through funding to local women's organizations, where appropriate and possible;
- **Enhance the utilization of research and evidence to improve the impact of humanitarian assistance on gender equality;**
- **Increase system accountability for consistent implementation of commitments for women and girls in humanitarian action** by building on existing independent monitoring mechanisms that report on field-level implementation and performance by humanitarian partners.

To ensure sustained follow-up on these actions, Canada will host a high-level meeting in 2019, ahead of the Women Deliver 2019 Conference in Vancouver, to review progress in addressing gender equality in humanitarian action.