Civil 20 India 2023
POLICY PACK
#YouAreTheLight

"Let us all proceed, with one mind and one goal, to work selflessly for the world's welfare. May our acts become a noble ideal for those who will come after us. May the tree of our life be firmly rooted in the soil of love. May our good actions be its leaves. May our kind words be its flowers. May peace be its fruits. May this world grow and prosper as one family, united in love. May the ethos of vasudhaiva kutumbakam 'The world is one family' awaken, be put into practise and bear fruit in everyone. May we realise a world where there is endless peace and harmony. May Divine Grace bless us all. "

-Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi

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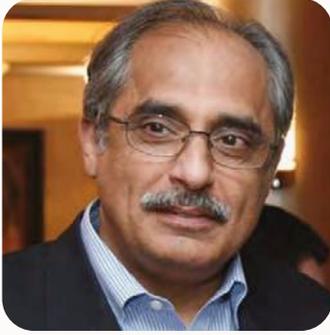
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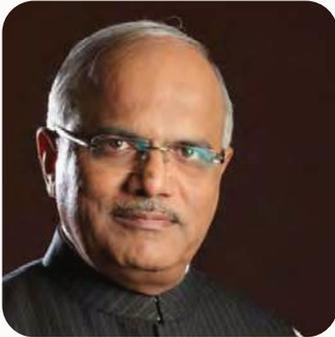
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Working Group's Policy Briefs

Civil-20 2023

An Introduction

The C20 under India's chair has had an unprecedented degree of "Jan Bhagidaari" or people's participation. More than 1000 meetings will have been held by the time of the Jaipur Summit in end-July. With the participation of more than 184,000 persons covering 74 nationalities, including mainly countries of the Global South, its activities have comprised, both in-person and online, conferences, workshops, seminars, "chaupals", "samaj-shalas" and youth ambassador programmes. The number of Working Groups (WGs) set up under C20 auspices this year have also been larger than ever before. They cover both traditional themes of concern as well as new themes

The policy pack prepared for the Summit is likely therefore to be voluminous. If working papers, white papers and other assorted documentations are included, the C20 Working Group material would be quite considerable.

Coming to substantive issues, never in its long history has the world been as connected, interdependent and exposed to mutual vulnerabilities as it is today. The salience of India's G20 motto: "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", or "One Earth, One Family One Future", therefore remains of utmost relevance and indeed must remain the abiding leitmotif for our preoccupations, even into the future. While calling for the inclusion of the African Union within the G20 organisation, we look forward to increased cooperation between developed and developing nations, as well as among the countries of Global South. Today, there is a major financial and debt crisis across the world. The pandemic has pushed 200 million people below the poverty line, 100 million people have lost their jobs around the world and 75 countries are facing major debt crises. We face not only the fallout of the cost-of-living and debt crises affecting many developing countries, but also instability in financial markets and a structural slowdown in growth that could persist over at least a decade. While post-pandemic risks linger, climate-related extreme weather events pose a growing threat. Public protests are on the rise and violent conflicts have escalated in intensity and breadth in Europe, Africa, and elsewhere. But these challenges have also evoked imaginative and resilient responses around the globe. The threat of COVID-19 resulted in the creation of a "unified platform for outbreaks and emergencies," and a complex ecosystem of partnerships and alliances emerged to tackle the design and delivery of health responses. Climate change has prompted significant institutional innovations. The net-zero movement has brought together diverse ecosystems of alliances to drive international climate action more purposively.

So, while the overall prospect remains grim, there are also reasons for hope and confidence. It is this hope that motivates the C20 to speak out on such a wide range of issues affecting the international family of nations. We

call on G20 whose members command formidable economic and political power and influence to act at both national and international levels to address these fundamental questions and to work steadfastly to strengthen and reform the multilateral framework of the United Nations. In particular, sustained recovery from the multi-dimensional crisis facing the world today will require fundamental changes to the roles and functions that financial capital and the global financial architecture perform in the lives of humans and other living beings on this planet. They must involve:

a. Rethinking the global debt architecture to create and support better and new mechanisms that can help in fair and effective sovereign debt restructuring.

b. Expanding fiscal space to allow for social protections and investment in resources to help deal with multiple challenges such as climate change, public health inadequacies and growing inequality.

c. Democratizing global tax governance under the auspices of the United Nations instead of the OECD. It also requires combating tax avoidance, base erosion, and profit shifting.

d. Reform of Multilateral Development Banks and financial institutions of their mission, incentives, and operational approaches to better address global challenges, reduce poverty and achieve SDGs.

e. G20 governments focusing on all SDGs. The private sector must pay for negative externalities that bring serious harm to people and the planet.

f. Governments reducing the unsustainable debt burden of individuals, households, and small entrepreneurs through legitimate entrepreneurial efforts by creating mechanisms for such dignified exit.

Broadly, therefore, the C20 calls for a shift away from an economic growth model that uses people and the planet as "extractable resources" to a global "reprograming of our economies to work for its people and planet."

I. Sustainable & Resilient Communities

This WG has done major work on a range of environmental issues: Enhancing regional climate resilience and disaster management capabilities by ensuring rights, access, and sustainability for food security, climate-resilient agriculture by promoting sustainable practices and knowledge transfer; prioritising ecosystem restoration, biodiversity protection, sustainable water governance, and coastal conservation; climate-sensitive planning for climate-induced displacement; climate finance for inclusive and effective climate action; focusing on lifestyle changes and demand reduction, circular economy, deep decarbonization; and fostering peace, harmony, and compassion by integrating cultural values as well as rediscovering local traditions. It is clear that not enough funding has gone into adaptation. Multilateral institutions must be incentivised to do direct lending. New imaginative sources must be located from both private and public sectors. New structures are needed for credit enhancements, first loss guarantees and better de-risking modalities. The resources needed are not in billions but in trillions of US dollars.

II. Integrated Holistic Health

The WG's key policy recommendations align with G20 priorities: universal health coverage with a guarantee of "access for all" for preventative care, therapy, and health system delivery through public health institutions and private sector; reduction in the cost of healthcare; management of mental health conditions and promotion of mental well-being; sustainable implementation of national mental health program in all G20 countries; creating and implementing policies on One-Health, with emphasis on antimicrobial resistance encompassing surveillance, data sharing and alerts, research and shared infrastructure and management; as well as advancing efforts to tackle communicable and non-communicable diseases. Also, they seek to promote digital health strategies to reduce healthcare costs.

III. Technology, Security & Transparency

This group has focused on cross-cutting and thematic recommendations aimed at creating a digital future that is more accessible, secure, transparent, and inclusive. A future that leverages technology to create safer, more equitable societies globally to deal with the ever-evolving digital environment.

In Technology for Empowerment, the WG calls for enhancing accessibility and inclusivity by setting up infrastructure bridging the digital divide, promoting user-centric design and subsidies that increase access to assistive technologies, establishing open-data policies, and democratising e-commerce platforms.

Regarding cybersecurity, the need for enhanced cooperation is stressed, as provided in the Budapest Convention and an additional protocol to the Geneva Convention pertaining to the protection of critical infrastructure against cyber-attacks. Moreover, the need for improved collaboration between national and international agencies to mitigate cybercrime and for norms to be set to prevent AI misuse in safety-critical applications was highlighted.

Pertaining to AI and data, the WG emphasises that both data collection and AI technology deployment must be ethical, fair, and safe. They portray the need to generate high-quality datasets and create international regulations assigning liability for technology-related harms.

The Group also calls for tackling disinformation by developing a shared terminology and a comprehensive strategy, establishing national information networks and effective legal infrastructure, and enhancing transparency and trust within the technology supply chain.

A new "GLIDES" initiative has been launched to create a global alliance of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as part of Civil20, working collectively to enable an inclusive, open, non-discriminatory, and fair digital society. With CSOs from 22 countries as members, GLIDES serves as a platform to provide opportunities for policy recommendations, sharing best practices, and collaborating on issues such as digital access, internet governance, online safety, net neutrality, and data privacy.

IV. Education & Digital Transformation

The Education and Digital Transformation Working Group (EDTWG) suggested key areas of focus to foster inclusive, accessible, compassionate, and human-centered education and digital transformation which include:

◆ Education for Life and Global Citizenship covering experiential learning and community involvement in rural villages, promoting indigenous cultures and knowledge systems, and address mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of people.

◆ Education for persons with disability which emphasizes early identification and intervention for persons with disabilities, awareness about inclusion and designing and implementing policies for early detection of disabilities, supporting research in disability studies and building tools for early identification, and provision of low-cost assistive technology for inclusion.

◆ Learning Equity & The Future of Education: Enhancing equitable access to education and ensuring the fair allocation of resources through learning equity audits as well as promoting inclusion of people from vulnerable populations in decision-making processes. Other recommendations include fostering mutual recognition of online and on-site degrees and certificate courses, developing inclusive curricula, and providing pedagogical skills, inclusion, and technology training for teachers.

◆ Skill Development covering inclusive financing mechanisms for skill development as well as and Education in Emergencies providing localized emergency curriculum models and for enhancement of teacher capacity for inclusive education and invest in continuous professional development; Digital Transformation & Accessibility by developing human-centered design principles, promoting digital public goods and providing comprehensive training on responsible technology use. The recommendations emphasize inclusive digital access for all, including marginalized and vulnerable populations.

V. Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

This Group has underlined the focus on women, transgender people, and other populations that are marginalised at the "base of the pyramid", those who have the least access, opportunities, resources, and privilege, and yet comprise a majority of the world's population. At current rates of progress, the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index Report estimates that it will require 132 years to achieve gender equality.

Cross-cutting recommendations include:

◆ Improving gender-disaggregated data collection to inform decision-making.

◆ Integrating monitoring and evaluation into policy development for transparency and accountability.

◆ Allocating sufficient resources to gender equality policies and programmes.

◆ Prioritising safety and security for girls and women in all aspects of life.

The thematic recommendations focused on:

◆ Prioritising mental health and investing in accessible mental health services for women and girls by developing comprehensive national mental health education policies and integrating such policies into schools and workplaces.

◆ Expanding access to education, particularly for rural and marginalised women by addressing barriers such as safety concerns, inadequate sanitation facilities, and lack of digital infrastructure.

◆ Establishing gender-responsive learning centres, ensuring access for marginalised groups, improving existing infrastructure, and expanding internet connectivity are key goals.

◆ Engaging men and boys which is vital for achieving gender equality. Harmful social norms contribute to issues like violence against women; and gender sensitization and transformative education should be provided to various stakeholders.

◆ Ensuring disaster preparedness and management includes women and girls who are disproportionately affected.

◆ Mandating their representation in decision-making bodies, conducting gender and vulnerability assessments, providing gender-responsive training, and collaborating with local organisations are essential.

◆ Promoting women's economic empowerment and enhancing financial inclusion and equal financing opportunities (25% in green and blue economies and priority procurement for women entrepreneurs) through collaboration between relevant institutions and organisations.

VI. Disability, Equity & Justice

The policy suggestions cover a gamut of issues from education and employment to health, social protection and environment-related needs.

Education: They ask for a greater understanding of the needs of children across disabilities, material in local languages, understanding the needs of diverse learning styles and requirements and addressing barriers to inclusion not limited to inaccessible transport and physical infrastructure. Their need for equitable access to digital infrastructure as well as support services communication aids and other facilities is also underscored.

Employment: SDG Target 4.5 requires enabling policies and strategies to support access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes for persons with disabilities consistent with ILO standards, as also to ILO Violence and Harassment Convention norms (No. 190) and (No. 206) to address discrimination, harassment, and violence against persons with disabilities in the workplace.

Health: They call for acknowledgment and design of disability inclusion as a necessary component of public health initiatives. There is a need to implement a strong health policy and research agenda on disability inclusion to develop interventions; address the vast inequities in health care access for persons with disabilities, and ensure that healthcare providers are well trained and WASH programmes are accessible.

Social Protection: They call for action to create an adaptive Universal Framework for Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities.

VII. Life Style for Environment (LiFE)

The LiFE WG has tried to prepare a value-based sustainability framework to guide and assess the progress of countries. Global well-being i.e., Sumangalam will be the universal principle of this framework which will include a set of values, concepts, instruments, and actionables for individuals and communities. This brings a much-required holistic perspective to the subject of sustainability and stresses values like compassion, gratitude, respecting diversity, a sense of responsibility, decentralization, harmony, using local resources (and not drawing from far-off places) etc. Behavioural indicators, goals, and levels of progress can be defined from these sets of values. LiFE along with the value-based sustainability framework will bring in a paradigm shift from right based approach to a responsibility-based approach in global environmental governance. LiFE is a set of good, desirable practices rooted in cultural traditions, customary practices, grassroot innovations, and environmentally conscious contemporary actions. LiFE can complement scientific, political, and economic measures of global environmental governance. However, it would require close cooperation between the government and society in which societal responsibility would be a little higher than the government.

VIII. SDG16 Plus and Enhancing Civic Space

Notwithstanding the current geopolitical challenges, urgent action is needed to reduce the gap between the polarized viewpoints across the world. While governments have committed to building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions, many of these are still weak and ineffective. Without the support of all G20 countries, the international community's collective commitment to fostering peaceful, just, and inclusive societies cannot succeed. As we reach the halfway point to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, civil society calls on the G20 to intervene and take bold actions - including through substantial financial commitments. Steps taken by the Indian G20 Presidency in its Action Plan 2023 would assist in planning the next steps for achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Unless member states, UN bodies, multilateral agencies, donors, the private sector, CSOs, and others work collectively, progress on SDG16 Plus goals will not be possible. This means protecting fundamental freedoms, addressing systemic barriers, and promoting civic space. It also means promoting greater transparency and accountability, strengthening anti-corruption laws, and policies and international cooperation to prevent illicit financial flows, stolen assets, and organized crime. The G20 Indian Presidency has included asset recovery, information sharing and integrity and effectiveness of public bodies under its anti-corruption priorities for 2023. Equally noteworthy is its scaling up of public digital platforms like Aadhar, Unified Payment Interface (UPI), digital signature, etc., and adoption of AI in fintech and high-speed internet services which are a model for emulation to meet the global need for better public goods. An annual review of the SDG16 Plus is well warranted.

IX. Diversity, Inclusion and Mutual Respect

The WG underlined the urgency of inclusion of those left behind in the development process due to want, disability, disease, or neglect. This comprised inclusion policies for LGBTQAI, indigenous communities, and support for traditional practices.

The WG's recommendations focused on avoiding fixed binaries, preserving cultural diversity, building knowledge bases, and incorporating traditional knowledge into policy-making and education systems.

X. "Sewa", Philanthropy & Volunteerism

The concept of "Sewa" embodies voluntarism based on selflessness and the desire to create positive change in the world on the basis of the fundamental value of giving back to society, fostering empathy, and making a positive impact on the lives of others. The WG called for:

1. The creation of a global alliance of individuals and civil society organizations to facilitate Sewa on a global scale.

2. Utilizing the experiences and talents of the elderly and retirees towards for nation-building purposes and mentoring of youth.

3. Establishing a global network of civil societies and voluntary organizations practising Sewa in different countries, and

4. Developing a compendium of exemplary Sewa practices from G20 and other countries to foster cross-country learning, inspire new initiatives, and promote collaboration among nations.

XI. Delivering Democracy

This WG's report calls for founding democracy on native models of governance, native values, and ethos, and best practices and learning. It calls for engagement of young people in democratic processes and to inculcate respect for democratic processes and institutions at the school and university levels.

It also emphasises practising grassroots democracy at village level by respecting the individual as the cornerstone of democratic process. It speaks of adapting digital democracy by expanding digital and internet footprints countrywide and using social media intelligently. It also speaks of responsible citizenry and responsive governance; and direct or indirect participation by the people in governance as well as in the assertion of their rights of self-governance.

XII. River Revival and Water Management

This WG proposes several recommendations for river revival and water management that emphasize the importance of maintaining the natural flow and self-purification capacity of rivers, as well as protecting water resources as commons. They call for government stewardship, including respecting citizens' rights and relationships with water, preventing environmentally costly projects, and implementing pollution prevention laws. The involvement of diverse stakeholders, such as indigenous communities, NGOs, and experts, is also highlighted. The G20 is urged to leverage technology, strengthen cross-border cooperation, and consider environmental factors in valuing water resources. The approach should be integrated, scalable, participatory, and supported by sustainable financing

XIII. Other Working Groups

Similarly the **Working Groups on Human Rights and Human Values** as well as the one on **Preservation of Traditional Arts and Crafts and Protection of Livelihoods** have laboured hard and presented meaningful policy recommendations that are detailed in their respective presentations. Globalisation, industrialisation, and changing lifestyles have all posed problems for traditional art, crafts, and culture recently and G20 nations need to take measures to promote and maintain traditional art, crafts, and culture in order to solve these issues and further their preservation and conservation.

XIV. Compassion: Desideratum for a Harmonious and Flourishing Future

The world is witnessing an alarming rise in violence against both humanity and the environment. Interpersonal violence affects millions of people, with a staggering number of annual fatalities globally. While efforts are being made to address its causes, that alone is inadequate to restore peace and harmony in society and nature. As the C20 Chair, Mata Amritanandamayi Devi says: "People experience two types of poverty in this world – poverty of material goods and poverty of love and compassion." Compassion is the most important factor that can transform lives.

It helps people take decisions and actions with spontaneity, power and effect. As a foundational element, it will need to be integrated into our educational curriculum. It must instill a sense of oneness among individuals, amplifying their power to fight against odds and enabling them to live in harmony with nature for not just a sustainable but a flourishing future. We must strive to foster peace and harmony across continents, integrating cultural values and rediscovering local traditions.

An exemplary compassion practice developed recently is the geo-enabled software platform titled: "Sustainability and Resilience for Community Engagement and Empowerment (SREE)" integrated with a crowd-sourced mobile application titled "Empower Community." This integrated platform is capable of measuring, mapping, analysing, and proposing recommendations for community-level sustainability and resilience indicators. SREE operates on community-driven data that is aggregated according to thematic layers which can be assessed on a multi-scale approach bringing multiple stakeholders on to a common knowledge acquisition level to make informed community decisions and resolve community-level sustainability and resilience assessment challenges. It has already been implemented in several countries in a participatory manner.

In conclusion, it may be observed that the world views of civil society organisations of various countries evolve along with the ethos of their respective countries. They naturally reflect the civilisational values and principles of the respective countries more prominently. It may be noted, in this backdrop, that three of the sixteen policy briefs prepared by the Working Groups, namely those on Sewa, Lifestyle for Environment or LiFE, and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam are reflective of the world view as well as the ethos essentially of the civil society organisations from India, the host country. Notwithstanding reservations of CSOs of some other countries, briefs on these themes have been included in this policy pack with a view to generating a larger conversation in the larger interest of the global community.
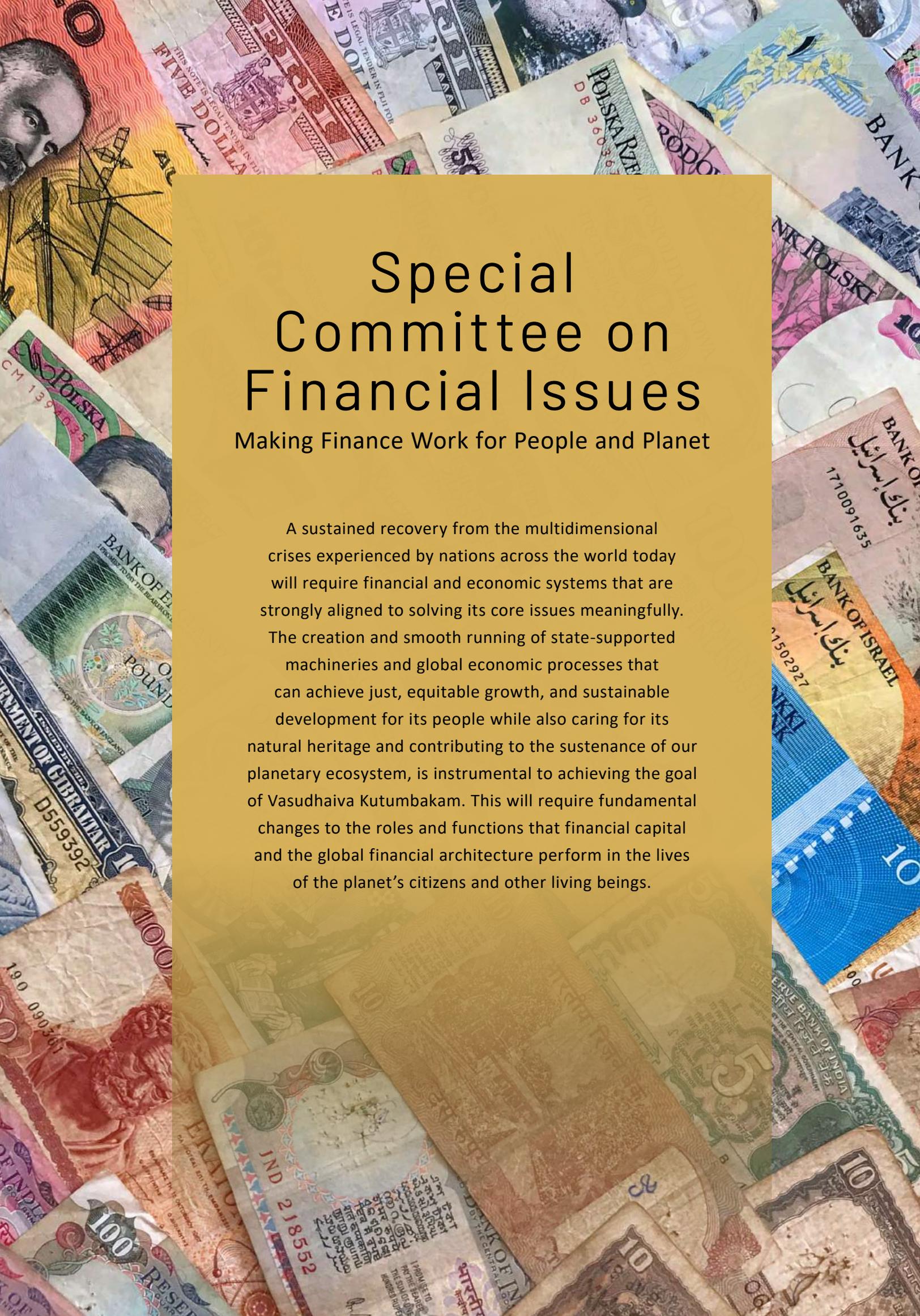
Special Committee on Financial Issues

Making Finance Work for People and Planet

A sustained recovery from the multidimensional
crises experienced by nations across the world today
will require financial and economic systems that are
strongly aligned to solving its core issues meaningfully.
The creation and smooth running of state-supported
machineries and global economic processes that
can achieve just, equitable growth, and sustainable
development for its people while also caring for its
natural heritage and contributing to the sustenance of our
planetary ecosystem, is instrumental to achieving the goal
of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. This will require fundamental
changes to the roles and functions that financial capital
and the global financial architecture perform in the lives
of the planet's citizens and other living beings.

