

**GLN Communiqué on Financing for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health in a
Time of Austerity
22 September 2026, United Nations, New York**

We, the members of the Global Leaders Network and partnering sovereign states- gathered on the margins of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly for the high-level session on *"Financing for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health in a Time of Austerity"*- reaffirm our shared and unwavering commitment to the health, rights and well-being of women, children and adolescents.

Today's meeting comes at a crucial moment for global health and development. Intersecting crises, including geopolitical uncertainty, rising debt burdens, and historic contractions in official development assistance, are placing growing pressure on health systems and national budgets and threatening decades of progress in women's, children's and adolescents' health.

Compounding these challenges are growing efforts to roll back hard-won rights, particularly sexual and reproductive health and rights. When shrinking resources converge with organised pushback against human rights, the consequences fall hardest on those already facing the greatest barriers to care. We reaffirm that protecting the health, rights and dignity of women, children and adolescents is fundamental to achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

We therefore call for a decisive shift towards stronger, more sustainable, country-led health financing, underpinned by a determination for all countries to attain health sovereignty. We commit to financing mechanisms that uphold the ability of countries to determine, mobilise and direct resources according to their own priorities and the needs of their populations. We call on donor partners to support this shift by aligning their assistance more closely with nationally determined priorities and plans, as contemplated in the Lusaka Agenda.

We cannot allow a period of fiscal constraint to become a period of lost progress. We therefore call on governments, development finance institutions, international partners and the wider global community to act with collective urgency.

We commit to catalyse domestic resource mobilisation and to explore diversified financing mechanisms, such as blended financing, optimised pooling, debt swaps, and other emerging evidence-based innovations. These approaches must be appropriately implemented, adapted to national contexts, and embedded within country-led financing models.

We will carry this agenda beyond the 81st United Nations General Assembly by leveraging the GLN platform to engage governments, technical expertise and investors. We will advance practical financing solutions, facilitate South-South learning, and hold ourselves accountable for the commitments made here today.

The health and well-being of women, children and adolescents must remain a political and financing priority and stand as a measure of our shared commitment to sustainable development.