

A new challenging vision: from inclusion to empowerment of women

People all over the planet are at the epicentre of three epochal influences - the pandemic crisis, the climate crisis and the technological revolution. These will have considerable social, economic and environmental impact for years to come, particularly on women. We, the representatives of Women 20 2021, call on G20 leaders to address gender inequalities, establish sustainable development policies, employ and fund strategies to support the empowerment of women, with priority on tackling the intersecting structural barriers that negatively impact women and girls in all their diversity, by implementing our main focus areas and cross-cutting recommendations:

- 1. Place gender equality at the heart of budgeting decisions** by creating inclusive and innovative economic models that work for women and focus on achieving human well-being;
- 2. Ensure equal representation of women at all levels of decision making** in public and private, national and global, political and economic bodies by 2030; adopt multi-year plans to achieve this goal and monitor progress annually;
- 3. Collect, analyse, and report on all areas identified in this Communiqué using gender-sensitive and disaggregated data;**
- 4. Develop gender impact assessments, leaving no one behind,** in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all legislative, political, strategic and programmatic initiatives including post-pandemic reconstruction plans, and climate response strategies;
- 5. Promote education by investing in infrastructure** to ensure women and girls have access to and participate in pre-school to tertiary education, including early education and STEAM programs; bolster technical and vocational training, digital, financial and entrepreneurial skills, and lifelong learning. This is to enable women to secure quality employment with continuing education and progression during career breaks.

Focus area: CULTURAL CHANGES AND GENDER STEREOTYPES

Discriminatory social norms, gender stereotypes and unconscious biases, including those potentially captured in new technologies, produce a distortion in all aspects of life which reinforces and sustains gender inequalities in education, the workplace, family, and broader society. G20 governments need to formulate national plans to tackle gender stereotypes within the next three years, support organisations addressing these issues, and allocate funds for policy implementation.

- 1. Develop lifelong learning programmes and campaigns to address gender stereotypes** by a) introducing curricula that aim to eliminate unconscious biases and stereotypes, in all professional fields, and from pre-school to tertiary education; b) developing age-appropriate content with a focus on human rights, equality, respect, financial education, caring skills, and critical use of the internet, social media and artificial intelligence; c) updating and revising school texts including women's history; d) implementing actions for empowerment and diverse role-modelling;
- 2. Provide systematic awareness-building measures to combat sexism and gender biases** by a) mobilising all key multipliers (educators, researchers, politicians, doctors, among others) to enhance full participation of women in all aspects of society; b) encouraging media players and publishers to apply a gender lens, establish frameworks, guidelines and guaranteeing equal representation in media content creation; c) encouraging men and boys to take action on gender equality.

Focus area: HEALTH EQUITY AND GENDER MEDICINE

Universal access to quality health care is an essential prerequisite for a better and sustainable future. The successes of recent decades in reducing levels of maternal and child mortality must not be set back and access to services for sexual and reproductive health rights diminished. COVID-19 recovery planning provides an opportunity to use planetary health as a guiding development narrative, given the widely recognised interconnection between safeguarding of the earth's ecosystem and human health (One Health).

- 1. Guarantee health and care for all** by a) ensuring adequate and equitable financing of infrastructure and services; b) strengthening gender sensitive public health care systems; c) offering the best prevention and universal health care including people with disabilities and older people; d) ensuring strong development of local public health services for primary and secondary health prevention, including mental health issues; e) taking advantage of artificial intelligence and telemedicine; f) ensuring sexual and reproductive health services, specified as essential services by WHO 2020, as well as modern and free contraception, and dissemination of comprehensive information and guidance;
- 2. Promote free, universal, accessible, and affordable health care systems to combat COVID-19 and halt the pandemic and other globally significant existing and potential future diseases** by a) guaranteeing equitable access to all control tools, drugs including vaccines and medical devices, supporting

W20 Communiqué

research to produce thermostable vaccines and drugs that do not need low temperatures for transporting and distributing to isolated regions; b) supporting the temporary waiver of patent rights of the Trade and Intellectual Property Rules to enable the production of COVID-19 vaccinations in more countries and accelerate the global effort to contain the pandemic and to address health globally as one nation;

3. Develop and fund multidisciplinary strategic plans on Gender Medicine by a) investing in research that considers biological and gender differences in essential risk factors, biomarkers, mechanisms and outcomes of diseases, drug metabolism and response, and in relation to specific lifecycle requirements.

Focus area: WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FINANCE

Women have been hit harder than men in this pandemic crisis, in particular entrepreneurs. G20 members must develop a strategic policy to reinforce and relaunch female entrepreneurship, that generates multiplier effects to create jobs, drive innovation, and reduce inequalities, including sectors impacted by the pandemic and climate change. Women entrepreneurs have the potential to add \$13 Trillion USD to the global economy by 2030 (McKinsey, 2020) to help humanity build forward better, and contribute to government tax revenues. We call on G20 leaders to implement OECD suggestions for a strategic policy framework.