The C20 calls upon the G20 to place an urgent need, in these conditions, to rethink the global debt architecture and to create and support better and new mechanisms that can help in fair and effective sovereign debt restructuring. In addition, the G20 should develop ways to support the expansion of fiscal space to allow for countries to maintain social protections and invest in resources that may limit the multiple overlapping emergencies such as climate change, public health inadequacies and growing inequality.

C20 demands the democratization of global tax governance under the auspices of the United Nations instead of the OECD so that all state voices can be incorporated when formulating international decisions. International tax cooperation must be under a coherent institutional and normative framework. At the domestic level, the excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few individuals or households can lead to negative consequences for social and economic well-being. A wealth tax is needed to ensure the principle of equity and/or distributive justice and the G20 nations can take the lead in implementing this.

The G20 must call on MDBs to update their mission, incentives, and operational approaches, in order to better address global challenges, reduce poverty and achieve SDGs. C20 calls for G20 nation governments to focus on all SDGs through their national strategies, without cherry-picking some SDGs over others.

CSO must be co-opted as serious economic actors with non-trivial decision-making powers across all stages of implementation of the SDG Agenda by MDBs and national governments. G20 nations must also focus on the crux of the issue with the private sector, which is to have industries pay for negative externalities that bring serious harm to people and planet.

C20 calls for national strategies that support individuals and households in their own legitimate entrepreneurial journeys, through the creation of state-supported mechanisms that provide for a dignified exit from unsustainable debt. This is an innovative welfare benefit the state can offer.

Through the above mechanisms, the C20 calls for a dramatic shift away from economic growth that uses people and the planet as extractable resources, to a global "reprogramming of our economies to work for its people and the planet".

A. Sovereign Debt Restructuring and Development

Emerging Markets and Developing Countries (EMDCs) now have worryingly high debt vulnerabilities both in absolute terms and relative to pre-pandemic levels. More than two thirds of the world are either at high risk or already in debt distress, while 25% of middle-income countries, which host the majority of the extreme poor, are at high risk of fiscal crisis. Global inflation over the last two years has prompted advanced economy central banks to steeply increase interest rates. The tightening financial conditions worldwide increases borrowing costs for EMDCs. Dollar-denominated debt that dominates private corporate sector international borrowing is set to aggravate debt-added pressure on developing economies.

A significant number of sovereign debt restructurings are expected. However, current mechanisms are ill-equipped to be effective and have no predictable legal and institutional framework; they are a composite of conventions that have evolved over the years. Given the evolution of capital markets and new official bilateral creditors, these practices are under further stress.

There has also been virtually no progress over the last seven years in the process of establishing an international statutory mechanism for sovereign debt restructuring. The Common Framework for Debt Treatment (CF) did not conclude a single restructuring in the first one and a half years of its existence.

The G20 is in a place to push for new global rules in this regard. As countries, especially EMDCs brace to deal with the overwhelming changes in store for them, there is a need to extend provisions available under the CF and for this to be more effective. These include debt cancellation and debt standstills during renegotiations, resolving inter-creditor relationships and their management, adopting contingent clauses in bond issuances and also the issuance of GDP indexed bonds. Many of these mechanisms have built-in speed breakers for the purpose and are very useful to have during downturns.

The debt sustainability analysis of the IMF has been observed to be too optimistic, seriously underestimating the possibilities of shocks that will

further undermine the ability to repay and therefore demanding much quicker and sharper repayment schedules. There is a profound need to rethink the assumptions underlying these and to make a broader set of criteria relevant (like concessions for policies promoting human rights, and climate change investment).

Finally, there is the need for expanding fiscal space, even with the kinds of limitations imposed by debt restructuring. The G20 can support re-channeling Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) for this and in the current circumstances, not make them overly restrictive in terms of conditionality.

Recommendations

Several additions to the current framework must be undertaken and we call upon the G20 to reflect these.

1. Maximize the flexibilities afforded by the Common Framework to allow for effective and fair resolutions.

2. Make progress towards a truly effective global sovereign debt resolution authority that can solve some of the intransigent problems in the current scenario. Such a mechanism must have statutory powers.

3. Improve debt sustainability analytic criteria to be more realistic and to take into account positive policy choices, for example as the UN notes the possibility of undertaking debt-for-climate swaps.

4. Expand the use of useful instruments such as state-contingent bonds and collective action clauses that resolve the problem of hold-up.

5. Expand the use of SDRs and effective recycling as well as new forms of concessional finance to support stressed EMDCs.

B. Fair Taxation for Improving the Social Contract

The rise of economic globalization through digitization of the financial system poses a significant challenge to closing the SDG financing gap for many countries that are also trying to manage fiscal imbalances due to rising public debt, increasing healthcare and pension costs, and other long-term liabilities. This systematically harms developing countries and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) by eroding their tax base, because the current global financial structure and system allows for tax avoidance and evasion. Tax avoidance and evasion undermines the ability of all countries to invest in sustainable development. Illicit financial flows contribute to worsening inequality and equity, both within and between countries.

Global profit shifting has not declined since 2015, a year prior to the implementation of the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Initiative by the OECD. Shifted profits grew at the same pace as multinational profits. As multinational profits grew by 52% in nominal terms (compared to 17% for global GDP), the absolute amount of profits shifted to tax havens increased by slightly more than 52%. BEPS has been ineffective in reducing the fraction of multinational profit shifted to tax havens each year even if it might have stopped the growth of this fraction. The current OECD/G20 plan and its Pillars 1 and 2 suggestions are tragically insufficient to stop the ongoing wealth transfer—measured in lost tax revenues—from poor to rich countries, where the digital corporations are based. These Pillars do not address emerging nations' incapacity to collect substantial tax revenues from digital businesses that operate there and generate enormous profits while avoiding paying taxes and out-competing domestic tax-paying businesses.

The C20 has urged for the establishment of international tax cooperation for a strong globally coherent tax system under the auspices of the UN, rather than under the G20, and for modalities of the inter-governmental tax body to be designed in an inclusive, fair, transparent manner. It must be structured to provide a substantial solution that sets taxing rights between governments based on an agreed formula in a system that is supplemented by a minimum effective corporate tax rate.

Globally, the top 10% wealthiest captures more than 55% of total household wealth, compared with below 5% captured by the bottom 50%. Such inequalities can also be seen between high and low CO_2 emitters in low-income, middle-income and rich countries. By reducing the concentration of wealth and promoting a more even distribution of resources, a wealth tax can help ensure that resources are invested in productive activities that benefit the broader economy and generate long-term sustainable growth, rather than be channeled towards personal consumption. This can help reduce the gap between rich and poor and promote a more equitable distribution of wealth. A modest progressive wealth tax on global multimillionaires would yield significant revenue gains. Given the large volume of wealth concentration, a 1% effective wealth tax rate can generate 1.6% of global incomes and could be reinvested in education, health, and the energy transition. This can help fund programs such as in education healthcare and social security, which are important SDGs.

Recommendations

1. The G20 must support the creation of an effective intergovernmental tax body under the UN and this is to be accompanied by the adoption of the latest UN Tax Convention.

2. The G20 must demand country-level reporting by multinational corporations to be made public as articulated in the Global Reporting Initiative, including reporting of beneficial ownership, so that all countries where the corporation has its activities in, are able to access information. All countries and particularly LMICs need to benefit from automatic information exchange.

3. Establish a multi-jurisdictional tax framework.

4. The G20 must promote the creation of a wealth tax by, as an example, implementing it domestically in their countries, to create a more equitable distribution of wealth and to raise state revenue for public services and infrastructure, which are critical for social and economic development.

5. The G20 must enhance the involvement of civil society organizations in tax matter decision-making processes.

C. Financing for Sustainable Development

The financing gap to reach the SDGs in developing countries after the pandemic increased by 56%, requiring investments worth USD 4.2 trillion per year in order to achieve the SDGs for all by 2030. In order to catch up with the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda and to close the widening financing divide, it is time that international finance architecture is explicitly required to be aligned with all aspects of the SDGs so that all financing flows can become aligned with them.

While there have been several calls requiring concerted efforts on the part of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and allied institutions to bring in the SDGs into their board-level strategy-setting and evaluation mechanisms, the World Bank has taken a first step in this direction by acknowledging the need to evolve its mission to strengthen development impact in its 2023 Roadmap.

While SDGs are universal in that they are accepted by all and applicable to all, the UN states that policy choices will be country-specific, tied to national priorities laid out in their sustainable development plans. For truly equitable growth and sustainable development, all SDGs will need to be accorded equal importance by every nation. The importance that a government accords to an SDG is not to be measured merely by the quantum of national budgets that get allocated to it but by the efforts invested towards devising a combination of policy tools and interventions that can help to credibly progress on the targets for each SDG. Further, the Indicator 17.14.1 requires countries to have mechanisms in place to enhance policy coherence of sustainable development because the SDGs are interdependent and indivisible and impacts on one SDG will have non-linear impacts on other SDGs.

The UN Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2023 alludes to the need for more comprehensive pricing of negative externalities and for charging it to domestic and international private businesses, but stops short of suggesting a roadmap towards achieving this, not just for carbon emissions but also for a variety

of other unpriced resources such as water, fossil fuels and food, besides the more apparent negative externalities that certain industries give rise to such as the sugar-based industries causing obesity, tobacco-based industries causing cancers, fossil fuel-powered automobiles causing air pollution and so on.

It would be impossible to achieve the 2030 Agenda without civil society organisations (CSOs); they are the only non-state non-profit-seeking stakeholder involved. Indeed, many CSOs continue contributing to SDGs without even being aware of them. But the only place within the SDGs that CSOs find recognition is in the SDG target 17.17 and its single Indicator is woefully inadequate to capture the essence of the Target. CSOs have not been co-opted as an equal stakeholder with decision-making powers, this holds true irrespective of the level of intervention or the stakeholder under question.

The UN General Assembly Resolution on April 18, 2023 (A/77/L.60) is a first of many concerted steps needed to recognize the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in its important role in achieving the SDGs for the world. It encourages UN member countries to promote and implement national, local and regional strategies, policies and programs for supporting and enhancing the SSE, develop specific legal frameworks, and innovate financial instruments for it. A clear articulation of the functions that CSOs perform in achieving SDGs is needed to drive SDG Target 17.17 as well as to have them occupy a 'seat at the table' as declared by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) in December 2022. Past articulations of the role of CSOs such as by the World Economic Forum and the Busan Partnership Agreement 2011 provide guidance in this regard. An expanded role for CSOs has already been articulated by the World Economic Forum that go beyond that of service provider to include roles such as experts, capacity builders, incubators, representatives, citizenship champions, solidarity supporters, and definers of standards.

Recommendations

1. The G20 must call on MDBs to update their mission, incentives, and operational approaches, in order to better address global challenges, reduce poverty and achieve SDGs. This includes a significant scale-up of MDB financing including through better and expanded use of callable capital and other forms of guarantees, the development of new concessional tools and greater mobilization of private capital.

2. The G20 must support the development of estimation tools to cost for negative externalities such as air and water pollution and the obesity epidemic, and introduce taxes directly on businesses and industries that profit from activities that create these externalities. As much as possible, these tools must avoid providing easy options to offset these costs through the trading of financial instruments, and instead, rely on directly costing these in by the industry so that the true costs are revealed to consumers, and profiteering that makes people and planet worse off can be checked.

3. All G20 nations must, through demonstration, devise and implement national strategies for each and every SDG (and their targets). While Governments must continue to exercise their wisdom and judgement, depending on each nation's unique economic, cultural, environmental and social imperatives, they are best placed to decide, and place in their public domain, an articulation of which combination of policy tools they consider appropriate for each SDG, why, and where more public spending is warranted, and where private capital can be relied upon, wholly or in combination with concessional and public financing.

4. For the private sector, scaling up and mandating corporate sustainability related disclosures across all SDGs rather than selecting the easiest SDGs and related targets to report on, can have multiple benefits in avoiding 'cherry picking' and driving corporate investment decisions towards all sustainability goals as well as in aiding the fight against SDG-washing.

5. G20 nations must establish a 'seat at the table' for CSOs in the global strategy for SDGs and accelerate their progress towards the UN resolution on the SSE. A simple way to articulate the functions for CSOs in achieving the 2030 Agenda, adopted from a Technical Paper of UNDESA, is in a) Implementation via regulation (as watchdogs), b) Representation (as voice for people, especially those 'left behind'), and c) Realisation of sustainable development outcomes through service delivery.

D. Humane Mechanisms for Discharge of Personal and Enterprise Debt

The tremendous push for financial inclusion has been led much by credit inclusion targeted towards MSMEs, a majority of whom are unincorporated, and households. However, unlike informal debt, formal debt creates many challenges for MSMEs. Contractual terms will likely overlap personal and business assets. Any inability to repay would thus, often impact not just the business, but the personal assets and lives of borrowers, if the lenders were to initiate enforcement proceedings and create barriers in accessing credit and other financial services, but also negatively impact the borrower's wellness. The environment that a country provides to its enterprises, to dream, innovate, clinch opportunities, solve problems and generate value, will determine the growth trajectories of many promising enterprises and start-ups. One determinant that seldom gets attention is the way failure of the enterprise is treated and whether society victimises the owners of such enterprises or supports them in restarting economic life in other ways.

Personal insolvency mechanisms for individuals, households and self-proprietorship and partnership enterprises (with unlimited liability in design, comprising a majority of enterprises in developing countries) are distinct from corporate insolvency and bankruptcy mechanisms because of the absence of a separate legal existence as is in the case of corporates. Government policies should distinguish inability to repay debt from unwillingness to pay and seek to 'forgive the unfortunate'. A humane statutory mechanism for the restructuring or discharge of debt is a crucial instrument through which borrower enterprises and households must be allowed to seek refuge. This will have twin benefits. One, it will help to reduce the burden on governments to undertake ad-hoc loan waivers and for providing sovereign guarantees as a protection mechanism when domestic household sector and MSME debt becomes too much. Two, and more importantly, individuals and households that rely on their own entrepreneurial abilities to support themselves will be able to find a dignified exit in order to start afresh after an event of legitimate failure.

Recommendations

1. Best practices for how developing nations can build these mechanisms is the need of the hour and the G20 can spearhead the creation of such a best practices endeavour. The best practices must offer high-level yet clear guidance to countries on designing principles and procedural aspects that make personal insolvency accessible, simpler than its corporate counterpart, and cost-effective while being efficient and impactful. This is an innovative welfare benefit the state can offer. An overwhelming majority of citizens in developing nations can benefit from this policy and contribute to their nation's economic activity.

2. Consideration should be given to designing policies that encourage creation of a 'safe to fail' eco-system in countries where citizens perceive failure resulting from the inability to repay debt as a stigmatising failure. Decentralising approaches can result in enhanced ownership across varying cultural dynamics and can lead to greater impact.

Udaaharans

- In 2020, Argentina used the new Collective Action Clauses (CACs) to restructure its debt, improve inter-creditor coordination and do away to a large extent with the hold-up problem associated with Vulture Funds. The terms of borrowing also saw serious principal reduction and increased average maturity of debt, all of which are critical to a more timely and orderly restructuring.

- India's Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR) regulations which were put into place by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in 2013 mandates companies above a certain size in terms of revenue/profit to invest 2% of their annual net profits into CSR projects. Research suggests that such a mandate has been able to drive corporate investments in social sectors such as education, health, rural development, eradicating poverty and hunger, and environmental sustainability, since its enforcement.

- The Securities and Exchanges Board of India (SEBI) is putting in place a Social Stock Exchange platform where CSOs can 'list' their securities, and report on their financial, governance. and impact measures, and in doing so, build credibility through which scaled up access to funding through instruments such as grants / Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) bonds and equity can be enabled. Such an approach also envisages an ecosystem of actors, including independent Social Auditors who would audit, among others, the social impact claims made by such entities.

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Sustainable & Resilient Communities

Climate, Environment and Net Zero Targets

The WG acknowledges that the key to meeting the challenges facing the global community is the development of integrated solutions through international agreements, multilateral collaborations and transboundary cooperation for systemic transformations, to enable good governance, sustainable finance and circular economy.

Drawing inspiration from "Lokah Samastah Sukhino Bhavantu" meaning may all the beings in all the worlds become happy, the working group recognizes the fundamental interconnectedness and interdependence of all beings and all resources on earth. Thus, resolves to invoke the innate compassion arising from this universal interconnectedness in every individual.

The detrimental impacts of climate change makes it imperative that we act, unitedly, equitably, inclusively, and justly, to protect the people and planet earth. The C20 Working Group on Sustainable and Resilient Communities (SRC) - Climate, Environment and Net Zero Targets proposes policy recommendations to mitigate these global challenges.

The working group has outlined a set of transformative measures that will lead to sustainable and resilient communities through more nuanced and informed developmental pathways, based on greater equity, justice, and inclusivity. The policy recommendations from the four sub-themes namely, Climate Resilience and Social Justice, Environmental Sustainability, Net Zero Emission Management and Compassion driven Approaches to Sustainable and Resilient Communities have been cumulatively reviewed and curated. The following overarching categories of recommendations have emerged:

- ◆ C20 urges G20 to ensure implementation pathways for efficiency that are compassion driven and engage all sections of the population, creating targeted investment opportunities, as well as co-developing adaptation metrics, and standards across sectors to guide investment decisions. Localised implementation approaches need to be in place considering the sustainability factors.

- ◆ G20 needs to incentivize transparent and effective public-private and social sector partnerships for sharing expertise, knowledge, experiences, local context specific best practices and resources, to enhance innovations and sustain actions.

- ◆ G20 countries should support their education systems to develop and implement curriculum and training modules specific to climate change and resilience, net zero emission targets, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration & degradation, at primary, secondary and tertiary level. Along with providing affordable, equitable and quality education, community specific capacity development programs need to be developed to create community wise champions.

Climate Resilience and Social Justice

A. Enhancing Climate Resilience and Disaster Management

As per United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction, (UNDRR) an effective early warning is capable of saving many lives and reducing damage by 30% if activated 24 hours before the event. However, today, one-third of the world's population, mainly in the least developed countries, is still not covered by early warning systems. Furthermore, as the impacts of climate change accelerate, investments in climate resilient infrastructure must be equally prioritised to prevent deaths, reduce the lock-in of climate vulnerability, and avoid economic losses in the decades to come. The OECD estimates that USD 6.9 trillion worth of infrastructure investments would be needed annually by 2030 to meet the sustainable development goals.

Recommendations

◆ G20 must enhance regional climate resilience and disaster management capabilities in developing and implementing early-warning systems for cascading events such as rainfall, landslides, floods etc. through reflection on approaches that are gender-equitable and support vulnerable and marginalised sections of the community.

◆ C20 recommends to foster and support the transition of agro-systems into agroecology practices, and to prevent conflicts on the use of water for agriculture and to build water resilience.

◆ Member countries should develop incentives and policies to encourage private sector investments in climate-resilient infrastructure and technologies that integrate indigenous knowledge and experiences.

◆ G20 must prioritise integrity and good governance that encompasses promoting anti-corruption measures, strengthening legal frameworks, ensuring inclusive decision-making processes, and supporting the capacity building in all community scale resilience policies and programs.

