

SDG SYNTHESIS

And the G20

Initial briefing for the C20-2024



Executive Summary

Throughout three meetings of C20, the civil society has built an overview of 2030 Agenda and has reiterated the called of the responsibility of Sherpas and heads of government with the effective participation of civil society in the formulation and monitoring of initiatives to achieve the Sustainable Development Agenda and to guaranteeing effective actions for the construction of a sustainable society - through policies that articulately address the social inequalities and discrimination, promote gender equality and ensure social protection for the entire population. Among the main demands for the G20 2024, civil society points out the urgency of tariff exemption and infringement Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) for vaccines and other inputs related to the fight against COVID-19, the equal distribution of immunization agents around the world – with state policies that ensure donations to poor countries and emphasis on the African continent -- and expansion of financing for universal policies.

Below, we present the analyzes and recommendations of the C20 2021, 2022 and 2023.

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The C20 has constantly asked the G20 to be “stronger in fostering UN frameworks and goals, faster in sharing its financial power, clearer in promoting human rights at home and in the international arena, and accountable on its commitments.”

While we welcome the effective and inclusive dialogue with some G20 Working Groups, we remain concerned with the sharp asynchronies in the openness, transparency and opportunities for substantive civil society engagement with the process of many other Working Groups, such as the Trade and Investment WG as well as the Finance Track in its entirety. This created tangible difficulties in interacting with the G20 process on economic and financial issues, despite the cordial and continued interaction with the representatives of the Presidency. We therefore reiterate our call for a much deeper integration between the G20 Sherpa and Finance Tracks in one comprehensive track with common and consistent modalities for civil society participation, under the responsibility of the Sherpas and Heads of Government.

We renew this call, insisting on the need for policy coherence. We consider the joint ministerial meetings organized this year as positive steps that should be maintained and increased in the next years and we propose again to institutionalize a joint Ministerial Meeting between the Development and Finance WGs.

C20 also calls for an institutionalisation of a Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting and of official mechanisms to ensure gender mainstreaming in each G20 Working Group. Under the framework of the human rights, we have been guided by four overarching principles: the

adamant determination to leave no one behind; the necessity of a gender-transformative approach in all decision-making; the need for a comprehensive vision for realising sustainability with the policy coherence to respond to the challenges faced by humankind and the planet. This means taking care of vulnerabilities, protecting diversities and biodiversity, putting at the center of the policies women and girls in all their diversity, promoting the One Health approach, fostering meaningful environmental and energy policies together, with the UN Principles on business and human rights (PBHR) to guide the just transition by tackling together the climate, environmental and social challenges.

Careful attention must be given to provide adequate social protection floors to everyone at all stages of their life cycle by ensuring that all human beings in all their diversity have access to the conditions for livelihood, such as health care, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. Furthermore, develop guarantees that people is able to address lifecycle risks and shocks, as well as face vulnerabilities created by systematic and intersecting forms of oppression, discrimination and violence, including gender-based violence.

Strong action must be taken towards tax and financial justice to provide the needed resources to support inclusive economies based on the respect for workers and consumers, and by recognizing the unaccounted value of unpaid care work.

VACCINES

In 2024, the G20 has an opportunity to be historically important, and one of the fields where the G20 can show its real political will, coherence, and leadership is the decision on the TRIPS waiver for vaccines and COVID-related goods. The distribution of the vaccines is outrageously unequal in the world, maintaining the poorest part of the world in more vulnerable conditions and keeping the world exposed to new strands of the virus. The pledges to donate vaccines are far from the real needs, while the Covax initiative that ended in 2023 was not capable of supplying the constant demand. The efficient way to increase vaccines' production is through the TRIPS waiver. We call the G20 to clearly support this proposal in the WTO. Any veto on the waiver is only to maintain the power in the hands of the private companies that reached an oligopolistic primacy thanks to public resources provided internationally. People's lives should come before profit.

SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS

Existing social protection programs remained inflexible with dispersed targeting schemes and limited capacities to prepare households to cope with multiple devastating shocks.

To strengthen adaptive social protection that is responsive to the world's vulnerable citizens. G20 countries must provide adaptive social protection to informal workers, vulnerable

workers (precariat), refugees, persons with disabilities, children who are at risk of human trafficking and child labor, migrant workers, unpaid care workers and those who are at the lowest bottom of socio-economic groups through the promotion of active labor market policy and flexicurity (flexible and security) policies as universal protection (SDG 1, 3, 4, 5, 8). The adaptive social protection must ensure that those vulnerable groups have the resilient capacity in terms of resources of income, jobs, and social safety nets in order to prepare, cope, and to adapt into covariate circumstances. Under this adaptive social protection recommendation, we propose that G20 member countries focus in two ways: 1) social protection schemes must put poverty alleviation programs as priority and; 2) the schemes must ensure equal access to health services including long-term medical treatment and social support.