1. Ensure equal rights to ownership of assets and remove barriers to financial inclusion for all women by a) legislating for equal rights for women to finance and investments, ownership of land and assets, inheritance rights, pensions and insurance, mobile and cryptocurrency bank accounts, and devices for access to these assets, achieving financial independence and self-sufficiency;

2. Facilitate access to finance, and capacity building for all, in particular for solopreneurs and microenterprises by a) developing and promoting inclusive financial solutions, in partnership with public, private and civil society institutions, including microfinance, credit schemes and alternative systems of collateral to increase women's access to finance; b) supporting access to digital banking, mobile money accounts, mobile commerce, and blockchain-enabled assets and technologies; c) providing incentives and an enabling environment for training to enable women to transition from solopreneurs to employer businesses, and from the informal to the formal economy;

3. Create policy frameworks and a strategic growth initiatives by a) creating and/or updating overarching policy frameworks to support women's entrepreneurship, including sectors that have been hardest hit by the pandemic; b) developing actionable strategies with funding to overcome gaps in entrepreneurial ecosystems with innovative support services; c) creating incentives to fund innovative sectors poised for growth;

4. Create public procurement and access to markets initiatives by a) implementing policies to promote public procurement spend with women-owned SMEs and providing incentives for large government contractors to subcontract contract value to women-owned SMEs, by a minimum of 10% increase in improvement for each country according to its own baseline by 2030 using a "step by step" plan that will be piloted for 2 years and refined; d) researching and reporting progress on private and public procurement, international trade, ecommerce, for women-owned businesses of various sizes;

5. Promote private and public investment by a) incentivising private and public investment communities and philanthropists to incorporate a gender lens into their funding decisions across all asset classes; b) allocating a minimum of 1 percentage point of the new global minimum tax of at least 15% on corporations, endorsed by the G20, to fund women-owned and led SMEs and scale-ups, to help close the estimated several trillion dollar funding credit gap; c) incentivising all investors to invest in more women-founded and female/male co-founded employer companies.

Focus Area - DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT

The pandemic has hastened digital transformation, dramatically deepening gender inequalities. It is imperative to halt the digital marginalisation of girls and women impacted by this disruption, and urgently take action to ensure a just digital transformation where girls and women are fairly, meaningfully and equally engaged as digital citizens.

1. Ensure safe access to and use of digital technologies for all women and girls in G20 economies by 2026 by a) removing barriers such as prohibitive costs, insufficient infrastructure, unsafe online environments and harmful gender stereotypes; b) facilitating use of the internet, mobile telephony and other digital tools by women and girls for health, education, financial, employment and other purposes; c) developing gender-sensitive ethical guidelines on artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital technologies;

2. Guarantee foundational digital skills for all women and girls of G20 members, with pathways to future work and expertise in disruptive technologies by 2026 by a) upskilling and reskilling women to address the skills shortage in digital and STEAM jobs; b) providing funding and incentives to public and private sectors to provide training and career development in digital fields to women and girls; and c) implementing skills programmes that promote women's financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, focused on and enabled by digital technologies to support women's economic development;

3. Ensure that women hold equal leadership roles in digital fields in G20 economies by 2030, including technology organisations, start-ups, policy-making and academia, by a) ensuring women are equally represented in fields of technology research and development; b) creating more visibility of women in high level positions in the ICT sector; c) providing fiscal and other incentives to achieve gender-balanced

W20 Communiqué

leadership in the technology sector, including academia and research institutions;

4. Adopt and implement comprehensive and coordinated policies encompassing all relevant measures to identify, prevent and prosecute cyber violence and threats of violence by a) promoting awareness-raising programmes throughout society on how to prevent harmful online gender-based violence; b) legislating for prevention and punishment of online violence.

Focus Area – LABOUR

The COVID-19 pandemic increased the entrenched gender inequalities that are prevalent in labour markets. To counteract the current regression, which is holding back the global economy, interventions are urgently needed. Equal access to full and productive employment, including decent work with social protection for women and men is fundamental for a better future where everyone has an adequate standard of living and equal access to opportunities to realise their full potential. G20 leaders must accelerate the implementation of national gender equality plans towards and beyond the Brisbane 25x25 commitment, as mentioned in G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Declaration (2021).