B. Democratising climate change efforts through climate-sensitive planning for climate-induced displacement

According to UNHCR, hazards resulting from the increasing intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, such as abnormally heavy rainfall, prolonged droughts, desertification, environmental degradation, or sea-level rise and cyclones are already causing an average of more than 20 million people to leave their homes and move to other areas in their countries each year. It is estimated that 80 percent of people displaced by climate change are women, according to UNEP. When women are displaced, they are at greater risk of violence, including sexual violence.

Recommendations

♦ G20 must ensure that gender mainstreaming is integrated into policies, programs, multi-level governance & administrative systems and training for capacity building of those impacted by climate-induced displacement and migration.

♦ C20 urges G20 to adopt a climate-sensitive planning dimension to peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction, and development efforts to prevent any relapse to armed conflicts in fragile communities. Community level training to develop comprehensive short term strategies, while implementing necessary schemes to facilitate their effective implementation.

♦ C20 urges member countries to develop a strategy to manage the forecasted displacement of population affected by climate related disasters. States need to derive policies and interventions for earmarking the camps for settlement, supply chain pathways for managing resources for non-permanent resettlement.

C. Climate Finance for Inclusive and Effective Climate Action

The World Bank Group delivered a record $31.7 billion in fiscal year 2022 (FY22) to help countries address climate change. This is a 19% increase from the $26.6 billion all-time high in financing reached in the previous fiscal year.

However, the current climate finance architecture is distributed unevenly and inefficiently especially in economies that are developing and most vulnerable to climate change.

Recommendations

- ◆ G20 should establish national policies that promote collaboration between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in climate finance and foster partnerships to enhance the breadth and effectiveness of climate actions.

- ◆ Governments should increase emergency funding mechanisms, make it easily accessible and provide immediate and timely support to meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities affected by climate-related disasters.

- ◆ Member countries should upscale specific financing for mitigation and adaptation for climate change, and ensure inclusivity and social justice in the allocation and distribution of funds effectively.

- ◆ G20 must consider measures to integrate climate risk assessments and integrate community scale resilience building strategies into funding and project implementation, decision making processes across all levels and sectors to help governments identify potential trade-offs and synergies between climate goals and other development objectives.

- ◆ G20 must develop country specific climate adaptation metrics and standards to guide investment decisions and incentivize proactive community based mitigation/ adaptation actions.

Environmental Sustainability

A. Ensuring Rights, Access, and Sustainability for Food Security

According to the statistics released by WPF, more than 345 million people are facing high levels of food insecurity in 2023 – more than double the number in 2020. This constitutes a staggering rise of 200 million people compared to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. More than 900,000 people worldwide are fighting to survive in catastrophic hunger/one step away from famine. This is ten times more than five years ago, an alarmingly rapid increase.

Recommendations

◆ The G20 must ensure that individuals have the rights and access to safe, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, and that food systems are sustainable and resilient to climate change. Member countries need to adopt innovative food engineering technologies as well as promote the integration of the traditional practices like consumption of ayurvedic leaves and other herbs into their lifestyle.

◆ G20 countries need to promote sustainable food consumption patterns and awareness campaigns to bring in a major shift in resource consumption and food waste generation. Based on the food intake and the water consumed at community level, people need to be made aware of sustainable practices according to resource availability and changing climate patterns.

◆ G20 must implement environmental labelling and taxing of food products that are environmentally damaging, to incentivize consumers to make more responsible and sustainable food choices, as well as incentive pricing for the less-impacting food products in order to incentivize consumers to make more responsible and sustainable food choices.

◆ C20 recommends implementing a scheme where every food packet includes information on the man hours involved, the number of individuals in the supply chain, resources utilised, thereby fostering a gratitude-based approach that promotes reduced consumption and wastage.

B. Climate-Resilient Agriculture: Promoting Sustainable Practices & Knowledge Transfer

Climate change impacts food security, particularly in developing nations. According to the World Bank, the growing impact of climate change could further cut crop yields, especially in the world's most food-insecure regions. Our food systems are also responsible for about 30% of greenhouse gas emissions. Current food systems also threaten the health of people and the planet and generate unsustainable levels of pollution and waste. A third of global food production is either lost or wasted. Food insecurity worsens nutrition, causing malnutrition, undernutrition, and obesity. Roughly 3 billion people lack access to a healthy diet.

Recommendations

◆ C20 urges G20 to promote dynamic management of crop diversity and diversity-based strategies to ensure nutritional needs of the community and for more sustainable agro-ecosystems by emphasising bottom-up approaches engaging with local farmer networks in the perspective of agroecological approach.

◆ Member nations need to enhance global investment to promote sustainable agricultural practices. Training and educational programs need to be implemented to raise awareness among rural communities about the need for ecosystem restoration, environmental shifts and the impacts of climate change.

Schemes need to be accompanied by incentives such as subsidies, tax exemptions, and low-interest loans to farmers to adopt such practices.

◆ C20 recommends to raise community awareness about nutrition requirements through schemes and foster a connection between agricultural practices and food grain production.

◆ C20 calls for the adoption and enforcement of robust regulations, limiting pesticide usage to permissible levels, in the agricultural sector to safeguard the well-being of individuals and the environment.

C. Prioritising Ecosystem Restoration, Biodiversity Protection, Sustainable Water Governance, and Coastal Conservation

The world is currently grappling with significant challenges in environmental sustainability across sectors. Biodiversity loss is accelerating and the International Union for Conservation of Nature has listed a staggering 32,000 species listed as threatened, and the WWF has documented a distressing 68% decline in vertebrate populations since 1970. Water scarcity is affecting billions worldwide, as the UN estimates that 2.2 billion people lack access to safe drinking water. Marine ecosystems are under grave threat, with WWF reporting that 90% of global fish stocks are either fully exploited or overfished.

Recommendations

◆ C20 recommends the protection of important biodiversity hotspots, ecosystems and the livelihoods by addressing the challenges of biodiversity loss and the spread of invasive species through conservation of native species and promotion of ecovillages through special schemes and funding mechanisms.

◆ G20 must establish strong water governance frameworks that consider climate change, ensuring sustainable and high-quality water availability. Legislation, monitoring, and enforcement mechanisms should be implemented, along with promoting water-efficient practices at the community level. Collaboration on integrated water management, climate-resilient infrastructure, and leveraging wastewater for economic growth is crucial. Capacity building for community water champions, along with the allocation of specific schemes and funding, are necessary. Furthermore, the creation of certification and ranking systems for water-wise communities should be prioritised.

◆ C20 recommends the stricter enforcement of coastal protection regulations and policies to safeguard marine resources, ecosystems, and biodiversity. Nature based solutions should be integrated into territorial planning for climate adaptation and infrastructure development along with mobilising private and international funding, and matching grants by recognizing their potential to deliver benefits across sectors.

◆ C20 calls for the promotion of widespread tree plantation initiatives, through simple and holistic approaches like the practice of seed ball plantation to promote afforestation, enhance soil quality, combat air pollution and foster ecological restoration at a global scale.

◆ C20 recommends to better protect forest ecosystems in order to secure in-situ carbon sequestration and biodiversity, by labelling new protected areas in line with Montreal COP15 agreement, and by supporting the implementation of both biodiversity and carbon favourable practices through harmonised and science-based certification schemes.
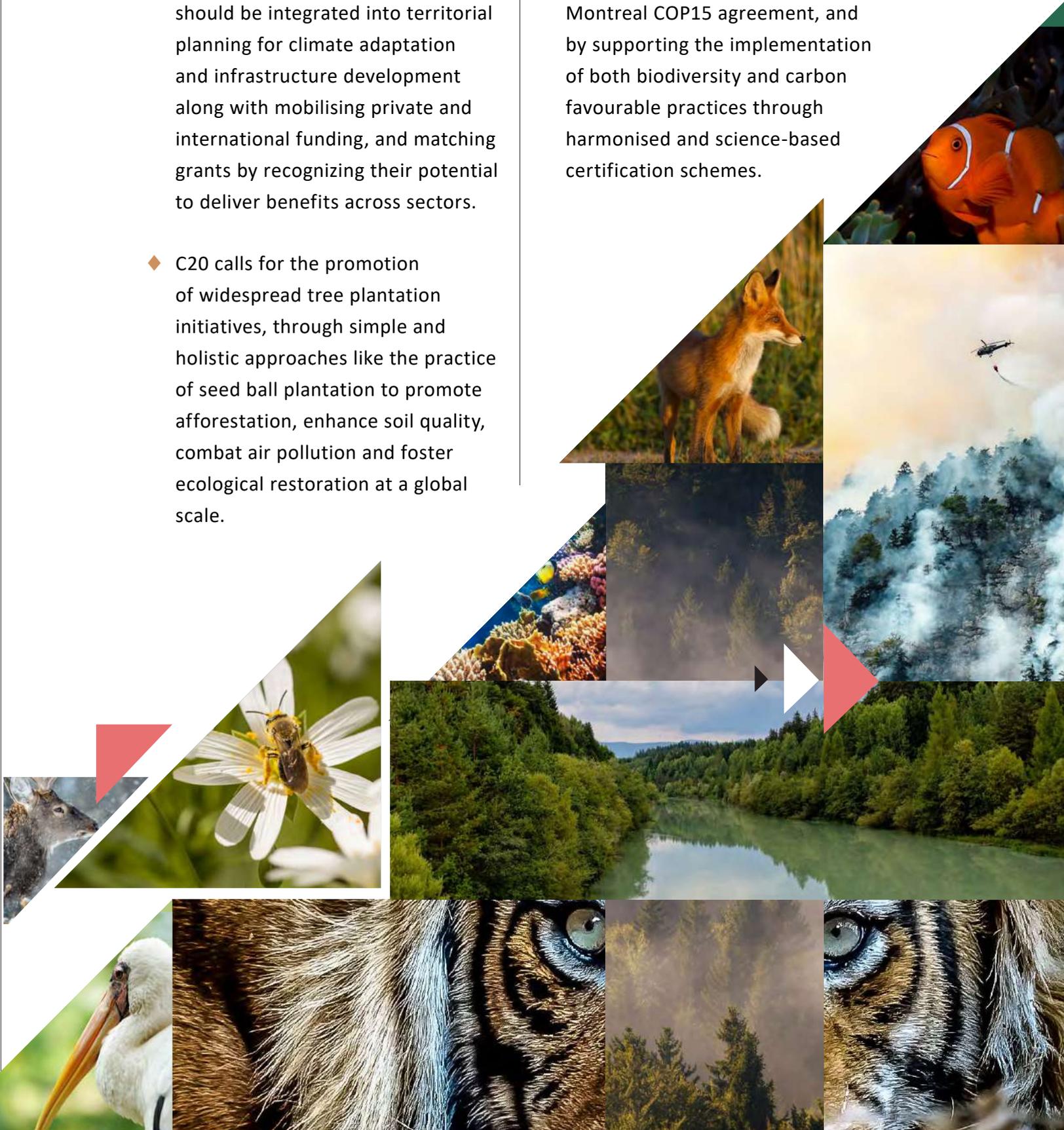
Net Zero Emissions Management

Despite strong emphasis on climate change, environmental sustainability and net-zero emissions, G20 still accounts for over 77% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The transition to net-zero is woefully inadequate, mostly techno-solutions-focused, poorly-funded, slow, and unsustainable. It has already exacerbated crises of displacement and exploitation of vulnerable communities, caused loss of livelihoods, and generated non-recyclable waste. There is poor awareness and understanding of the crisis at hand, solutions and their feasibility, the urgency for sustainable solutions, the magnitude of financing and monitoring needed for the same. In all these aspects, maladaptation is arising as the most significant challenge in transition to net-zero emissions.

Recommendations

A. Lifestyle Changes & Demand Reduction

G20 nations must commit to promoting sustainable lifestyles focused on reducing the quantum of residual emissions that have to be balanced, by promoting solutions that bridge socio-behavioural, infrastructural, and technological domains. C20 calls for G20 nations to:

- ◆ Redesign communities, urban form, and infrastructure to drastically reduce induced GHG emissions.

- ◆ Introduce policy incentives for high-emission individuals, organisations, enterprises and communities to reduce consumption and modify behaviour and choices to achieve lower per capita resource footprints while ensuring wellbeing.

◆ Promote redesign of living spaces - enhance efficiency in use of floor space, increase daylighting and passive thermal management, use only smart appliances, minimise materials in construction.

◆ Transformatively reduce total geographical distances travelled by individuals and goods - minimise travel for work, promote teleworking and shared pooled mobility, promote city- and state-level rail transport powered by renewables, incentivise decentralised, coupled production-consumption infrastructures, systems and provisioning of services.

◆ Incentivize transitions to energy, food, water, and resource self-sufficiency - on-site renewables and micro-grids, household-level food production, resource sharing, life-enhanced and efficient products, reuse and recycling, incentivize shift to plant-based diet.

◆ Design and promote energy, emissions, and resource-efficient. management of electronic devices.

B. Circular Economy

C20 urges G20 to mandate the use of circular economy principles in designing, financing and implementation of policies for transitions to net zero emissions by:

◆ Accelerating time-bound planning, funding and development of solutions for recycling, reuse and valorisation of spent waste arising from the technologies being adopted at global scale.

◆ Mandating decentralised, affordable, efficient and clean

recycling, reuse and valorisation solutions as the necessary condition for a technology to be deemed sustainable.

◆ Promoting grassroots and frugal innovations for sustainable emissions reductions.

C. Deep Decarbonization

G20 must accelerate deep decarbonization initiatives across all sectors to achieve tangible national and global targets for net zero emissions within 2050. C20 calls for G20 nations to:

- Immediately cease subsidies for fossil fuels.

- Transparently determine and commit to peaks and timelines in emissions.

- Incentivise adoption of energy-efficient appliances and solutions across sectors and value chains.

- Mandate time-bound, renewables-powered electrification of energy/ thermal sources in industries and phasing out of coal & fossil fuels.

- Mandate time-bound transition to sustainable feedstock for hard-to-abate chemical industries.

- Design, implement and monitor solutions to prevent lock-in emissions in future sectoral growth.

- Effectively monitor and eliminate greenwashing, green colonialism, and monoculture plantations for carbon capture.

Compassion Driven Approaches to Sustainable and Resilient Communities

The world is witnessing an alarming rise in violence against both humanity and the environment. Interpersonal violence affects millions of people, with a staggering number of annual fatalities globally. While efforts are being made to address it, they alone are inadequate to restore peace and harmony in society and nature. People experience two types of poverty in this world - poverty of food, clothing and shelter and poverty of love and compassion. Compassion is the most important factor that can transform lives. If we take this first step courageously, without fear, then all of our decisions and subsequent actions and their results will have a special beauty, spontaneity and power.

Recommendations

A. Fostering Peace, Harmony, by integrating Cultural Values and Rediscovering Local Traditions

- The G20 needs to prioritise promoting a culture of peace, harmony with nature, and education for building sustainable and resilient communities, emphasising human, cultural, and spiritual values for collective flourishing and well-being, and integrate them effectively into all public policies in a trans-sectoral manner.

- G20 must develop and implement experiential learning and hands own approaches at schools and universities for promoting a culture of peace and harmony with nature

- Member countries need to develop and implement strategies to rediscover local traditions, map them with respect to fostering peace, harmony and ecosystem restoration. Develop scalable models to train the future generation in utilising local traditions.

◆ G20 should establish schemes that will motivate multinational corporations and business enterprises to adopt rural enclaves and provide support and funding for the development of essential infrastructure such as schools, colleges, hospitals, and small-scale industries.

◆ G20 needs to recommend the local universities to adopt the nearby communities to engage, support and work in a participatory manner for identifying existing challenges, developing sustainable and resilient solutions, providing support in availing existing government schemes.

◆ C20 recommends prioritising youth empowerment through compassion-driven approaches by engaging young people in decision-making processes with access to quality education, skills training, and opportunities for leadership and entrepreneurship.

B. Compassion as a foundational element in educational curriculum

1. G20 must consider mandating the development of compassion-based educational frameworks that are tailored to local cultural, social, and economic contexts, while ensuring alignment with international standards and global perspectives. Furthermore, a course that teaches compassion and selflessness needs to be developed from kindergarten to grade 12 and higher education.

2. Member countries need to develop training materials and in terventions tailored for teachers and parents, focusing on integrating self-care, resilience, and the cultivation of inner compassion within the learning environment. A mandatory textbook including all aspects of the greatness of selflessness and compassion should be introduced. Furthermore, countries should also invest in designing reliable and valid assessment methods.

3. G20 must prioritise awareness programs that highlight the value of local experience, indigenous knowledge, and social responsibility, aiming to counter the invisibility of these important resources.

Udaaharans

We selected the following best practices to showcase the achievements of high impact projects undertaken by civil society organisations.

1. Unnat Kheti – Children's Investment Fund Foundation

The project, initiated three years ago, aims to promote Low Carbon Agriculture (LCA) and natural farming practices in India. It has successfully trained and supported 18,000 farmers including women. The project has also facilitated market linkages for LCA products, engaged cooperatives and corporations in sustainable sourcing, and provided research-based support to governments. The outcomes include widespread adoption of natural farming practices, the establishment of natural farming boards in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, and the operationalization of bio-resource production centres run by women Self-Help Groups.

2. SREE (Sustainability & Resilience for Community Engagement & Empowerment) Platform – Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

The lack of effective measurement, dissemination of information, and dynamic data analytics for community-scale sustainability and resilience assessment poses challenges for community-level decision-making. To address this gap, a technology-based crowd-sourced platform called Sustainability and Resilience for Community Engagement and Empowerment (SREE) has been proposed. Integrated with a mobile application called Empower Community App, this platform enables bottom-up assessments, knowledge acquisition, and informed decision-making. SREE utilises geo-enabled software and crowdsourced data to measure, map, analyse, and propose recommendations for community-level sustainability and resilience indicators. Implemented in multiple countries, this participatory solution allows for mapping, monitoring, risk assessment, and deriving recommendations for sustainability and resilience at various scales.
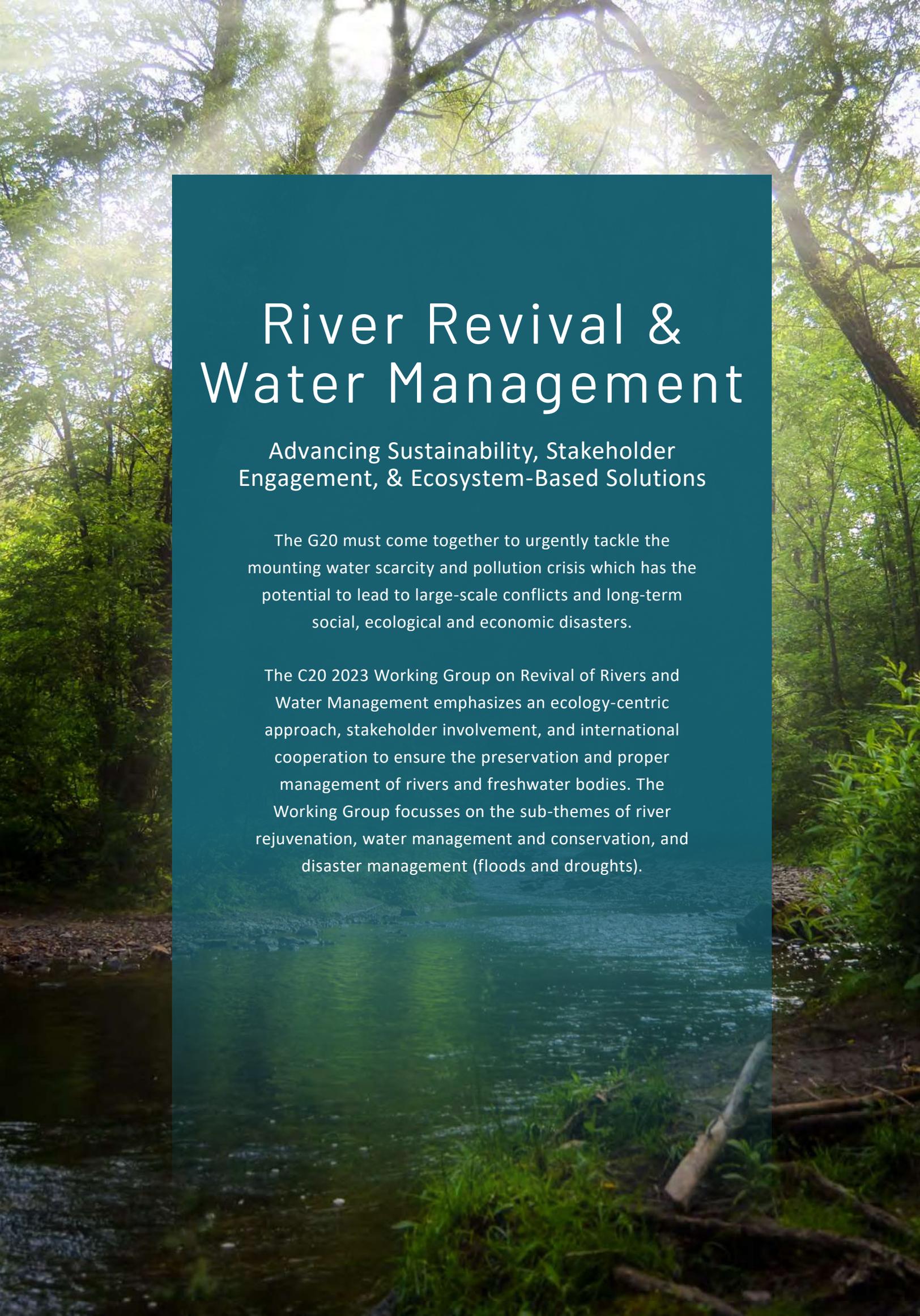
River Revival & Water Management

Advancing Sustainability, Stakeholder Engagement, & Ecosystem-Based Solutions

The G20 must come together to urgently tackle the mounting water scarcity and pollution crisis which has the potential to lead to large-scale conflicts and long-term social, ecological and economic disasters.

