

P R E S S E M E L D U N G**Millions of children at risk if G7 fails to find long-term solutions for key global and humanitarian issues**

Taormina, 26. Mai 2016. G7 leaders, meeting in Sicily today, must make firm commitments to address key global issues like food insecurity, migration and lack of education to avoid plunging millions more children into hunger and extreme poverty, Save the Children is warning.

“The G7 meeting of the world’s richest nations comes at a time of deep global uncertainty but failure to act would be catastrophic for millions of children in desperate need,” said Egizia Petroccione, Head of Advocacy and Policy at Save the Children Italy, who is attending the G7 Summit.

“The consequences of inaction are just too high for children – nutrition is a matter of life and death. We need to see firm commitments from world leaders to help the world’s poorest nations. More than this, leaders must live up to their previous commitments on the quantity and quality of aid and be made accountable for their pledges.”

At the 2015 summit in Germany, G7 leaders vowed to help lift 500 million people out of malnutrition. Yet, globally, 159 million children have been left stunted because they don’t have enough to eat.[\[1\]](#)

Every year 3.1 million children die due to malnutrition but 2017 threatens to be especially dire as devastating drought grips East Africa. If humanitarian assistance is not stepped up, alongside clear plans to strengthen resilience, more than 1 million children in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen are at risk of death.[\[2\]](#)

Yet, even as need grows, some of the wealthiest nations in the world have proposed the harshest cuts. The US administration has revealed plans to reduce its aid budget by a third and Australia’s aid budget is due to hit a historic low this year. Aid contributions have fallen in almost a quarter of all OECD countries.

“The G7 must use the meeting in Italy to reverse this course and step up, instead of roll back, their aid commitments so that we can stop global challenges from becoming unmanageable catastrophes in which millions more children could lose their lives,” said Petroccione.

“Leaders must make sure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and development aid policies feature prominently at the summit. Commitments should also look to the future. While more funding is needed for famine stricken countries today, further pledges should be made to ensure we can better prevent crises from happening again. Governments should invest in long-term food security and nutrition policies to help millions of children to survive and ultimately reach their full potential.”

Education must also be a key priority of G7 leaders, with 263 million children and youth out of school worldwide.[\[3\]](#) Figures show that refugee children are disproportionately affected and 3.7 million, almost half of refugee minors, are not in school.[\[4\]](#)

“For too long G7 leaders have focused on stopping migration and beefing up border patrols, at the expense of improving the outcomes for some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised children,” said Petroccione. “Brave leadership is needed so that the protection and safeguard of children is a priority in the management of migration flows. The G7 leaders must respond to this moral challenge and opportunity by cooperating with the countries of origin, transit and destination.”

Notes to editors

- Global spend on development aid reached a new peak in 2016 of USD 142.6bn, but this increase was heavily driven by spend on refugees within donor countries and masks a 4 percent drop in bilateral aid to the poorest countries.[\[5\]](#)
- In February, the UN identified a \$4.4 billion funding gap that needs to be filled so that life-saving food, health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene assistance could be secured drought-ravaged Somalia, Yemen, South Sudan and Nigeria.[\[6\]](#)

To arrange an interview with one of our staff at the G7 summit please contact Eleonora Tantaro eleonora.tantaro@savethechildren.org / +39 346 8893629

[1] UNICEF / WHO https://www.unicef.org/media/files/JME_2015_edition_Sept_2015.pdf

[2] UNICEF https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/index_95476.html

[3] UNESCO <http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/OOSC%20press%20release.pdf>

[4] UNHCR <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/sep/07/nearly-half-of-all-refugees-are-children-unicef-report-migrants-united-nations>

[5] OECD <http://www.oecd.org/dac/development-aid-rises-again-in-2016-but-flows-to-poorest-countries-dip.htm>

[6] UN http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56223#.WSdjEhMrl_U

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