1. Increase women's employment rate and quality of work by removing structural barriers by a) promoting women's economic autonomy and rights, ensuring decent work conditions and equitable remuneration, social protection and pensions; b) addressing gender and pensions gaps; c) creating new career opportunities for women; d) fostering standards and tools for remote working guaranteeing privacy, safety, security, work-life balance, and the right to disconnect from work; e) guaranteeing fiscal stimulus and recovery plans ensuring women's access to jobs in traditional and non-traditional sectors including those that were impacted by COVID-19;

2. Reduce gender pay gap and horizontal and vertical segregation of women in the labour market by a) implementing equal pay for work of equal value and pay transparent measures; b) implementing policies for affirmative action including temporary special measures to remove employment systems biases; c) developing new organisational structures based on fair and just employment practices for all; d) adopting gender responsive public procurement awarding organisations with certified gender equality performances together with at least 40% of women in decision making positions and welfare programmes;

3. Value unpaid care and domestic work in the definition of economic and social policies by a) recognising, reducing and redistributing women's unpaid care and domestic work; b) investing a meaningful proportion of GDP, at least 2%, in the care economy, in accordance with national baselines, to create gender-responsive public health and care services, ensuring universal, free and accessible care for children, older people, and people with disabilities; c) securing paid maternity, paternity and shared parental leave, promoting shared responsibility among partners, in the national legislations and promoting its implementation.

Focus Area: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is a violation of human rights and one of the most serious forms of discrimination against women. VAWG affects fundamental rights to freedom, silencing voices, creating barriers and preventing equal and just participation in public and private spheres. VAWG manifests itself as physical, sexual, psychological, economic and other forms of violence including stalking, in homes, workplaces and public spaces. VAWG is a global emergency. Its eradication is a step on the road to gender equality.

1. Develop integrated and coherent public policies to ensure the right of every woman and girl to live free from violence by a) preventing, punishing, and providing reparation for all acts of violence; b) allocating funds for training for professionals involved in the multi-agency response (in the law enforcement, judicial, social, and health sectors) with the aim of reducing the risk of secondary victimisation;

2. Empower and support the right to freedom from violence and offer quality services for survivors by a) increasing funding and allocating appropriate public financial resources to women's specialist support services; b) supporting healthcare models that provide trained health professionals, and adequate and accessible safe treatment; c) providing women survivors of violence with access to economic means and upholding their right to decent work, access to legal services, social, economic and environmental justice and safe affordable housing; d) establishing holistic care programmes to support child witnesses, especially orphans of femicide, and addressing the issues of forced early marriages and female genital mutilation;

3. Provide safe and welcoming workplaces by a) supporting ratification and full implementation of the ILO Convention n. 190; b) ratifying all international and regional conventions related to VAWG;

4. Combat human trafficking and modern slavery of women by a) paying particular attention to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees and other marginalised groups; b) providing quick access to non-exploitative employment, residence status when needed, restitution of unpaid salaries and compensation, and personalised assistance and support.

Focus Area – ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The Paris Agreement, brokered by women, underpins a global economic transformation needed to both limit

W20 Communiqué

climate change and foster human and planetary well-being. Women are most frequently first responders to crises, including health, food and water security. Women have also proven to be agents of change in the areas of resource sustainability and driving forces behind the shift to a wellbeing economy. It is essential that G20 members engage the wealth of ingenuity and ability that lies with women leaders and experts, including grass-roots women's organisations.

1. Prevent and mitigate the effect of climate change and environmental degradation on women by a) providing more effective mitigation and adaptation measures through gender-responsive interventions, health equity with the One Health approach; b) providing measures to guarantee education and decent work opportunities for women affected by natural disasters and other effects of climate change; c) strengthening equal access to environmental justice and tackling discrimination that affects women's rights and their ability to adapt to climate change and other forms of environmental degradation; d) ensuring all climate finance is gender-just; e) ensuring that women have equal representation in decision-making positions;

2. Provide equal opportunities in the climate, environment and energy sectors, including green, blue and circular economies for a socially just transition by a) supporting inclusive job creation and entrepreneurial business, investing in education, up-skilling and reskilling to increase women's ecological and carbon literacy; b) promoting strategies for sustainable food and water security and building resilience of women to climate change;

3. Build and redesign sustainable and inclusive intermediary cities and other communities by a) rethinking or adapting urban design and planning considering women's and girls' needs in terms of wellbeing, lifestyle, health and security, including public transportation and e-mobility solutions; b) planning gender budgeting and gender procurement for the development of rural, indigenous and other communities with the provision of access to essential services such as education, health and renewable energy.

Moving Forward

W20 welcomes the G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Declaration (2021), including the G20 Roadmap Towards and Beyond Brisbane Target, to reach more, better and equally paid jobs for women, and asks for this to be included as an attachment in the G20 Leaders' Declaration, along with the focus areas and cross-cutting recommendations in this Communiqué. In addition, we call on G20 members to establish a clear mechanism to monitor progress and accountability on commitments on gender equality. Reinforcement of the engagement groups infrastructure by G20 would facilitate an effective transition among presidencies each year and maximize effectiveness of their contribution to the political and policy making processes.