The C20 2023 Working Group on Revival of Rivers and Water Management emphasizes an ecology-centric approach, stakeholder involvement, and international cooperation to ensure the preservation and proper management of rivers and freshwater bodies. The Working Group focusses on the sub-themes of river rejuvenation, water management and conservation, and disaster management (floods and droughts).

The WG urges the G20 to commit to preserving and sustaining the natural flow and self-purification capacity of rivers. The Working Group has urged governments to exercise stewardship over water resources as a common good which includes obtaining citizens' consent for activities affecting water resources, preventing environmentally unsustainable projects, and ensuring water education in school curricula to promote awareness, conservation, and responsible use of water. States are encouraged to include native, traditional, and indigenous communities and integrating their knowledge and practices.

The G20 is called upon to leverage technology for the identification, management, monitoring, and dissemination of information about water systems. Such data must be made publicly available and accessible to citizens for their active participation in water protection and judicious use. Additionally, the G20 must facilitate technology and know-how transfers for

effective disaster management related to floods and droughts. Exemplary success stories from around the world provide valuable insights. Cross-border knowledge-sharing to help in the replication of best practices among G20 states is needed to prevent climate-induced migration and water conflicts.

The G20 is urged to incorporate environmental factors and ecological sustainability in valuing water resources, including implementing the "polluter pays principle" for accountability on water pollution and ecosystem degradation, the "user pays principle" to ensure that the cost of water usage reflects its full life cycle costs and legally-binding obligations on large-scale users to maintain or restore ecological conditions and prevent short-term economic exploitation.

By implementing these recommendations, the G20 can play a crucial role in restoring and maintaining freshwater availability and avoiding water wars, ensuring a sustainable future for all.

Introduction

Water is the bloodstream of human civilization. The scarcity of clean and pure water threatens the survival of all living beings in the ecosystem. Human activity has steadily reduced the amount of fresh water available. Competing demands for water from agriculture, industry, energy production and basic human consumption intensify the pressure on overground resources and underground reservoirs. A significant proportion of water bodies are contaminated. Dramatic changes in the volume and period of rainfall due to anthropogenic factors have created a water crisis. Large rivers that were once perennial now run practically dry through the year. Other species – plants, animals, birds and even microbial life – are being destroyed with disappearing water habitats. Conditions that create moderate short-term economic gain also consequently risk medium-to-long term social, ecological, political, and economic disaster.

G20 leaders must come together to urgently address the mounting challenges on our doorsteps. Though water conflicts are not a novel phenomenon, the possibility of large-scale human conflicts due to water scarcity in the very near future is alarming. The question is, what would it take for the G20 to achieve all of this in tandem and with swiftness?

Appeal to the G20 Leadership: There is an urgent need for globally replicable and scalable frameworks built on consensus, combining economic and ecological sustainability, combining indigenous wisdom, sound technology and robust sociological and governance processes to create a water-sustainable future for all.

Working Group Themes

The UN's SDG 6[1]-Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all - has six targets of which targets 6.32[2], 6.43[3], 6.54[4], 6.65[5] and 6.a6[6] & 6.b7[7] are relevant to this Working Group8 on 'Revival of Rivers & Water Management'[9].

This WG notes that all SDG6 targets show varying levels of achievement so far. Achieving universal coverage by 2030 will require a 6-fold increase in current global progress rates on drinking water. Domestic wastewater trends show limited progress towards halving the proportion of unsafe discharges by 2030, water stress[10] levels show regional variations and indicate a 1.2% increase between 2015-2020. One in two countries lacks effective frameworks for sustainable water management, and one in five river basins are experiencing above natural fluctuations in surface water in the last five years[11]. ODA[12] commitments to the water sector have declined since 2017 surfacing a need for alternate finance towards meeting targets. The proportion of countries demonstrating a high level of local community participation in water resources management remains small (<40%)[13].

The World Bank informs that floods and droughts have increased especially in the last two decades (recording 1.65 billion flood-affected people and 1.43 billion drought-affected people) and more in news since 2021[14].

The European Parliamentary Research Service's 2021 briefing[15] stated that, while there wasn't any standardized definition of "climate refugees" (the
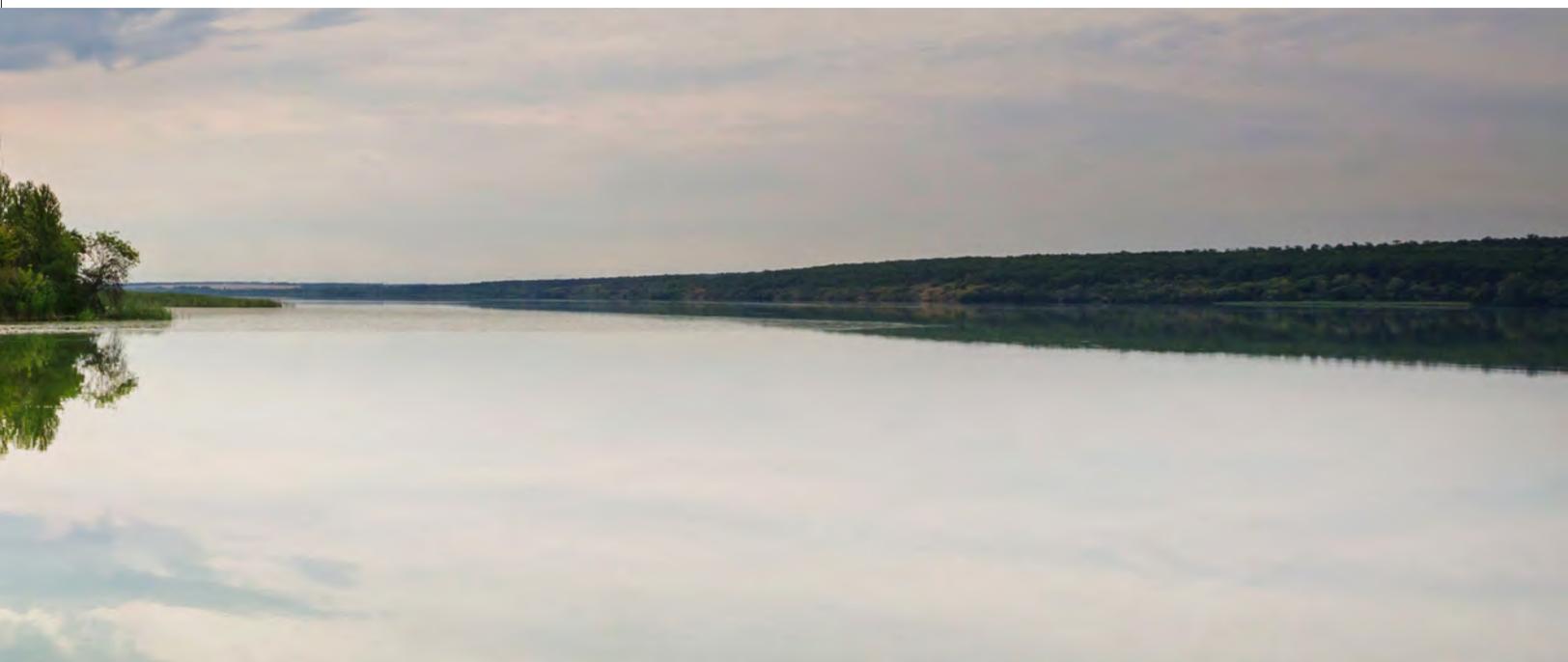
alternate term is "climate migrants"), over 318 million persons had been displaced since 2008 until the date of the document because of climate disasters. Since then, further climate-extreme events, including drought or extreme heatwave conditions, hurricanes/cyclones of growing intensity, irrational rainfall patterns, and flooding have affected wide swathes of the population around the world.

On a longer timescale, the trends of rainfall variation and water scarcity have the potential to have intergenerational impact such as exacerbating poverty, washing out livelihoods, prompting migration and human suffering, and increasing economic costs as climate change becomes more widespread, rapid, and intense[16].

While previously the displacement of people due to climate-related disasters usually happened within a country's borders and was the sole concern of the national government, increasingly populations may seek food, shelter and livelihood across borders. Thus, corrective measures on water security are absolutely essential to avoid such mass migration and potential international conflicts.

The C20 Working Group on Revival of Rivers and Water Management came together to take stock of sector progress, deliberate on the challenges and propose steps towards creating lasting solutions.

The WG comprised of highly experienced experts in this area, stakeholders, community members, government officials, and CSOs[17].

On the back of discussions on pressing issues of water exploitation, scarcity, encroachments, pollution, privatization and commodification, policy and governance worldwide, the WG contributed insights across 3 sub-themes for 'Revival of Rivers and Water Management' including:

1. River Rejuvenation

2. Water Management & Conservation

3. Disaster Management (floods and droughts)

The three sub-themes have been considered by the Working Group on a foundation of tactical, strategic and institutionalizing measures. The sub-themes fit into climate change, the key priority of India's G20 Presidency and would also help towards accelerating progress on SDGs[18].

To create the policy recommendations, the Working Group has discussed areas including:

1. River Rejuvenation from Origin to Confluence

- Riverine ecosystems and Ecosystem Services

- Forestry interventions including agroforestry, ecotourism and conservation measures

- Watershed management, catchment area treatment and ecological restoration measures

2. Flood mitigation and drought management

- Flood management tactics and strategies in high rainfall and flood prone areas

- Policies, regulations and guidelines for prevention and mitigation of flood and related disasters

3. Role of Community and Multiple Stakeholders

- River basin management: Technology innovations; Community empowerment, youth participation and delegation of power amongst communities

- Traditional knowledge on river flows and its applications in river rejuvenation

- Community-centric Engineering of Water Infrastructure

- Water conservation measures

- Addressing the Commodification of the Water Commons

- Catalysing Broad-based Community Financial Participation in Revival of Rivers

- Catalysing Philanthropic Capital / Private Capital for Nature Based Solutions through outcome-based financing mechanisms

Udaaharans–Exemplary Stories of Success

Exemplary stories or best practices raise awareness of what worked and encourage replicating (or tweaking) practices across G20 countries, challenge conventional practices and develop a shared vision to attain desired outcomes.

A.Revival of Arvari basin, Rajasthan, India:
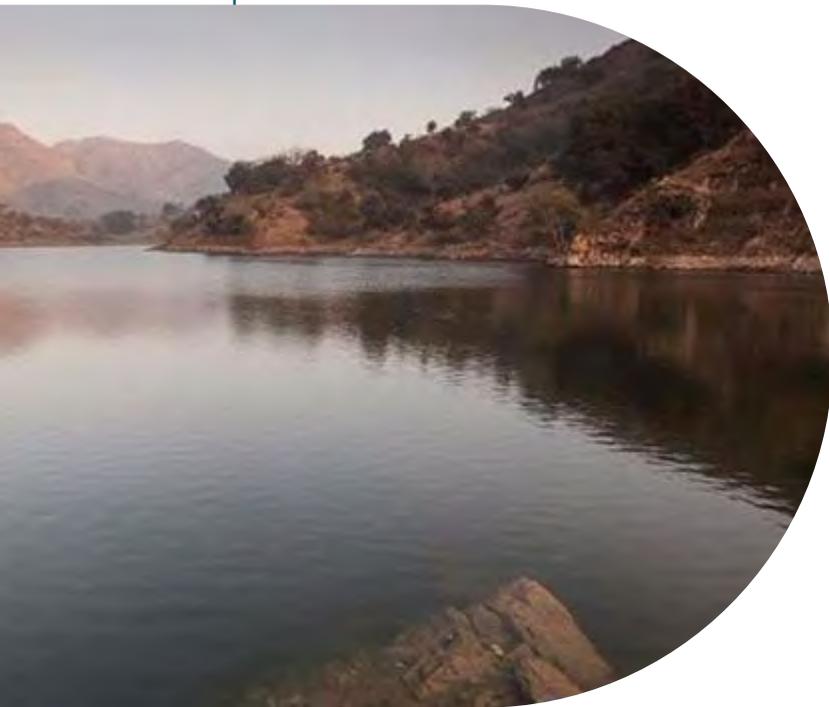
- ◆ River dried after excess groundwater withdrawal and extraction in 1985.

- ◆ Community mobilised to build structures for water retention and to route rainwater using traditional harvesting systems

- ◆ Achieved increased water level in wells and groundwater recharge due to less extraction.

- ◆ Arvari Parliament formed to establish community-led ownership of the river.

Alignment with WG's policy thrust:

- » Community-driven and decentralized water management

- » Leveraging palaeogeological knowledge

B. Cooperation for sustainable development of the Mekong River Basin System, South-east Asia:

◆ World's 12th longest river running through 6 riparian countries.

◆ Due to continued regional conflict and geo-political barriers, there were no structures on the Lower Mekong mainstream.

◆ The Mekong Agreement was signed amongst the Lower Mekong River Basin States (LMRBS) Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam in 1995 that dealt majorly with water allocation.

◆ It led to dam development with cross-border consensus and "to cooperate in a constructive and mutually beneficial manner for sustainable development, utilization, conservation and management of the Mekong River Basin water and related resources."21

◆ The Agreement is the outcome of more than 40 years years of regional and supra-regional efforts to cooperatively manage the river water/related resources. Each party had distinct issues & the Agreement benefited all by resolving via cooperative development of the LMRB.

Alignment with Working Group's policy thrust:

» International/cross-border cooperations and management.

» Ecosystem services

» Reflects best practice of international river basins to turn Potential Conflicts into Potential Cooperations (PCCP).

» Eco-centric development model impacting livelihoods/marginalization of people due to dam development.

C. Indian city of Chennai bounces back from Day Zero

- ◆ Excess demand over water supply, damage to catchments, and extreme weather created acute water scarcity.

- ◆ Chennai mandated rainwater harvesting, and actively began recycling waste water (aiming for a target of 75% reuse rate)

- ◆ Networks of nature-based solutions have been created by CSOs, including rainwater harvesting (RWH), vegetation ditches and anaerobic treatment to recharge aquifers.

Alignment with WG's policy thrust:

- » A combination of technological solutions to desalinate water and recover waste water, as well as nature-based solutions

- » Multi-stakeholder alignment between public, CSOs, and government

D. Delivering Change Programme Water Project, 2014, Maharashtra state, India

- ◆ Aimed to assist the Government of Maharashtra (GoM) to deliver a "Water for All by 2019" vision via ensuring adequate & consistent water supply for a Drought Free Maharashtra.

Alignment with Working Group's policy thrust:

- » Leveraging multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary platforms for consensus-led solutions.

- » Process-oriented (lab-based) approach.

◆ 70+ participants; 60+ organizations; 30+ meetings; 32 initiatives developed (water source & conservation, agriculture and domestic & industry); 240+ hours lab effort; 4 months ground-level pre-lab research.

◆ Resulted in water sufficient Maharashtra.

◆ 7.2 BCM23 of additional water created. Initiatives designed with potential to increase surface water capture (to 36.35% from 32%); increase ground water levels (to 36.32 BCM from 33.95 BCM); increase irrigation potential to 5.8 Million Ha; and improve water supply to 91 ULBs

Policy Recommendations

Keeping in mind the urgency of the challenges facing humanity, and with the underlying G20 leadership commitments already in place, the WG submits the following recommendations. Many need only conscientious implementation of existing legal and other frameworks, rather than the promulgation of new laws or signing of new agreements.

◆ **Governments and people must commit to an ecology-centric approach to maintain the natural, continuous and free flow of rivers and their self- purification capacity; the very definition of a river is that it is a natural flow of water with its own structure, life, and dependent life-forms, as different from a canal which is man-made and a bound structure.**

◆ **The State must exercise stewardship over water resources as a commons and protect them in conjunction with their associated ecological functions, such that:**

1. It respects the rights and relationships of citizens with water and water ecosystems, and ensures their free, prior, and informed consent for any activities on and/or affecting water resources and related ecosystems

2. It prevents projects around riverine systems whose

environmental cost is unreasonable or excessive in comparison to the benefits derived from any part of and/or the whole of those projects

3. It makes age-appropriate water education a mandatory part of the K-12 curriculum, including site visits and interactions with local freshwater bodies, specifically the local sources of domestic water, so as to foster sensitivity, awareness, and a healthy relationship with water and water ecosystems, and promote judicious use, reuse, and conservation of water

4. It undertakes the enactment and implementation of strict pollution prevention laws to keep human generated pollution such as industrial effluents, urban solid waste and effluents, agricultural waste, and any other untreated water generated from human activity from being directly discharged into freshwater bodies

◆ **States must engage multidisciplinary stakeholder groups for ground-up consensus-**

led solutions to reviving rivers and freshwater bodies, including but not limited to:

1. Ensuring participation of native, traditional, & indigenous communities and their practices to benefit from palaeogeological knowledge, tools, and techniques for river restoration and water management

2. Decentralizing river management and river revival projects based on ecological, geographical, morphological, territorial, administrative, and other such related factors as necessary to effectively plan, execute, and monitor strategies suited to each segment along the length of a river and its tributaries

3. Consult and include stakeholders such as NGOs, INGOs, FBOs, corporate bodies, private entrepreneurs, private sector, start-ups, youth, and experts from different fields of humanities, sciences, and finance to develop and implement a holistic framework for water management and river revival.

4. Promote regular dialogues between the various stakeholders mentioned above to align interests, onboarding, removing roadblocks, identifying actionable steps for smooth execution, and monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of projects undertaken for the revival and management of water resources

♦ **The G20 must lead in leveraging technology to explore, document, manage, implement, monitor and disseminate information about water systems, such that:**

1. All water bodies are identified, demarcated, notified, managed, and monitored, the data of which is made publicly available and accessible for the knowledge and perusal of citizens to get involved in the protection and judicious use of water and water systems

Technology innovation and intervention is facilitated for disaster management (floods and droughts)

♦ **G20 states must strengthen cross-border agreements and cooperation to prevent climate migration, prevent water conflicts and water wars**

♦ **G20 must show leadership in including environmental factors and ecological sustainability in**

the correct valuation of water resources and their services based on the following frameworks:

1. "Polluter pays", where those who cause water pollution and ecosystem degradation shall bear the costs of restoring and compensating for any harm caused to human health and/or the environment

2. "User pays", such that usage of water shall be at cost based on the full life cycle of costs of extraction, provision, disposal, and replacement of the water resource

3. Legally-binding obligations on large-scale users to ensure that

ecological conditions of water resources and their ecosystem services are maintained (or to be restored, if degraded), keeping in mind that the water commons are often exploited for short-term economic gains by private or public parties without paying heed to the long term ecological, social or even economic degradation being caused.

4. Since rivers and freshwater bodies may cross jurisdictions and even national boundaries, the G20 needs to create multilateral governance frameworks and mechanisms to define these principles and enforce the effects.

The G20 must initiate an integrated approach imbibing consensus and pledges, sustainability, and robust processes using both technical and financial resources. The process framework would support the validation of what works and what doesn't and take solutions to countries accordingly. This approach will be governed by the following guiding principles:

◆ Make the solution scalable, replicable, and adaptable to the local context

◆ Ensure participation and consensus of all stakeholders involved, especially the public at large, along with Civil Society Organizations,

Government, private and other affected agencies

◆ Identify entry points for short-term and long-term action plans

◆ Ensure availability of sustainable financing for implementing plans.

Conclusion

Attention has been accorded to rivers and water in the past G20 summits. An enhanced focus under the ongoing G20 Presidency is encouraging. No discussion on climate change is complete without including water as "water is the leverage for best climate impact", hence to a large extent SDGs 13 and 6 should go hand-in-hand in policy, planning, and execution.

Cross-border cooperation, with process-orientated methodology and contextualization of exemplary stories of success can produce replicable and scalable impact projects across G20 countries. It is imperative to drive efforts that are not one-off, rather sustainable and process-oriented. Both urban and rural ecosystems are valuable

and need to be supported considering unique needs of their local economies and neither should face a scarcity to save the other.

Policy decisions need to be taken now to avert new failures and perhaps even repair the old ones. Sound decisions, both at individual country level and at the G20 level, would underscore the sublime importance of the precious water resource on which depends the existence of all life.

There is an imperative, undeniable need for the confluence of community participation, traditional knowledge, and technological innovations to achieve sustainable solutions. Exemplary success stories from around the world provide valuable insights

and encourage the replication of best practices. The policy recommendations stress the importance of an ecology-centric approach, stewardship over water resources, stakeholder engagement, technology utilization, cross-border cooperation, and the inclusion of environmental factors in water resource valuation. By implementing these recommendations, the G20 can play a crucial role in restoring and maintaining freshwater availability and avoiding water wars, ensuring a sustainable future for all.