(C20 2022 - Policy Pack - pág 58)

"Believe that our world cannot be destined to stay in turmoil and call upon the leaders of the G20 to step forward and act to promote peace, humanity, justice, and equity, and strengthen efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We call for enhanced intergovernmental partnerships and partnerships between governments and respective civil societies to resolve the critical issues of our time and build a strong foundation for a just, equitable, and sustainable future for all with the vision of One Earth, One Family, One Future."

(C20 2023 - Communiqué)

SOVEREIGN DEBT

The majority of civil society organisations from around the globe still have some concerns about the role of the private sector in debt relief efforts as well as in the debt restructuring process, including:

1. The private sector already failed to act in good faith after the G20 called on private creditors to suspend servicing repayments under the DSSI, and is failing so far in committing to comparability of treatment and debt restructuring under the Common Framework. The G20 and IIF sponsored Principles for Stable Capital Flows and Fair Debt Restructuring, which supports a voluntary contractual approach to sovereign debt restructuring, have clearly not worked. We note that François Villeroy de Galhau, Governor of the Banque de France and Dr. Yi Gang, Governor of the People's Bank of China, are co-chairs of the Trustees of the Principles. We wonder whether that interferes with independence of central banks participating in the G20, and with the possibilities of the G20 to adopt effective measures to ensure private sector involvement and comparability of treatment in debt restructurings, within or outside the Common Framework.

2. As civil society organisations, we have monitored with concern that the Institute of International Finance (IIF), as spokesperson of the private sector to the G20, as well as IIF

members have argued towards debtor countries in favour of more debt issuance and against participation in the DSSI and Common Framework with various arguments. Credit rating agencies are members of the IIF but their approach has not been challenged as regards the long-term positive impacts of debt restructuring efforts and negative impacts of debt restructuring delays. Nevertheless, the G20 is providing the IIF and private creditors privileged access to G20 finance track working groups, seminars, conferences, and the G20 presidency. In contrast, debtor developing countries and their citizens who suffer from the cuts in government budgets, have not been able to address the G20 finance track directly.

3. We also consider the G20's endorsement of the IIF/OECD debt transparency initiative, based on the IIF's Voluntary Principles for Debt Transparency, as vastly insufficient and incoherent. The IIF's claim to sponsor debt transparency is not consistent with the IIF's Global Debt Monitor reports and IIF members' holdings of developing country debt not being publicly transparent. Furthermore, only two IIF member banks have disclosed loans to the OECD registry.

4. The G20 action on debt has been far from addressing the emergency for broad debt restructuring and cancellation for various low- and middle-income countries and contrasts with recommendations made by civil society. The G20 did not enforce the private creditors' participation in a context of increasing private debt holdings and high interconnectedness within the financial sector. This can have long lasting effects, amplified by increasing commodity prices, particularly for food and energy, higher inflation, economic effects of the pandemic, tightening monetary policies, geopolitical tensions and the urgent need to finance a climate-friendly transition.

(C20 2022 - Working Group - pág. 34 a 35)

The C20 encourages greater efforts by G20 countries to strengthen the Global Health Architecture, including the role and effectiveness of the World Health Organization (WHO) to fulfil its mandate. Further work is necessary to maximise available global health resources of non-state actors, global health financing, and investments towards pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPPR). This includes the functions and authorities of WHO to monitor and evaluate the International Health Regulations on a regular basis to prepare for future pandemics and protect the global community.

We note with concern the shrinking civic space of communities and civil society in global dialogues and especially the lack of transparent, inclusive and meaningful engagement in decision-making platforms and mechanisms of the majority of institutions within the Global Health Architecture as witnessed in discussions around the Financing Intermediary Fund (FIF) for PPPR in the official spaces of the G20.

The right to participation is now widely accepted in development cooperation and institutionalised in the HIV, TB and malaria sectors such as within the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Stop TB Partnership, RBM Partnership to End Malaria, GAVI and Unitaid to name a few.

We draw on the experiences from the ACT-A that accountability and transparency mechanisms must be built into governance structures and that representation for decision-making processes and that representation must be set up, co-created and grounded in equity, inclusion and ensure greater parity with strong representation from LICs and LMICs, and communities and civil society.

- We call on G20 countries to align with the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To achieve this, G20 leaders must address inequalities and adhere to the principle of transparency, accountability and inequalities in materialising global health security.
- The C20 calls the G20 to acknowledge the urgency of Sustainable Health Financing. The long-term domestic financing of health systems must be addressed immediately, including the addressing of issues such as debt restructuring and introducing/implementing progressive taxation to increase the fiscal space needed sustainably.

(C20 2023 - Policy Pack - pág. 11)

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The multidimensional crisis resulting from COVID-19 has had devastating impacts on workers. Health services and social protection are the sectors most visibly disrupted.