This policy brief emphasizes that we must ensure that the way we are developing the sector is by moving towards an eco-centric rather than an anthropocentric development. It is imperative that river revival and water management be attended to with priority and with the enhanced status that natural capital deserves via recycling, reuse, rejuvenation/restoration and repair.

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3. Target 6.4: By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.

4. Target 6.5: By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate

5. Target 6.6.: By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes

6. Target 6.a: By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity building support to developing countries in water-and sanitation-related

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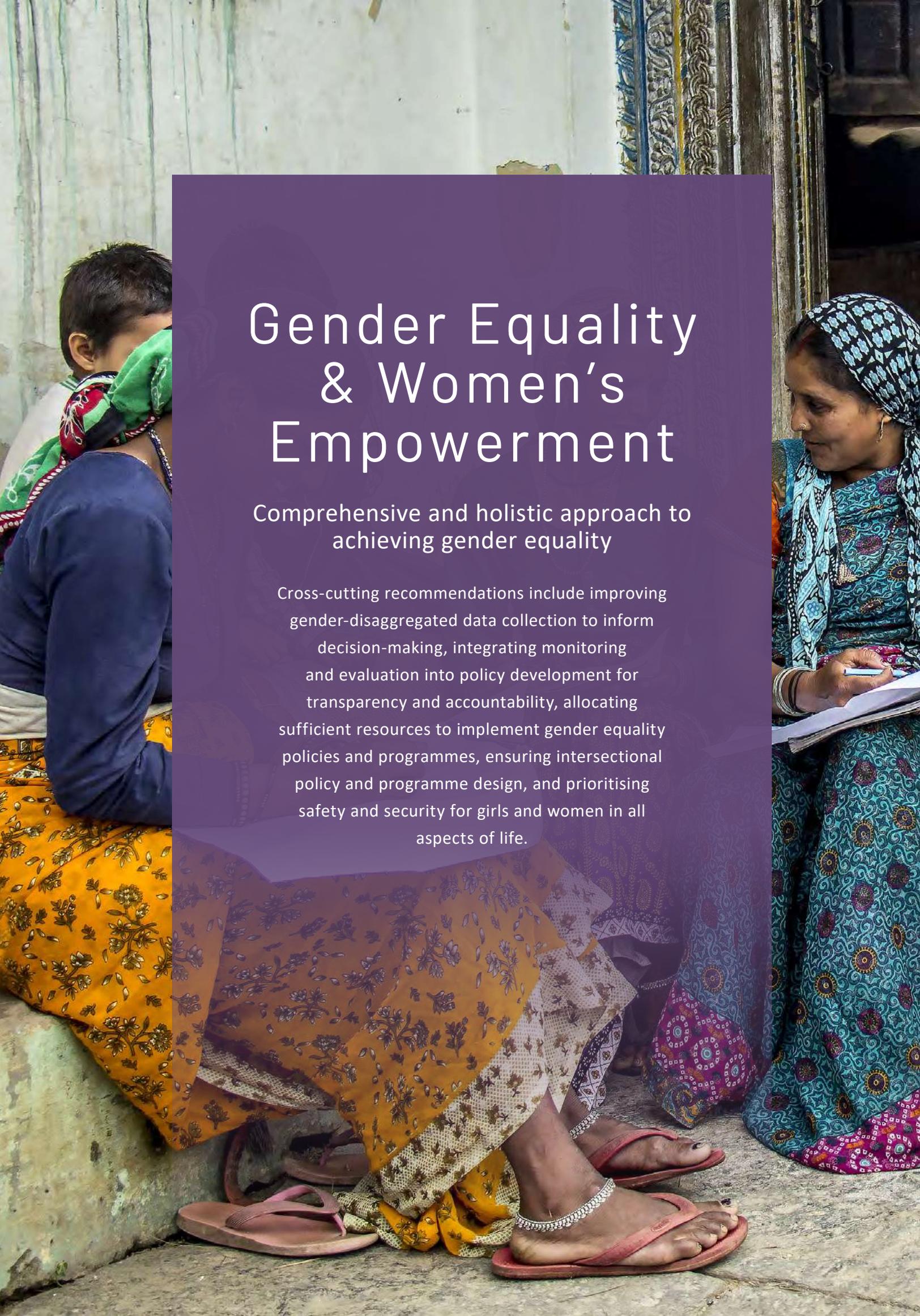
Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment

Comprehensive and holistic approach to achieving gender equality

Cross-cutting recommendations include improving gender-disaggregated data collection to inform decision-making, integrating monitoring and evaluation into policy development for transparency and accountability, allocating sufficient resources to implement gender equality policies and programmes, ensuring intersectional policy and programme design, and prioritising safety and security for girls and women in all aspects of life.

Thematic recommendations focus on specific areas:

- Prioritising mental health is crucial, and investing in accessible mental health services for women and girls can yield significant benefits. Inclusive, comprehensive national mental health policies should be developed, and mental health education should be integrated into schools and workplaces.

- Expanding access to education, particularly for rural and marginalised women and girls, is required. Barriers to education, such as safety concerns, inadequate sanitation facilities, and lack of digital infrastructure and access to it, must be addressed. Establishing gender-responsive learning centres, ensuring access for marginalised groups, improving existing sanitation infrastructure, and expanding internet connectivity and access to it are key goals.

- Engaging men and boys is vital for achieving gender equality. Harmful social norms contribute to issues like violence against women, and gender sensitisation and transformative education should be provided to all stakeholders.

- Disaster preparedness and management should include women and girls as they are disproportionately negatively affected. Mandating their representation in decision-making bodies, conducting gender and vulnerability assessments, providing gender-responsive training, and collaborating with local organisations are essential.

- Promoting women's economic empowerment is critical. Enhancing financial inclusion and promoting economic opportunities for women through stronger collaboration among financial institutions, government, private sector and civil society organisations can have a significant impact on women's economic empowerment and economic growth.

Gender inequality is internationally recognised as a cross-cutting issue that must be addressed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the realisation of basic human rights. Considering that all G20 countries have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, gender equality and empowering all women and girls are intrinsic objectives. However, a pernicious and persistent gap remains: Women comprise 49.7% of the world's population[1], yet the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report (2023) estimates it will take another 131 years to attain a gender-equal society at the current pace[2]. Women hold only 33% of leadership positions across public and private sectors[3], earn less than men, are over-represented in low-paying jobs, are less likely to own land and control assets than men, and have limited influence over important decisions[4]. Women are also exponentially more vulnerable to discrimination, violence, sex and labour trafficking, the effects of climate change and disasters, food insecurity, and lack of access to education and healthcare, among other disproportionately negative impacts[5]. When women are empowered with education and decision-making power, together with access to and ownership and control over economic resources, they contribute more to sustainable development; children are less likely to suffer from malnutrition and more likely to be educated. Women's empowerment has long-term positive impacts on a family's economic status, significantly reducing poverty, and women are more likely to promote environmentally sustainable practices in agriculture and consumption[6]. Gender equality is vital to achieving a regenerative, harmonious, and prosperous world, and empowering women is a critical component of achieving gender equality.

Achieving gender equality cannot be accomplished through isolated or fragmented approaches. Instead, a comprehensive, holistic, systemic approach must be adopted to achieve sustainable and long-lasting results[7]. The following policy recommendations aim to advance such an approach, highlighting the inter-connected nature of these policies.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

The following five key components reflect gaps in cross-cutting issues that have weakened previous policy designs and their implementation. Therefore, these must be incorporated into all policies and programmes to successfully realise the SDGs.

Further, data collection should include regular, periodic audits of the implementation processes of policies and programmes. Incentives should be put in place to ensure high-quality processes and data collection.

1. Improve, increase, and incentivise high-quality gender-disaggregated data collection. This requires dedicated, inter-sectoral resources to design data collection protocols that reflect holistic indicators on gender, society, economics, environment, health, education, and safety; design appropriate tools that will facilitate data collection; and teams of social and data scientists to extract meaningful insights from the collected data.

2. Allocate sufficient financial and human resources to gender equality policies and programmes. Mandate the integration of gender budgeting into existing public financial management and in future reforms. Gender budgeting must be included throughout the entire budget cycle, applicable to planning, budget execution, reporting, impact evaluation, and reflection upon efficacy. Incorporating gender budgeting and the allocation of

adequate human resources into all phases of the budget cycle will improve sustainability of gender policies and programmes and improve gender-related outcomes.

3. Ensure monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessments are integrated into developing all policies and programmes. This entails the creation of context-appropriate key performance indicators and expected outcomes, which should be publicly available. Additionally, evaluation reports should be published to provide a comprehensive overview of the progress made. By adopting this approach, organisations can enhance accountability, facilitate evidence-based decision-making, and foster transparency.

4. Incorporate safety and security into all aspects of life, with special attention paid to institutional approaches to ensuring girls' and women's safety. One of the primary characteristics of gender-based violence (GBV) is that it cuts across all boundaries - social, economic, and political - therefore requiring urgent attention in developing and developed nations alike[8]. Schools, workplaces, and public spaces need to be designed (or re-designed) with safety and security as a priority.

First responders, criminal justice workers, social servants, and the medical community should be actively engaged. The most effective initiatives to reduce violence against women and girls require a community-based, multi-pronged approach and sustained engagement with multiple stakeholders. These initiatives should address underlying risk factors, such as gender roles and the acceptability of violence[9].

5. Develop intersectional policy and programme design. Develop policies and programmes that are targeted, tailored, flexible, and cognisant of the different identities women carry. These involve understanding the specific challenges faced by indigenous women, LGBTQ+ women, women of colour, women with disabilities, and others. Recognise these experiences and barriers to design more effective policies that are responsive to the unique needs of diverse groups of women. Stakeholder participation, including those from traditionally marginalised groups, should be increased at all levels of decision-making processes. Ensuring that policy development includes voices representative of all aspects of intersectionality will result in more equitable policies.

Thematic Recommendations

Prioritise Mental Health

In 2022, global costs of mental health disorders were estimated at 4.7 trillion USD and are expected to grow significantly annually[10]. However, countries' mental health spending remains low, with less than 2% of health budgets allocated on average, particularly in low-income countries[11]. Despite one in ten individuals being in need of mental health care, government spending in low-income countries is estimated at less than 1 USD per capita. For example, investing in scaled-up treatment for depression and anxiety can yield a 4 USD return in better health and productivity for every 1 USD invested[12].

Specifically, women face a significantly higher lifetime risk of mood disorders and anxiety compared to men[13]. Investing in accessible mental health services for women and girls offers extensive economic and social benefits, including the potential to reduce the inter-generational transmission of mental illness. However, addressing men's mental health issues is also crucial for achieving gender equality[14], as there is a strong link between men's mental health and gender-based violence[15]. Early intervention and prevention programmes for mental health, particularly in schools and community settings, can significantly

reduce mental health problems in adulthood[16]. Such programmes, incorporating robust social-emotional learning skills, have shown positive outcomes for mental health[17], all of which are vital in the post-Covid-19 era when global health systems are still strained, and mental health conditions are even more prevalent.

Revamp existing or develop comprehensive national mental health policies to:

1. Incorporate social-emotional learning and mandatory mental health education in schools and workplaces by 2025.

2. Increase access to mental health services for underrepresented communities by providing financial incentives to healthcare providers to serve these communities by 2025.

3. Increase funding for public-private partnerships to expand access to mental health services in underserved areas by 50% by 2030.

4. Ensure mental health is integrated into all primary care services by 2030, and that access to these services is subsidised or free of cost.

5. Increase the number of community-based mental health services available in underserved areas by 50% by 2030.

Expand Education and Continuing Education to Reach Rural and Marginalised Women

While most countries have achieved gender parity in primary school enrolment, approximately 129 million girls are still not attending school, with 97 million of them being of secondary school age[18]. Such statistics highlight the need to address low completion rates and target underserved populations for sustainable gender parity in education. Investing in women's education has significant financial benefits, as each year of education can increase earnings by 10%, and educating all girls and women could boost global GDP by up to 112 billion USD annually[19].

Barriers to girls' and women's education include safety, inadequate sanitation facilities, and lack of digital infrastructure and access to it. Providing proper sanitation facilities in schools increases girls' attendance rates by 11% and improves academic performance[20]. Additionally, expanding internet access, especially for girls and women in rural areas of developing countries, has a substantial impact on reducing poverty and promoting gender equality[21].

1. Establish and operate gender-responsive, accessible, and affordable learning centres in underserved areas by 2030. This includes migrant and immigrant populations and rural areas.

2. Ensure that at least 80% of uneducated girls in all their diversity, marginalised groups, and migrants have access to learning centres and online education by 2030.

3. Increase the percentage of girls in all their diversity, marginalised groups and migrants who complete secondary education or equivalent by at least 50% by 2030.

4. Improve sanitation and hygiene in all existing education infrastructure; provide all newly-built infrastructure with safe, functioning, hygienic facilities suitable for girls' and women's needs.

5. Aggressively implement a strategy to ensure last-mile connectivity for under-served populations. (e.g., The International Telecommunication Union's Last-mile Internet Connectivity Solutions Guide[22], or alternative) to ensure technological literacy for girls and women. Achieve 80% connectivity with minimum speeds of 25 Mbps by 2030.

Engage Men & Boys

Engaging men and boys is critical to gender equality and a key component of a holistic approach. The negative effects of social norms on men often contribute to violence against women, harmful gender stereotypes, and many other negative outcomes[23]. Studies to measure the effects of harmful social norms on men and boys have been developed, including an evaluation of a concept called the "Man Box". This refers to harmful beliefs that pressure men to conform to certain stereotypes, including being tough, self-sufficient, and sexually aggressive[24]. Internalising these beliefs leads to a range of negative outcomes, including sexual violence, traffic accidents, bullying, violence, suicide, binge drinking, and depressive symptoms in men aged 18-30 in the US, costing the US economy at least 15.7 billion USD annually[25]. The same issues cost the UK 3.8 billion USD and Mexico 1.4 billion USD[26]. In addition to global mental health efforts, specific gender sensitisation efforts need to be implemented.

1. All educational institutions, workplaces, government offices, and non-government organisations must provide gender sensitisation and masculinities' transformative education to their staff, children, parents, policy-makers, judiciary, and front-line workers by 2030.

2. Ensure that 80% of educational institutions, workplaces, government offices, and non-government organisations receive regular audits of their gender sensitisation and masculinities' transformative education programs by 2030.

3. All curricula should include culturally and age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health and rights and responsibilities of all genders, awareness of alternative masculinities, sexual and gender diversity awareness, sexual harassment, anti-violence and anti-bias campaigns, and online safety by 2030.

4. At least 50% of all educational institutions, workplaces, government offices, and non-government organisations should have measurable targets for engaging men and boys in the context of gender equality by 2030.

Disaster Preparedness and Management

Women and girls, particularly those in lower socio-economic populations, are disproportionately negatively impacted by environmental degradation and disasters. Yet, women are typically not systematically included in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of disaster risk reduction and resilience efforts or in other environmental decision-making

roles. This has resulted in persistent inequalities in women's access to housing, education, health services, safety, employment, and other post-disaster economic reconstruction

efforts. Women's roles as key stakeholders in agriculture, biodiversity preservation, and as transmitters of inter-generational values and sustainable environmental practices are vital contributions to disaster preparedness. In particular, indigenous keepers of traditional knowledge have a long-held understanding of the plant and animal species that inhabit their regions and the sustainable practices that allow them to flourish. It is important to include indigenous and native peoples, especially women, in planning and decision-making processes to prevent or mitigate climate-induced natural disasters. Several agencies of the United Nations have developed programmes to address gender inequality in disaster preparedness and relief from multiple angles, but men still hold 94% of managerial roles in the field of disaster risk reduction. Upon closer look, women in managerial positions are concentrated in roles such as personnel and public relations rather than direct management of disaster response programs.

1. Mandate a minimum representation of at least 50% women, girls, and other vulnerable groups in disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) planning and policy development committees, task forces, and decision-making bodies and ensure this target is met by 2030.

2. Conduct gender and vulnerability assessments in all disaster-prone areas within the next three years.

3. Implement specialised gender-responsive DRRM training for at least 500 policymakers, planners, and practitioners in G20 countries, annually.

4. Establish community-based training initiatives in 50% of disaster-prone

communities within the next three years, focusing on empowering women and girls as leaders in disaster management.

5. Collaborate with local organisations, NGOs, and community leaders to deliver awareness programmes and challenge gender norms in at least 90% of targeted communities.

Women's Economic Empowerment

Access to finance for women entrepreneurs has a significant impact on economic growth. Studies indicate that closing the gender finance gap in developing countries could unlock USD 5.5 trillion in global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2025. Advancing women's access to finance equality could also add USD 12 trillion to global GDP by 2025. Additionally, women-led start-ups generate 78 cents in revenue for every dollar of funding, compared to 31 cents for start-ups founded by men. Furthermore, companies with more women in senior management positions have better financial performance, with a six percentage points higher net profit margin for companies with at least 30% women in leadership positions. Enhancing financial inclusion

and promoting other economic opportunities can be achieved by enabling convergence among financial institutions, government, private sector, and CSOs.

Specifically:

1. Mandate financial service providers to allocate a minimum of 33% of their credit portfolio specifically for micro, small, and medium scale enterprises led by women and marginalised groups.

2. Incentivise loan officers to positively consider applications from women business owners and institute an "if not/why not" accountability framework, under which loan officers must explain why a loan application submitted by a woman was rejected.

3. Provide capacity building and skills development to women and marginalised groups to access employment, entrepreneurship and investment opportunities in frontier technologies and the green and blue economies.

4. Encourage gender-responsive public procurement programmes in G20 countries; mandate Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting by the top 1000 publicly listed companies, encouraging reporting on gender-responsive corporate procurement as a metric.

Conclusion

Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment requires a comprehensive and holistic approach. Cross-cutting recommendations include improving gender-disaggregated data collection, integrating monitoring and evaluation into policy development, allocating sufficient resources, and prioritising safety and security for women and girls. Thematic recommendations focus on prioritising mental health, expanding access to education, engaging men and boys, including women in disaster preparedness and management, and promoting women's economic empowerment. These recommendations, with adequate human and financial resources, when implemented, will contribute to creating a regenerative, harmonious, and prosperous world where gender equality is a reality.

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Integrated Holistic Health

Mind, Body & Environment

Our goal is to promote a state of SAMYUKT AROGYA - 'SAMYUKT': Integrated, Holistic Health: Mind, Body and Environment. Aligned with the WHO definition of health, "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity", the C20 Integrated Holistic Health Working Group (IHH-WG) 2023 iterates that health promotion and disease prevention must be addressed at the levels of mind, body, and environment. Building on commitments made by previous G20 leaderships, IHH-WG expands the scope of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 (UN-SDG3), Good Health and Well-Being, proposing inclusive, equitable and holistic solutions for building healthy communities.

The consolidated policy recommendations are:

◆ Adoption, implementation and sustainability of a National Mental Health Programme in all G20 countries, extending into the community, public health institutions and private sector, entailing screening and follow-up at both community and institutional levels, with special emphasis on the vulnerable - women, children, and marginalised communities.

◆ G20 commitment to enhance community and primary healthcare systems by integration of Digital Health Platforms contextualised to the country, with a guarantee of "ACCESS FOR ALL" for preventative care, therapy, and health system delivery for both communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

◆ A uniform One-health policy to be agreed upon by G20 member nations through an Inter-sectoral Global Framework and Treaty for Zoonotic diseases and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) encompassing surveillance, data sharing, and alerts, research and shared infrastructure and management.

Introduction

Health is key to meeting the Sustainable Development Agenda by 2030. Health has a strong and direct influence on the economy of nations. The global GDP fell by 3.4% in 2020, translating to a 2 trillion USD economic loss due to COVID. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need for global healthcare cooperation, given the imminent likelihood of similar pandemics in the future. It is imperative to build consensus among United Nations member States on all fronts to be better prepared.