Countless livelihoods of citizens around the world have been destroyed: many have been pushed into forced employment in the informal sector, small and medium enterprises have collapsed, self-employment and footloose employment opportunities have disappeared and domestic workers have been laid off. While the global economy is steadily recovering the recovery is not equally enjoyed in many countries due to the differing economic realities.

In the 2021 G20 Rome Declaration, the leaders of the world's major economies admitted that the COVID-19 pandemic was a grave challenge for communities throughout the world. The pandemic has aggravated disparities in the labour force resulting in negative impacts for vulnerable workers (see Declaration; #35; 2021).

The pandemic has pushed at least 20 million people into extreme poverty. This is on top of the 82.4 million people who were forcibly displaced and the 161 million people who are suffering acute food shortages (see UNOCHA, 2022).

This is particularly true for low- and middle-income countries, which currently remain impoverished and trapped in a cycle of poverty, hunger, debt and other hardships of tight savings amid the pandemic (IATF, 2021). The United Nations has warned of prolonged, unequal and uncertain economic recovery from the pandemic and expects that around 750 million people across the world will be plunged into severe poverty by 2030, and a quarter of which or some 169 million people will experience extreme poverty as a direct consequence of the pandemic (see UNDP, 2021).

One in 29 people on the globe needs more social protection. The number of people who need humanitarian assistance has increased by 39 million people for a total of 274 million people (see Global Humanitarian Overview, 2022). Children, particularly girls, have been deprived of their education. The rights of women and girls are threatened, and the development decade is in jeopardy. Mobility restriction and a disrupted global supply chain have not only adversely affected prosperity, but also mental health as a result of unemployment, food shortages, isolation, intensifying violence to women and children and limited access to education, including sexual health and reproduction.

In addition, the United Nations recognizes that the specific needs of persons with disabilities are often overlooked, especially in the early phases of humanitarian emergencies, and that they, particularly women, children and older persons with disabilities, are exposed to discrimination, exploitation, violence, and sexual and gender-based violence, and may be excluded from support and services (Executive Committee 61st session, United Nations General Assembly document A/AC.96/1095, UNHCR Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Program, 12 October 2010).

The pandemic has widened gender and economic gaps. The impacts from crises are never gender-neutral, which has been borne out once again with the impacts of COVID-19. Women and girls are the most socially and economically affected parties.

They lose their jobs or suffer a reduction in their working hours, meanwhile healthcare needs and domestic work, physical and mental pressures are intensifying. There is little social assistance or protection from the government or non-government organizations (see UN Women, 2021) to address these issues. In 2021, around 435 million women are expected to fall in poverty due to COVID-19 (see UN Women, 2020).

With the ongoing climate change crisis, the global percentage of extreme poverty is estimated to increase by an additional 100 million people by 2030 (Hallegatte et al. 2016). Poverty can be the main source of vulnerability and constrain people to mitigate, cope with, and curtail the hazard consequences. A number of studies have documented that poor households resort to "negative coping mechanisms" to smooth consumption, including by changing healthy intakes, selling houses as the only asset they have, going into debt to moneylenders, and

removing children from school. Poverty also can prevent the adoption of livelihood strategies and higher-risk investments in support of greater preparedness and longer-term adaptation, leading to a state of chronic vulnerability to shocks. Thus, for many poorer households, the ability to bounce back to a pre-shock state of well-being is acutely limited, creating poverty traps and, at a societal level, undermining poverty reduction efforts.

1. There is a rising number of people who need humanitarian assistance during the past few years due to the covariate shocks (polycrisis) – climate, energy and food crisis, and conflict.
 2. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine is disrupting the supply chain and global food security leaving 17.7 million people destitute.
 3. As of 2022, the Official Development Assistance (ODA) is the major source of humanitarian financing, however it only covers 65% of the funds needed for humanitarian assistance.
 4. The Development Assistance Center (DAC) member countries have yet to fulfill their commitment to allocate 0.7% of their annual GNI for international development.
 5. Remittances have served as a household safety net during COVID-19, with a rise of 8% in total remittances sent by immigrants from 2018-2021.
 6. The cost of sending money across international borders continues to be high, around 6.4 percent on average. This is still well above the SDGs target of 3 percent of total funds by 2030.
- To set remittance costs at only 3% of funds (SDG 10.c). G20 countries, either as sending or receiving countries, must accept that remittances can make a significant contribution in enhancing the quality of human development. G20 countries must facilitate safe, low-cost and fast remittance transfer process with the adoption of digital technology to ensure great financial inclusion among migrant workers;
 - The COVID-19 pandemic triggered changes in the composition of the workforce with high numbers of furloughed employees and informal workers, vulnerable workers (precarariat), unpaid care workers.

These above circumstances contributed to the widening income-gap, especially for women, people with disabilities, refugees, and migrant workers.