To address this, we aim to accelerate progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) - ensuring everyone has access to quality, affordable healthcare. UHC requires promoting universal access to preventative and curative approaches. The interdependence of environment, climate, and health is clear, as is the connection between mental and physical well-being. Embracing a holistic approach to health is now an urgent necessity. Under the 2023 C20 Chair, Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MA Math), the Integrated Holistic Health (IHH) WG engaged over 5,000 people from 1,054 organisations in 86 countries. Through inclusive processes, key policy recommendations and best practices were selected via twenty-eight online and in-person events culminating in a summit in Faridabad, Haryana. Representatives from civil society, indigenous communities,
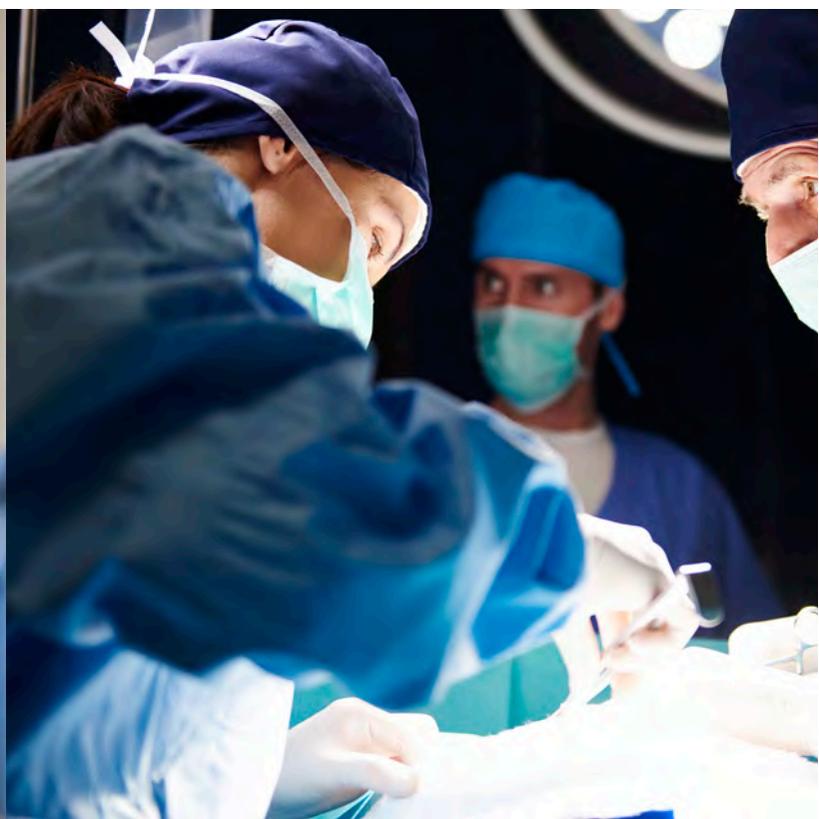
patients, caregivers, experts, and marginalised groups, including those with diverse SOGISEC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics) participated in these efforts.

The C20 IHH WG builds on commitments made by previous G20 Leaderships. Bali 2022 urged achieving Universal Health Coverage while addressing food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs). Rome 2021 committed to support countries to improve resilience by addressing critical sustainability challenges. Riyadh 2020 prioritised the tackling of AMR and environmental causes of disease

using the One-Health approach and advancing efforts in communicable and non-communicable diseases. Osaka 2019 envisioned an inclusive society that allows each individual to perform to one's full potential, with promotion of healthy ageing, and people-centric health promotion and prevention that are aligned to the life-course approach. This year's C20 IHH working group widened the scope to include different facets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 (UN-SDG3), Good Health and Well-Being, to develop inclusive, equitable and holistic solutions for health.

Policy Recommendations

I. Mind – Advocating a Mental Health Policy

Before the estimated five-fold increase in depression and anxiety globally since COVID-19, at least 1 billion people had mental health conditions, representing 418 million disability-adjusted life years and a burden of 5 trillion USD annually. Mental health conditions lead to loss of productivity, driving under-employment, social isolation, and poverty. Today, 90% of mental illness goes undiagnosed and untreated, a gap largely driven by stigma, discrimination, and human rights violations. The 2023 C20 IHH-WG includes Mental Health and Wellness for the first time.

Our policy recommendations to the G20 are:

- Adopt and sustain a comprehensive National Mental Health Literacy Program.

- Incorporate and integrate a Mental Health Education Program into the National School Curricula by 2025, to include:

- Awareness and knowledge of signs and symptoms of mental distress, reducing bullying, harassment, and stigma against those with or without mental illness.

- Suicide awareness and prevention; integrating skills and activities that promote mental fortitude, positive decision-making, and peer support.

- Provide Community & Institutional Mental Health Training to healthcare workers to promote suicide awareness and prevention.

- Deliver basic assessment tools for common mental health disorders and suicidal behaviours to support lay-counselling training among school counsellors, village social workers and non-specialist health workers.

- Ensure the availability of mental health services in all community hospitals, corporations, universities, government and other institutions.

- Training should be supported by health system networks so that acute mental conditions can be triaged by higher-level professionals.

- Develop robust, evidence-based mental health programs that promote knowledge and mind-strengthening life skills (e.g., meditation, yoga, cognitive skills) for advancing positive mental health and resilience, preventing mental illness and suicidal behaviours, and reducing mental illness symptoms, with special emphasis on the underprivileged - women, children, marginalised communities, and caretakers and those grieving the loss of their near and dear ones.

- It is vital to include community engagement as well as civil society organisations to make this process more effective.

- Ensure free and quality mental health care is integrated into all primary care services by 2030.

- Scaling up interventions and services across community-based, general health and specialist settings - In a country-by-country approach as per the WHO Special Initiative on Mental Health, considering that the status of mental health care differs greatly across nations.

- Mental health care must be integrated into relevant public health programmes (e.g. for HIV and gender-based violence prevention, disabilities) in addition to primary care services.

- Increase number and quality of community based mental healthcare providers via incentivization schemes.

II. Body- Implement a Life-Course Approach to Chronic Diseases incorporating Digital Health Applications

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, NCDs continue to be the top cause of mortality and morbidity globally, with low-middle-income countries (LMICs) bearing a disproportionate burden of NCDs. NCDs account for 74% of all deaths (41 million) globally annually and 80% of all "premature" deaths between 30 and 69 years of age. The likelihood of premature deaths from NCDs is six times higher in LMICs than in high-income countries. Modifiable risk factors include unhealthy diet, tobacco and alcohol use, sedentary lifestyle, and air pollution. The global burden of NCDs is estimated to be $47 trillion over the next two decades, unless adequate preventative and control measures are implemented.

LMICs are also burdened with treatable conditions complicating maternal and child health such as nutritional deficiencies, which have proven low-cost measures of mitigation. Given the increasingly ageing population globally, geriatric health and wellness, palliative and end-of-life care become priorities requiring critical attention.

An overarching theme that emerged from discussions among the various health sub-groups included usage of digital platforms for universal health coverage. The other common theme that emerged across the health sub-groups included a life-course approach to addressing NCDs, maternal and child health and wellness, nutrition and mental health alongside steps to improve health literacy.

The Life Course perspective looks at health as an integrated continuum where biological, behavioural, psychological, social and environmental factors interact and influence health outcomes throughout a person's life. A woman's health and nutrition as she enters reproductive age directly affects her future child's birth weight and order, nutrition, future risk of obesity and therefore potential contraction of NCDs and mental health conditions. Addressing the health and wellbeing of future generations requires immediate measures to ensure the health of all persons of reproductive age in order to prevent future disease.

A Digital health mission integrating services across the healthcare sector, including diagnostics, therapy, demography, health condition, and health delivery, would facilitate diagnosis, monitoring, adherence, preventative aspects and promote access to health information. Platforms similar to the ones created for COVID-19 could be replicated for other communicable and NCDs. The digital health platforms should integrate health literacy into the health delivery system spanning mental health, maternal and child healthcare, palliative and end-of-life care, and traditional and complementary healthcare systems.

Given the ubiquity of handheld devices and wide penetration of mobile networks, a Digital Health policy for G20 nations needs to be framed, including surveillance, monitoring, preventative and awareness indicators for both communicable and NCDs. Digital health policies should address deployment of myriad cost-effective digital tools, such as artificial intelligence, in a manner that prioritises ethics and person-centeredness, while increasing healthcare access, improving quality, reducing costs and ensuring privacy.

The policy recommendations to the G20 are:

- Integrate the life course approach into public health strategies, which addresses health disparities and improves overall population health for NCDs and maternal and child health. The life course approach incorporates health information from maternal, paternal, and individual perspectives. For example, if a mother has gestational diabetes, that child has a significantly increased likelihood of contracting diabetes in their lifetime. Appropriate preventative measures and follow up must be incorporated into that child's healthcare.

  ▶ Holistic Perspective: Public health services should adopt a holistic perspective that recognizes the inter-connectedness of different gender specific life stages and their impact on health outcomes, considering the interactions between various factors such as genetics, early life experiences, social determinants, and lifestyle choices.

- Prevention and Early Intervention

  ▶ Strengthening public health systems to provide free and quality integrated management of childhood illness as per WHO guidelines by 2025.

  ▶ Prevent and control micronutrient deficiencies in women of reproductive age and other vulnerable groups through dietary interventions, including dietary improvement, food fortification, including salt double-fortified with iodine and iron, supplementation, and public health measures: de-worming and improving Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) - with an emphasis on menstrual and sexual health.

  ▶ Develop an integrated nutrition plan using the life-course approach: Promote dietary diversity by including organic, non-genetically modified and locally sourced nutritious food items into beneficiary food baskets in existing meal initiatives.

  ▶ Ensure free access to family planning services in all public and community healthcare centres and educational institutions, including family planning programs, sex education in schools, and the availability of low-priced over-the-counter contraceptives.

- Employ digital platforms for surveillance, monitoring, preventative care, therapy, awareness, adherence, and follow-up, factoring in post-procedure care. These must be integrated into existing healthcare systems to facilitate access for populations who currently are not able to access consistent quality healthcare.

▶ Digital platforms must be leveraged for effective and holistic life-course approaches to healthcare solutions.

▶ Utilise digital platforms to accelerate immunisation and vaccination drives, to reach a target of 90% childhood immunisation by 2025.

- Create evidence-based guidelines for integrative care specifying the scope of different traditional and complementary medical systems (T&CMs) in managing specific diseases to enable the general public to make informed decisions.

▶ Develop research methodologies in alignment with the epistemological framework of T&CMs to generate evidence of safety and efficacy.

▶ Facilitate evidence-based integration of T&CM into mainstream health care to address unmet healthcare manpower needs, improve holistic treatment outcomes, and promote physical, mental, and spiritual health and wellness.

III. Environment - One-Health

The health of people is inextricably linked to the health of animals and our shared environment. According to WHO, climate change is the single biggest threat to human health which could directly lead to 250,000 deaths per year by 2030. New or endemic zoonotic diseases, Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), vector-borne diseases, anti-microbial resistance (AMR), food safety and food security all link environment, climate and health. Climate change lowers food productivity, both agrarian and marine, compounds mental health issues, contributes directly to nutrition, maternal & child health, poor outcomes in NCDs and majorly contributes to emerging infectious diseases. Poor practices in multiple industries, including livestock farming, and hospital and immunisation programme management are increasing AMR and decreasing the ability to treat it.

The IHH-WG deliberations focused on one-health and AMR, strengthening cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector, and improving healthcare service delivery. Placing an emphasis on access to and availability of safe, effective, quality, and affordable medical countermeasures such as vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics, and digital health innovations and solutions to support UHC. The current global leadership must work together for the formulation of a "Global Public Health Convention," with its core obligation being to protect Global Public Health, preventing profit-driven industry exploitative practices, and prioritise the needs of Global South.

The policy recommendations to the G20 are:

- Establish robust, inclusive, intersectoral, cross-Ministerial national One-health task forces by 2030 that comprehensively integrate critical sectors such as agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, environment, finance, forestry, and foreign affairs with health, addressing urgent health priorities such as emerging pathogens and zoonotic diseases.

- ▶ Task forces must be endowed with adequate resources and specific timelines, accompanied by measurable outcomes to help foster inter-disciplinary research and collaboration.

- ▶ Strengthen surveillance through capacity-building programs inclusive of improved management of zoonotic diseases such as rabies and emerging pathogens, communicable disease programs including HIV, TB, Malaria, NTDs, and snakebite.

- ▶ Ensure accessibility to low cost WHO-approved diagnostics and treatment, prioritising at-risk populations.

- ▶ Ensure that existing minimum standards for animal health services are met and set obligations to improve biosecurity in the production, transportation, slaughter, and retailing of animals to reduce the transfer of pathogens. This needs to include care and welfare practices on farms to both reduce the use of antimicrobials and support natural ecosystem health.

- Create a Global Framework for Addressing AMR – including surveillance, monitoring and strategic planning, similar to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control by 2025.

▶ Involve human, animal, and environmental health sectors, and engage with civil society organisations, community leaders, and international cross-sectoral stakeholders.

▶ Implement stringent legislative control of antimicrobial dispensing for use in both humans and animals, including effective antibiotics stewardship programs and community engagement initiatives.

▶ Ensure Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Right (TRIPS) and Intellectual Property waivers for the protection of Global Public Health implementing Universal access to Health services, including lifesaving drugs/medicines, diagnostics and related health services as "Global Public Health Goods" and allowing worldwide right to use, re-produce and ensure supply globally.

Conclusion

G20 leaders must recognise that it is time for a radical paradigm shift in addressing public health. We are in the midst of a global mental health crisis, particularly among youth which cannot be left unaddressed by G20 leaders. The accelerating pace of climate change has made it abundantly clear that a One-health model of public health is the only path forward towards protecting human and animal health and safeguarding the environment. Siloed public health approaches that ignore the interactions between people and nature will leave us unable to address current and emerging pathogens and incapable of confronting the next pandemic. However, advances in digital technology, machine learning, and artificial intelligence can dramatically reduce inequities in access, provided G20 leaders ensure that these technologies are deployed with health equity as a core principle.

Education & Digital Transformation

Towards Inclusive and Human-centred Education and Digital Transformation Policies

The Education and Digital Transformation Working Group (EDTWG) under C20 India 2023 has suggested several key areas of focus to foster inclusive, accessible, compassionate, and human-centred education and digital transformation.

1. Education for Life and Global Citizenship: Encourage experiential learning and community involvement in rural villages, promote indigenous cultures and knowledge systems, and address mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of people. Strategies include substance abuse prevention, education in indigenous knowledge systems, support for disadvantaged communities, and fostering cultural inclusion and social justice.

2. Education for Persons with Disabilities: Emphasizes the need for early identification and intervention for persons with disabilities. Raise awareness about inclusion and designing and implement policies for early detection of disabilities. Financially support research in disability studies, build tools for early identification, and provide low-cost assistive technology for inclusion.

3. Learning Equity & the Future of Education: Enhance equitable access to education and ensure the fair allocation of resources through learning equity audits. Promote the inclusion of people from vulnerable populations in decision-making processes at all levels of education, research, decision-making and in governance. Other recommendations include fostering mutual recognition of online and on-site degrees and certificate courses, developing inclusive curricula, and providing pedagogical, skills, inclusion, and technology training for teachers.

4. Skill Development: Establish inclusive financing mechanisms for skill development, create financial aid programs for marginalized individuals, encouraging corporate social responsibility contributions for skill development initiatives, include skill development opportunities in public employment programs, and establish public online platforms to collect and analyse skill development data.

5. Education in Emergencies: Provide comprehensive training for emergency situations and develop localized emergency curriculum models. Enhance teacher capacity for inclusive education and invest in continuous professional development.

6. Digital Transformation & Accessibility: Develop human-centred design principles, promote digital public goods and commons, bridge the digital divide, and provide comprehensive training on responsible technology use. The recommendations emphasize inclusive digital access for all, including marginalized and vulnerable populations.

The WG recommends a multi-dimensional approach to implement these sub-themes, including context-specific evidence-based programmes, stakeholder coordination, community engagement, affordable technological solutions, and quality assurance measures. In funding and partnerships, the WG suggests sustained political commitment, public-private-people partnerships (PPPP), and transparency in fund allocation.

Introduction

Education empowers and catalyses societal transformation. The Civil20 India 2023 Chair's vision for global education is based on the emphasis on both tangible skills and spiritual wisdom, along with their respect for diverse viewpoints. The holistic, inclusive nature of ancient Indian education, exemplified by prominent institutions like Nalanda and Takshashila, is still relevant in today's globalized educational landscape. The "Gurukula" system's focus on nurturing a deep student-teacher bond and promoting harmony with nature and society continues to provide important lessons for the development of today's education systems globally.

The WG initiatives build upon commitments enshrined in instruments like the United Nations Charter[1], Universal Declaration of Human Rights[2], and other treaties emphasizing

sustainable development. They uphold global citizenship education and values like diversity, human rights, and social justice. The 2022 G20 Bali[3] commitments further emphasized international collaboration for digital skills development, particularly benefiting people in vulnerable situations. The Transforming Education Summit (UNESCO 2023)[4] identified four key areas of transformation: creating supportive environments for all learners, empowering teachers, harnessing the digital revolution in public education, and advocating for increased, efficient, and equitable investment in education.

The EDT WG seeks to make an original contribution by distilling a set of recommendations that amplify the voices of the global South, particularly those of the most vulnerable, driven by a human-centred and values-driven perspective.

By prioritizing education for life, inclusion, accessibility, and equity for diverse learners, and emphasizing compassion, G20 countries can build empowered societies that are prepared

to navigate the complexities of the modern world and drive positive change. Specifically, the WG seeks to promote core principles of inclusiveness and human-centred approaches through compassion-based perspectives, universal access to education, including at the international level, skills, and digital resources, and the reduction of the digital divide.

This aligns with the principle of "Data for Development," which is a crucial aspect of India's Presidency of G20. India recognizes digital transformation as the key to achieving sustainable development goals related to poverty reduction, education, health, and direct benefit transfer. It also aligns with the aspirations of the Global Digital Compact (GDC)[5], which aims to establish shared principles for an open, free, and secure digital future for all, to be agreed upon at the Summit of the Future[6] in 2024 at the United Nations.

The rapid and widespread change brought about by Digital Transformation is unprecedented, transforming society and offering unprecedented advancements in the human condition. However, it is also crucial to recognize that education or digital technologies,

when used improperly or maliciously, can fuel divisions within and between countries, increase insecurity, undermine human rights, and exacerbate inequality.

While Education and Digital Transformation are distinct themes, the C20 EDT WG has considered specific recommendations for each theme and has also considered inter-connected recommendations that create synergies between these two areas.

Sub-themes and Recommendations

Under the guidance of the C20 India 2023 Chair and building on its consultations, the EDT WG has identified the following sub-themes:

- Education for Life and Global Citizenship

- Education for Persons with Disabilities

- Learning Equity & The Future of Education

- Skill Development

- Education in Emergencies

- Digital Transformation & Accessibility

We the need to prioritize holistic education for development, early identification and intervention for persons with disabilities, equitable access and learning equity audit, capacity building for emergency preparedness and safety, inclusive financing for skill development, and promotion of inclusive digital accessibility and technology for societal impact.

The recommendations below reflect the aggregated results of the consultation process organized in main areas of often cross-cutting policy recommendations for the sub-themes:

A. Promote Holistic Education for Development & LIFE

- Promote ancient and indigenous cultures as they recognize the inter-connectedness of various aspects of human beings, animals, and nature through Indigenous Knowledge Systems and through the lives of humanitarian leaders who have put this into practice, and address the emotional, social, mental, and spiritual dimensions of people's lives.

- Promote experiential learning among youth by encouraging their involvement in serving disadvantaged communities in villages and sensitizing them of their potential contribution towards achieving SDGs.

- Sensitize the community and educational ecosystem towards inclusion through activities that promote acceptance, foster cultural inclusion and social justice, provide socio-emotional support, and encourage respect and care for persons with disabilities, girls, indigenous people, and marginalized populations.

- Raise awareness and implement preventive measures to address substance abuse and internet abuse among youth. Establish a protective space within schools that provides psychological support to students.

B. Provide early identification and swift intervention for persons with disabilities and learning difficulties

- Raise awareness and sensitize teachers, caregivers, parents, communities, public authorities, and both private and public sectors about the importance of inclusion in education.

- Design and implement early detection policies and strategies for identifying invisible and other disabilities in the local context, and ensure swift interventions including relevant technology, and training for effective inclusion.

- Encourage research in the field of inclusion, disability studies, and assistive technologies with funding support. Document and make available best practices in inclusive education for the benefit of stakeholders.

C. Ensure Equitable Access and Learning Equity

- Promote the inclusion of people from vulnerable populations in decision-making processes at all levels of education, research, and in governance.

- Monitor through learning equity audit and the effective use of technology in education, utilizing disaggregated data to inform decision-making and allocate

  resources to areas with the greatest need and impact. Develop policies and mechanisms that ensure fair and effective allocation of financing.

- Foster the mutual recognition of online and on-site degrees and certificate courses internationally, emphasizing quality, inclusivity, and accessibility in higher education.

- Provide teachers with pedagogical, skills, inclusion, and technology training programs, while implementing incentives to attract and retain high-quality educators.

- Ensure equitable access to education, including foundational literacy and numeracy, for vulnerable populations such as children, persons with disabilities, women, rural inhabitants, individuals in emergencies, and indigenous communities.

- Develop inclusive curricula with diverse and relevant information and pedagogical approaches, prioritizing a human-centred approach to design and delivery. Ensure that curricula are accessible to all groups, including those with limited access to technology due to various reasons such as emergencies or disabilities.

D. Promote Capacity building for Emergency Preparedness and Safety to strengthen Education

- Provide comprehensive training for teachers in emergency situations, prioritizing the well-being of both students and teachers over specific subjects.

- Develop and implement localized emergency curriculum models to prepare for unforeseen circumstances in each locality.

- Enhance teachers' abilities and capacity to deliver inclusive education and education in emergencies, promoting an inclusive learning environment for all students. Invest in continuous professional development for teachers, with a specific focus on digital skills.

E. Take a Multidimensional implementation approach

- Build Education and Digital Transformation programs based on context-specific evidence and ensure involvement of private and government for regulation of digital services.

- Promote Life-long learning opportunities, stakeholders coordination, and international collaboration

- Ensure Community Engagement and alignment in education and skill development.

- Promote affordable emerging technologies and low-tech solutions, with a focus on practical aspects, especially in rural areas.

- Establish quality assurance and interoperable standards for educational programs.

F. Implement inclusive financing for skill development

- Allocate financial resources of equal value to public education spending to finance inclusive skill development programs targeted at marginalized communities and vulnerable groups, including investment in accessible TVET infrastructure, qualified teachers, learning materials, and resources (including digital).

- Mandate corporate social responsibility contributions equivalent to 1% of annual profits from private companies to support inclusive skill development initiatives to be spent based on multi-stakeholder decision-making mechanisms

- Implement a portable social security scheme covering 75% of informal sector workers within the next five years, providing access to healthcare, insurance, retirement benefits, and income support during emergencies.

- Ensure that 70% of individuals employed under public employment programmes are provided with opportunities for skill development and upskilling within three years.

- Establish national publicly accessible online platforms in G20 countries that collects and analyses disaggregated skill development and employment data, targeting at least 90% of training providers and employers within five years such that at least 95% of data is available in a standardized format and updated annually.

G. Promote Inclusive Digital Accessibility

- Develop human-centred design principles for all aspects of education/trainining/skill development.

- Promote Digital Public Goods and Digital Commons for inclusive, affordable, and customizable Digital SDG solutions

- Promote digital literacy and hygiene among marginalized and vulnerable communities.

- Strengthen digital accessibility and bridge the Digital Divide including vulnerable populations, low-literate populations, and persons with disability, and provide access to digital technologies, the internet, devices, and curricula in the local language.

- Provide comprehensive training to individuals on responsible technology use, addressing issues of misuse and abuse, while fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, digital literacy, and ethical skills.

H. Partnerships & Funding

- Secure sustained political commitment, including financial aspects for developing programs in Education, Skills, and Digital Transformation: G20 members could play a relevant role in financial terms, providing funds to improve access to education, inclusive practices, and technology in the Global South. Provide an emergency fund for the events of unforeseen circumstances. In those events, uninterrupted access to education must be ensured.

- Foster the role of PPPP (public-private-people partnership) in Education and Digital Transformation policies and ensure that they share a common goal and allow to provide a faster response to today's and future needs. Also foster PPPP partnerships to support the implementation of policies and programs. These PPPP need to be appropriately regulated, transparent, and public-oriented.

- Monitor implementation of practices and use disaggregated data for monitoring, learning equity audit, and transparency to ensure efficient fund allocation.

Udaaharans

Live-in-Labs®[7]

Established in 2013 in India, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham University, Live-in-Labs® is a multi-disciplinary international experiential learning programme that facilitates the research, development, and deployment of sustainable solutions for current challenges faced by rural communities in India. The programme is designed to engage participants in a mutual learning and sharing experience by breaking classroom and lab barriers to implement theoretical knowledge to address real-world problems.

www.amrita.edu/live-in-labs/

AYUDH[8]

AYUDH stands for Amrita Yuva Dharma Dhara, a Sanskrit term that means "the youth which perpetuates the wheel of dharma (righteousness)". In Sanskrit, AYUDH also means Peace, which is symbolized by the dove in the logo. Established in 1985, it is an international youth movement of Mata Amritanandamayi Math, currently active in Europe, North America, Asia, Australia, Africa, and India. AYUDH seeks to empower young people to integrate universal values into their daily lives. Starting with themselves, AYUDH wants to help establish a future of hope, peace, and social engagement while maintaining an awareness of spiritual principles. It is aiming to use the powerful force of young people to perpetuate natural harmony, social justice, and personal empowerment.

DIKSHA[9]

DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge-Sharing) is a national platform for school education, built with the support of a CSO and an initiative of the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), under the aegis of the Ministry of Education (MoE), Government of India.

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Technology, Security, and Transparency

This policy brief proposes strategic solutions to some of the most pressing digital technology challenges faced at a global level. Two cross-cutting recommendations will strengthen all policies and programmes designed to regulate technology. Education of emerging technologies for beneficial use and mitigation of potential harm and collaboration between stakeholders and countries to deal with the ever-evolving digital environment and promote a secure and inclusive digital world.

Our thematic recommendations include:

◆ **Technology for Empowerment** We advocate for enhancing accessibility and inclusivity by setting up infrastructure bridging the digital divide, promoting user-centric design in technology, establishing open-data policies, democratising e-commerce platforms, and investing in robust technological solutions to achieve the SDGs and creating an inclusive and fair digital society.

◆ **Security, Safety, and Resilience** This theme underscores the importance of international cooperation and collaboration in cybersecurity, protection against cyber attacks on critical infrastructure, establishing legal frameworks to counter online violence, especially toward vulnerable populations, and developing norms to prevent misuse of AI systems and regulating technologies that innately induce addictive tendencies and negatively affect user's health and well-being.

◆ **AI and Data for Society** We emphasise that ethical, fair, and safe deployment of technology must be ensured, the generation of high-quality datasets for marginalised communities is incentivised, and international regulations assigning liability for harms arising from technology are created.

◆ **Transparency, Trust, and Disinformation** We propose measures to combat disinformation, including developing a shared terminology and a comprehensive strategy, establishing national information networks, establishing an effective legal infrastructure, and enhancing transparency and trust within the technology supply chain.

The recommendations provided in this policy brief aim to create a digital future that is more accessible, secure, transparent, and inclusive. A future that leverages technology to create safer, more equitable societies globally.

Introduction

Technology has transformed how we interact with our surroundings and with each other. Automation, digitisation, and computerisation have increased productivity and convenience in our daily lives. The internet and digital technologies have revolutionised how nations approach challenges and transformed the global economy. Digital literacy has become a prerequisite for most workforce sectors, allowing people to transition from low-skill to middle-skill jobs. However, technology can exacerbate inequalities. Despite the benefits, the availability and accessibility of technology are not evenly distributed, with underdeveloped countries and less developed regions within developed countries being left behind. Although the digital economy is challenging to measure, it has become a significant propellant for commerce. There is now unprecedented dependence on the access, quality, and integrity of digitised information.

1. The digital economy is the primary catalyst for economic progress in developed and underdeveloped countries; hence, these issues must be addressed.

2. Ensuring accessibility and availability of technology is essential, but it is equally important to address significant security issues collectively. Technology has been weaponised in various ways, including spam mail with viruses and spear-phishing campaigns. Deep learning techniques can be misused to develop tools for harm, such as: propaganda, manipulation, and economic warfare. Cyber attacks are increasingly prevalent, with an expected annual cost of 10.5 trillion USD by 2025.

3. Moreover, inadequate security and privacy is a growing concern, and the dissemination of disinformation has aggravated societal divisions and polarised the world. It is causing severe harm to individuals and socio-political stability. Youth, in particular, are facing unforeseen effects living in a digital

world, including online harassment, cyberbullying, and internet overuse, affecting both their mental health and physical well-being. In addition to these challenges, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has brought new ethical concerns, bias, lack of transparency, and potential job displacement. These issues are classified as global risks by the World Economic Forum.

4. The fast pace of new technology development and consequent releases have outpaced the ability of policymakers to adapt and regulate them effectively. Civilians are the most impacted by emerging paradigms in technology development and use. There is a pressing need for online spaces to remain secure, safe, and lawful and ensure transparency in the policies that govern digital technologies. The C20 Technology, Security, and Transparency (TST) Working Group addresses these various technology-related risks, opportunities, and challenges society faces through the following policy recommendations.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

1. Education of emerging technologies for beneficial use and mitigation of potential harm is key to success. G20 countries should prioritise financial and human resources to design and implement comprehensive awareness and educational training programs. This education must cater to different age groups for digital up-skilling and reskilling on emerging technologies and provide an understanding of their impacts. This requires collaboration between the public, private and civil society sectors, with input from experts to develop tailored curricula and training activities to exercise critical thinking and increase competency. Those with limited financial capacity, low-income occupations, and those living in low or no-access rural areas should be prioritised. These training programs should integrate ethics and ensure that citizens of all ages can understand, safely use, and adopt new and upcoming technologies. Monitoring, evaluation, and national reporting of these programs should be integrated into programme design to measure their effectiveness and ensure they remain relevant and up-to-date with the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

2. Collaboration between stakeholders and countries is required to deal with the ever-evolving digital environment and promote a secure and inclusive digital world. We call on political will, leadership and action to encourage cross-border cooperation among governments, international organisations, private industries, academia, and civil society towards:
a). The creation and implementation of multi-stakeholder frameworks, protocols, and standards that ensure policy coherence, consistency and facilitate information sharing, capacity building, and collective action and
b). Support the exchange of best practices, expertise, and technologies, establish trust, promote responsible behaviour, and uphold digital rights, inclusivity, and security through these frameworks. Moreover, it is essential to actively involve all stakeholder groups, including those from marginalised groups, in shaping policies and programs.

I. Technology for Empowerment

Technology is now a fundamental pillar of our society. The economies of all countries are reliant on technology; hence empowering people with technology increases possibilities for the future. Three primary challenges have been identified concerning the digital economy.

1. Lack of accessibility, availability, and affordability inhibits sustainable development and the betterment of society. Physical infrastructure development is a barrier in rural areas where internet use is only 46% compared to 82% in urban areas.

2. For persons with disabilities, it is essential to have accessible technologies to participate in the digital ecosystem and achieve financial independence and resiliency.

3. Approximately 61% of all online content is in English. Parity in access to the digital world in low-English proficiency countries can only be achieved through the enablement of multilingual internet. For this, content in local languages and Universal Acceptance (UA), internationalised domain names (IDNs) and Unicode are necessary.

Technological solutions can help reduce global imbalances; for example, digital payment systems can increase financial inclusion. Another example is open-source initiatives allowing access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) by providing free, flexible, and customisable technology for developing countries and marginalised communities. Improved access to research publications is also important for society's prosperity.

However, access is frequently limited due to paywalls or fees for access. In some cases, access to necessary technology can be impeded by patent regulations and the reluctance of some organisations to share information, citing proprietary or competitive interests, hindering essential information sharing necessary for the common good and preservation of humankind, best exemplified by the COVID-19 vaccine.

Policy Recommendations

- Align with the UN's universal connectivity goals by promoting policies that expand broadband connectivity and access to digital devices, especially to remote, underserved, and vulnerable communities by 2030. Support multilingual internet by adopting UA, IDN and Unicode.

- Ensure that critical digital technologies such as financial, governmental, and healthcare services are inclusive and accessible for persons with disabilities by promoting user-centric design and establishing audit mechanisms to enforce accessibility guidelines. Mandate subsidising import duties and taxes to make assistive technologies affordable by 2027.

- Integrate digital unified payment interfaces to significantly accelerate the growth and adoption of the digital economy while enhancing financial inclusion and economic empowerment.

- G20 countries must incentivise, promote, and develop open-source software that enables long-term, customisable technology

solutions at minimal cost for public procurement. At least 40% of new software contracts in government should be open-source software by the year 2025.

- Mandate publicly funded non-classified research to be available as part of the digital commons to benefit the public, industries and academia.

- Digital platforms for e-commerce should be democratised and regulated by a public authority to ensure open and fair digital commerce practices that benefit Micro, Small and Medium enterprises (MSMEs).

- G20 countries should incentivise investments in vital technological innovations that preserve life and ecosystems. Speeding up the distribution and sharing of these technologies is crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Furthermore, we recommend that governments subsidise these technologies to facilitate their accessibility for the least-developed countries.

II. Security, Safety and Resilience

Widespread cybercrime and cyber insecurity are among the top 10 global risks. Governments, businesses, regulators and consumers are placing strategic priority on safeguarding technology ecosystems against cyber threats. While designated organisations must collect and use data to combat cybercrime and terrorism, balancing cybersecurity policies with individual rights is crucial. With the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, CSOs have expressed concern about the privacy risks posed by data sharing.

Addressing cybercrime can pose significant challenges due to the anonymous nature of virtual attackers. Targeting critical infrastructure and causing disruption of essential services such as power grids, water systems, health facilities, financial systems, and all vital services through cyber attacks can cause a colossal impact with significant ramifications to society.16 The increasing complexity of cross-border cybercrime makes coordinating a response challenging, necessitating stronger international cooperation and information sharing between multiple stakeholders.
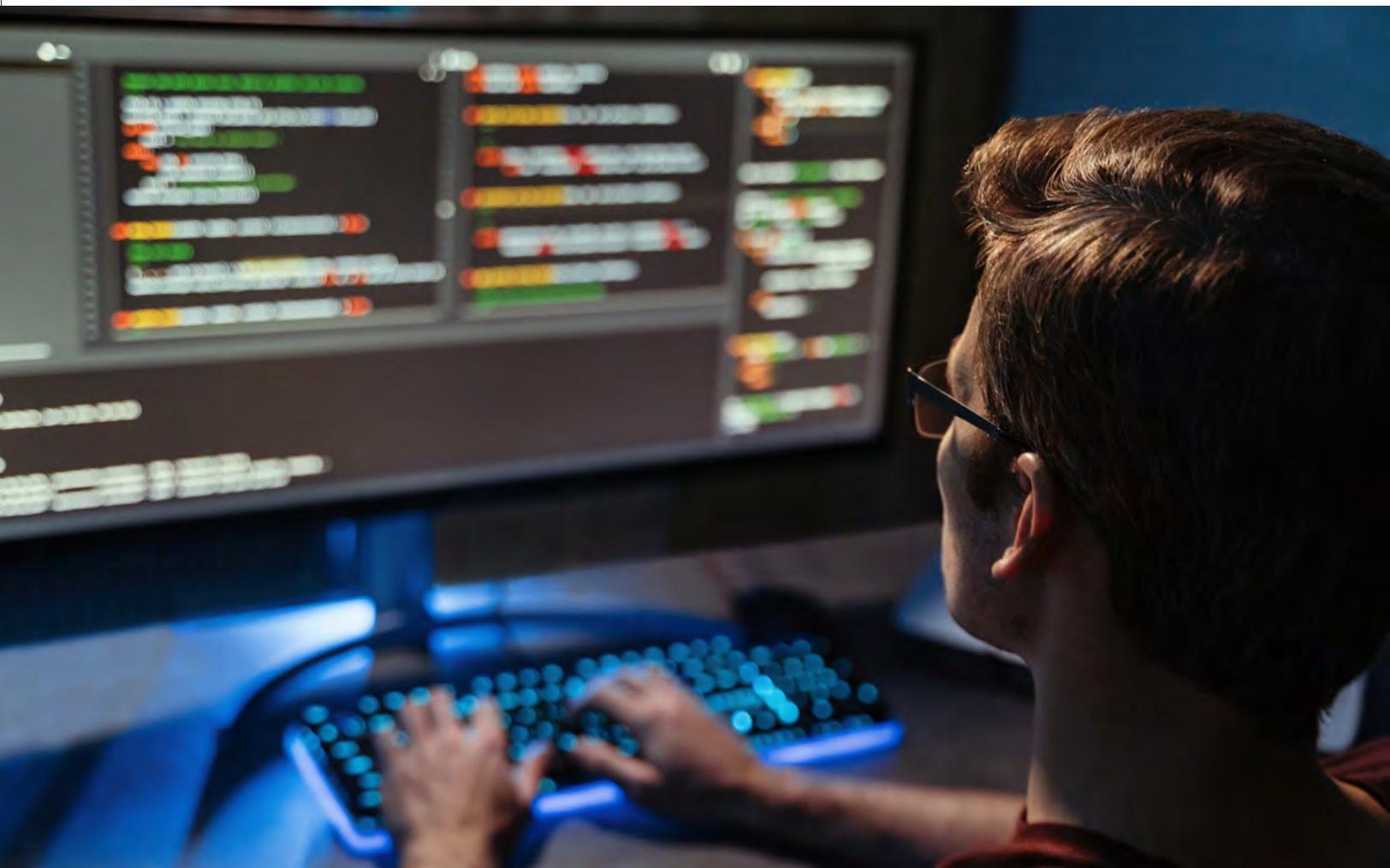
The majority of the general public often have limited awareness or understanding of the ever-changing landscape of cyber threats. Vulnerable populations, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and children, are more susceptible to online threats, such as cyberbullying, asset and identity theft. Due to scarce resources, there is also a lack of cybersecurity resilience among CSOs and businesses, especially in MSMEs. The average cost of data breaches varies between 38,000 USD and 4.35 million USD, depending on the organisation's size.

Cybersecurity risks threaten AI systems making them prone to error or theft and potentially destructive. Moreover, AI systems make decisions using complex functions, making it difficult to ensure transparency and explainability. These challenges are not limited to specific industries or applications but pervasive across all AI implementations and products.

As we rapidly iterate and build new technologies, we must also consider the potential negative side effects of technology that can induce overuse and potentially negatively affect users' mental and physical health.
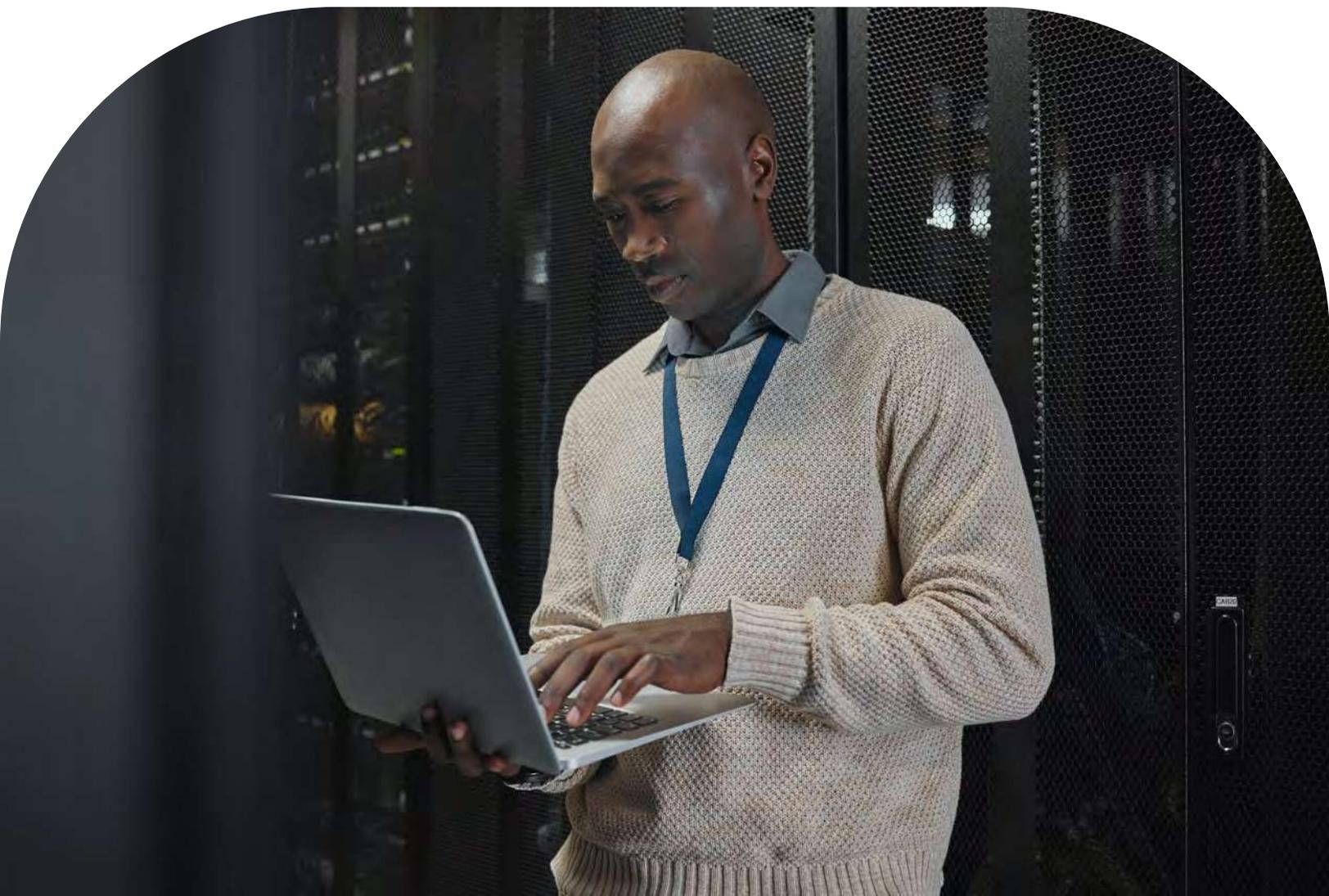
Policy Recommendations

- Increase international cooperation in cybersecurity as provided in the Budapest Convention.

- Fund and develop designated nodal agencies to enhance collective defence towards cyber threats and implement preventative measures. Facilitating collaboration between governments, the private sector, and other stakeholders is crucial to increase cybersecurity incident reporting.

- Enhance national cybersecurity policies and define mechanisms to enforce international standards and measures to safeguard cyberspace while respecting and protecting human rights.

- G20 countries should collectively recommend an additional protocol to the Geneva Convention specifically prohibiting any state from engaging in cyber attacks on critical infrastructure systems affecting civilian safety during conflict.

- Enhance cooperation between government, the judiciary, law enforcement and technology companies to mitigate online exploitation, violence or cyberbullying, especially towards children, women and persons with disabilities. Strengthen institutional mechanisms, enact comprehensive legislation, allocate resources for specialised units towards prompt investigation, impose stringent penalties, and enforce strict content moderation by 2028.

- Establish regulatory guidelines that ensure new technology releases safeguard users' physical and psychological well-being by conducting comprehensive analyses of potential negative side effects before their releases. This is especially relevant to the gaming and social media industries, whose user base is more susceptible to technology overuse.

- Develop a broad-ranging set of cybersecurity norms for AI systems, adaptable to the safety-critical nature of AI products, to prevent misuse of AI by malicious entities.

III. AI and Data for Society

2023 is likely to be remembered as the year ChatGPT, an AI language model, became a household name. The potential applications of AI are numerous, including healthcare, accessibility, research, business, and overall economic growth. It is predicted that by 2030, 70% of organisations will be using at least one type of AI technology. AI is expected to contribute 15.7 trillion USD to the global GDP by 2030. While AI technologies have been under development for many years, little regulation has been developed to address the considerations required for a safe and harmonious society. Efforts such as UNESCO's recommendations on integrating ethics in AI are broad, far-reaching, and exhaustive. However, they have not been translated into concrete legislation.

One of the most significant issues in AI is the proliferation of bias and discrimination, reflected in AI algorithms and systems due to human biases and systemic inequalities collected into the datasets used to power AI. These biases lead to unfair or inaccurate decision-making, disproportionately affecting marginalised groups. While datasets are not the sole cause of bias, they are a dominant factor. Another possible risk is sensitive data leakage. Using external third-party systems may lead to mishandling personally identifiable information (PII) and similar information.

Policy Recommendations

- Develop policy mechanisms and regulatory measures to ensure that data collection and technology development are deployed and used ethically, fairly, and safely in accordance with the OECD value-based AI principles.

- Incentivize and mandate the generation of high-quality datasets for and from marginalised and underrepresented communities to correct biases in medical, financial, economic, and all generative AI applications. Foundational and current datasets should be collected, debiased, and verified by established teams of experts and stakeholders to ensure inclusivity and impartiality by 2028.

- Establish international regulations that explicitly assign liability for harms arising from technology to ensure accountability and protect users' rights and interests. It is crucial to foster collaboration between international legislative and judicial systems, technology corporations, civil society, and independent regulatory bodies; to prescribe policies for non-compliance and dispute resolution mechanisms that are fair and impartial.

IV. Transparency, Trust and Disinformation

Disinformation has become a significant threat to today's society. While costing the world a staggering 78 billion USD annually, its impact has grown significantly with the advent of social media. With 4.8 billion users, social media platforms have become primary vehicles for spreading disinformation and polarising content. False information spreads faster on these platforms than accurate information, leading to the division of populations and increasing tensions among citizens.

Economists have recognised the correlation between trust and increased GDP. The potential risks of disinformation jeopardise the political stability and trust in established systems. Disinformation sows confusion and a lack of trust in established systems such as healthcare and scientific communities, as seen in the recent COVID-19 pandemic. It is crucial to develop approaches to address both dissemination of and response to disinformation without compromising human rights.

Moreover, the global technology supply chain, encompassing hardware and software presents a range of challenges. Recent supply chain incidents such as the WannaCry and SolarWinds attacks impacted organisations in over 150 countries, causing over 94 billion USD in losses. Adulteration, counterfeiting and sub-standard products are other manifestations of deficient supply chain processes that could be mitigated using technology. Addressing these concerns is vital to maintaining our global marketplace's safety, security, and reliability.

Policy Recommendations

- Facilitate global cooperation towards ending the spread of disinformation. Create a shared terminology and produce a comprehensive strategy against the spread of disinformation in congruence with UN General Assembly resolution 76/227.

- Establish national information networks that include professionals, news, and social media teams to track and respond to misinformation and disinformation.

- Develop an effective legal infrastructure to transfer the financial burden of the fight against disinformation to the individuals or entities responsible for its creation and propagation as set in national laws and regulations.

- Design and implement a trusted network for technology procurement, specifically focusing on G20 nations' supply chain.

Udaaharans

GLIDES

The Global Internet Governance, Digital Empowerment and Security Alliance (GLIDES), is an alliance of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the first of its kind. It is an alliance and a launchpad for multi-stakeholder policy-making processes toward security and internet governance. This alliance focuses on digital access, internet governance, inclusivity, online safety, net neutrality, data privacy, data governance, fake news, multilingual internet, and digital rights.

Team4tech

Team4Tech is a nonprofit impact accelerator, bridging the digital equity gap in education to foster inclusion and create opportunities for under-resourced learners worldwide. Team4Tech partners with companies on social impact projects that provide technology grants and training to build nonprofit capacity and provide opportunities for learners around the world.

Shakticon

ShaktiCon is an initiative for women by women that has successfully served as a platform to inspire, train, and upskill women in cybersecurity by providing an inclusive environment that showcases female talent and promotes diversity. ShaktiCon has mentored over 5,000 beneficiaries from over 70 countries worldwide in the past five years, contributing to developing a more diverse and skilled workforce.

eam4tech

anding opportunity through global connections

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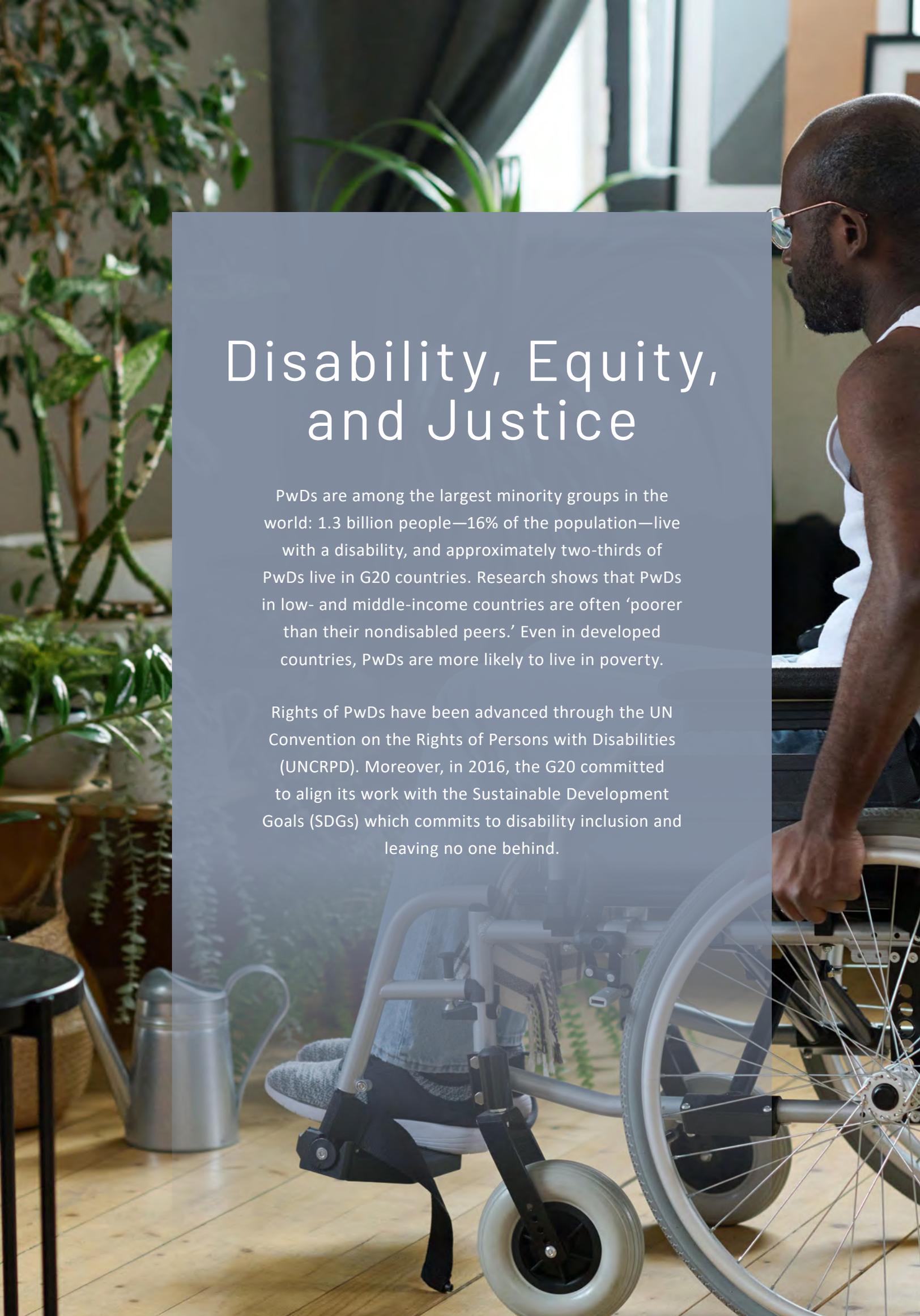
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Disability, Equity, and Justice

PwDs are among the largest minority groups in the world: 1.3 billion people—16% of the population—live with a disability, and approximately two-thirds of PwDs live in G20 countries. Research shows that PwDs in low- and middle-income countries are often 'poorer than their nondisabled peers.' Even in developed countries, PwDs are more likely to live in poverty.

Rights of PwDs have been advanced through the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Moreover, in 2016, the G20 committed to align its work with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which commits to disability inclusion and leaving no one behind.

Inclusion of PwDs, however, has yet to receive strategic planning, implementation, and resources even though lack of inclusion can cost countries up to 7% of their GDP. PwDs, particularly WwDs, are systematically excluded in education, employment, health systems and disaster response. They face barriers in accessing physical and digital spaces, and high levels of all forms of discrimination, abuse, and violence— often resulting in significant, long-standing physical and mental health consequences.

It is in the human, social, and economic interest of the global community that PwDs find budgetary allocation and commitment in implementing plans for inclusive, sustainable, and resilient growth; and are seen as active citizens, taxpayers, consumers, and nation builders. Meaningful participation of PwDs in governance at all levels is critical to effective planning and implementation, and confronting stigma and discrimination that undergirds exclusion.

Education

Context

The G20 Riyadh[2], Rome[3], and Bali[4] Leaders' Declarations commit to inclusive education, noting the importance of technology. The right to education for CwDs, free from discrimination, is recognized by the UNCRPD, UNESCO[5], the SDGs[6], and UNCRC[7].

CwDs are 25% less likely to receive early childhood education, 33% more likely to be out of lower-secondary, and 27% more likely to be out of upper-secondary school. CwDs who attend

school experience exclusion due to inaccessibility, unidentified needs, segregation, corporal punishment, and bullying[8]. The result: lower academic achievement, 37% poorer mental health outcomes[9], grade repetition, dropout, and limited future education and employment. They also have harder transitions to higher and tertiary education due to the stigma that discourages disclosing disabilities; inaccessible buildings, learning resources, and digital access; and inadequate inclusion[10].

Recommendations

Make time-bound, concerted efforts to transform all schools and universities into cross-disability inclusive educational institutions with requisite disability policies, commitments, and human and financial resources.

Ensure full and effective participation, inclusion, and quality education for all CwDs and adults with disabilities in urban and rural areas, across socioeconomic strata, residential facilities, and in situations of conflict and disaster.

Conduct screening for early identification and support CwDs and families through early childhood education.

Ensure equitable, inclusive and accessible education through adequate funding in educational, research and training institutions across all levels in terms of design, infrastructure, and information communication technologies. This should include universal design for learning, access to reading-teaching materials online and offline, assistive devices, classrooms, toilets, exams, laboratories, libraries, exhibitions, exposure visits, physical education, sports, etc. for all CwDs and adults with disabilities.

Support institutions to develop Personalised Education Plans (PEPs) for students with varied support needs and link financial resources with PEPs.

Ensure accessible transport and last mile connectivity for persons across disabilities to access learning institutions.

Ensure training, retraining and development of teaching and non-teaching staff and support personnel to foster inclusive learning environments.

Ensure PwDs, especially WwDs and girls with disabilities have equitable access and training for STEM, digital skills, internet and other technological devices.

Mandate all formal and informal educational institutions to institute reasonable accommodations and adopt zero-tolerance for disability discrimination. Use incentive and penalty systems to ensure enforcement.

Promote synergies between higher education institutions and job market stakeholders to ensure equal work opportunities.

Develop education financing that allows students with disabilities to cover extra disability costs. Provide free and subsidised education, scholarship and meal programmes for disadvantaged students.

Collect disaggregated data by gender, disability, caste and other markers of students with disabilities across levels, institutions and vocational trainings centres.

Include students with disabilities in all existing and future mainstream government awareness efforts, campaigns, policies, schemes, budgetary allocations.

Employment

Context

The G20 Buenos Aires, Osaka, and Bali Leaders Declarations acknowledge the labour market vulnerability of PwDs and commit to inclusive Futures of Work—including increased labour force participation through vocational training, skill development, reskilling, labour formalisation, and social protection for PwDs.

PwDs—an estimated 785 million working age persons—are marginalised in all labour markets worldwide. They are far more likely to be unemployed, underemployed or economically inactive. Lack of attention to disability inclusion in business development policies forecloses avenues to self-employment for PwDs. Labour market exclusion of PwDs has significant macroeconomic implications.

At work, PwDs are more likely to face workplace discrimination, low wages, poor working conditions, few prospects for promotion, and heightened harassment and violence—especially persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities and WwDs.

Recommendations

Update labour force participation surveys to facilitate disaggregated data by gender, social identity, and disability type.

Increase labour force participation for PwDs through vocational training, skill development, reskilling, training for platform economy jobs, labour formalisation, and social protection. Ensure that mainstream technical, vocational, education, training, labour market skills and apprenticeship programmes include PwDs.

Ensure and enforce legal protections against all forms of workplace discrimination, harassment and violence against PwDs, particularly WwDs.

Mandate and enforce the responsibility for public and private employers to ensure accessible physical and digital infrastructure and provide reasonable

accommodations to all PwDs. Incentivise inclusion policies, including hiring targets and career development.

Ensure employers report and publish disability employment data, disaggregated by career-level, disability-type and gender.

Combat stigma around disability by highlighting contributions and capacities of PwDs across sectors; and encouraging representation of PwDs in decision-making positions on boards and in senior management.

Prioritise and commit to a set

percentage of procurement from entrepreneurs with disabilities under government procurement policies.

Provide technical and financial assistance to small and medium enterprises to promote disability inclusion, and support PwDs within the informal economy and through self-help groups.

Adapt existing business development policies and programmes to include entrepreneurs with disabilities and improve their access to specialised trainings, credit, technical and financial resources.

Health

Context

The G20 Rome[18] and Bali[19] Leaders' Declarations commit to Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Health equity for PwDs is essential to global health priorities— including UHC and public health interventions that contribute to healthier populations[20]. The rights of PwDs to the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care is protected under the UNCRPD[21]. Accessible health infrastructure and systems must ensure PwDs are included, even during pandemics and in disaster health responses.

Research shows that PwDs receive lower levels of health care than persons without disabilities. PwDs experience health inequities arising from structural factors that generate social stratification; risk factors for disease; and barriers within health systems— including limited access to health services, social care, and rehabilitation; inadequate treatment; involuntary treatment and confinement[22]; heightened discrimination, and barriers to sexual and reproductive healthcare[23]. The result: poorer health outcomes, reduced life expectancy and higher mortality rates[24].

Recommendations

• Take urgent action to address the vast inequities in health care access for all PwDs, including those with mental health conditions, chronic illnesses and rare diseases. Take integrated action to strengthen health systems through disaggregated data collection, policymaking, financing and budgetary allocations.

• Ensure accessibility of health infrastructure at all levels (particularly within rural areas), including: physical and digital infrastructure, access to information, and community-based rehabilitation. Train all health professionals on disability needs, and invest in installing adequate

support personnel.

- Ensure persons across disabilities are engaged at all stages of design, implementation, and monitoring of healthcare facilities and public health interventions for effective inclusion.

- Ensure all public health initiatives, programmes and curricula are disability inclusive and gender sensitive.

- Ensure availability of tax-free, duty-free, affordable assistive devices and technologies that cater to specific needs of WwDs and PwDs.

- Improve access to sexual and reproductive health rights including access to abortion.

- Include PwDs in the health and care

workforce.

- Ensure early identification, rehabilitation and ongoing support to CwDs with rare diseases.

- Mandate provision of full medical insurance with no discrimination by public and private players to all PwDs, including the elderly, and people living with mental health conditions, rare diseases and chronic illnesses.

- Ensure informed consent and supported decision making for PwDs, particularly persons living with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities prior to initiating any health procedures or treatments.

- Collaborate in advancing the development of specialised medications and vaccines for various disabilities, including improved availability and affordability.

- Ensure that mainstream health schemes for physical, mental and women's health include needs of PwDs.

- Streamline procurement of disability certificates at local levels for all including those with invisible disabilities and fluid conditions.

Environment, Climate & Disaster Response

Context

The G20 Osaka Leaders' Declaration[25] commits to address disproportionate impacts of environmental disasters on vulnerable communities. As disproportionately impacted communities, PwDs must be included in mitigating climate change. However, they do not currently have access to information and inclusion on an equal basis with others. The rights of PwDs to equal protection from weather events and climate disasters is protected under UNCRPD, ICESCR, and ICCPR. The SDG targets also call for ensuring participation of PwDs in climate action and disaster risk reduction.

PwDs are particularly vulnerable to environmental and climate-driven disasters—including cyclones, floods, heat waves, and severe storms. PwDs may be less able to access warnings and emergency information, left behind during evacuation, require access to medications and assistive aids, experience greater challenges accessing basic needs, and face discrimination when resources are scarce. PwDs are also excluded from disaster risk reduction policies, plans, and programmes and therefore particularly at risk in the aftermath of disasters[26].

Recommendations

- Ensure that PwDs are included in environment and climate justice discussions and initiatives.

- Comply with existing commitments on climate finance, including the agreed upon and overdue $100 billion/year climate finance commitment to support adaptation to climate change with a 50/50 split between funding for mitigation and adaptation. This funding should prioritise the most vulnerable countries and communities, including PwDs.

- Rapidly reduce emissions, stop subsidising fossil fuels, and end new fossil fuel projects to prevent catastrophic climate outcomes and protect the rights of vulnerable populations.

- Include PwDs and their needs in design, implementation, communication and monitoring at all stages of disaster management processes, policies, plans and programmes – including during mitigation, planning and preparedness, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

- Put rights-based mental health support at the centre of policies related to humanitarian and climate-related responses.

- Ensure timely and appropriate health care including sanitation and hygiene, especially for WwDs, during extreme weather events and disasters.

- Invest in accessible infrastructure to ensure evacuation centres and shelter homes are accessible during disasters. Ensure reconstructed infrastructure is resilient to future hazards and accessible to PwDs.

- Collect disaggregated data on location of PwDs, their vulnerabilities and needs during extreme weather events and environmental disasters. Maintain real-time records and a digital database of PwDs for urgent disaster response and management.

- Ensure multi-stakeholder collaboration—including civil society, disabled persons organisations (DPOs), government, businesses and industry—in developing climate resilient community action-plans.

Poverty Reduction, Social Protection, & Sustainable Development

Context

The G20 Riyadh Leaders' Declaration emphasised the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable communities, committed to reducing inequalities and promoting inclusive growth, and highlighted the importance of social protection for all[27]. The right to social protection for PwDs is upheld by the UNCRPD[28] and UDHR[29].

PwDs are more likely to experience adverse socioeconomic outcomes than persons without disabilities, such as less education, worse health outcomes, less employment, and higher poverty rates. Accordingly, social protection is critical to support PwDs to develop more resilient livelihoods and break free from long-term poverty traps. Where social protection programmes are in place, however, PwDs currently face barriers to accessing protection, including: inaccessible procedures and centres, discrimination from programme administrators, conditional benefits, inadequate needs assessments, and lack of information on programmes, eligibility, and access pathways[30].

Recommendations

- Ensure access by PwDs, in particular women, girls and older PwDs, to CRPD compliant social protection and poverty reduction programmes[31].

- Provide direct financial assistance to individuals and households in need, including through disability-specific cash transfers, pensions, targeted subsidies, employment support and incentives, means-tested benefits, and financial inclusion and counselling.

- Provide insurance protection for PwDs, including income replacement; vocational rehabilitation and job retention programmes to address unemployment; and disability insurance and rehabilitation support in case of sickness or disability related challenges.

- Provide social insurance coverage, benefits or allowances to compensate for income loss due to caregiving responsibilities incurred by caregivers, including family members of PwDs.

- Address the mental health needs of PwDs, including through access to counselling services, psychosocial support, and mental health interventions.

Inclusive Communities and Societies

Context

In order to foster inclusive communities and societies, G20 countries should take measures to remove physical, social, and attitudinal barriers that lead to the widespread exclusion of PwDs across domains. To this end, G20 countries should promote integrated and independent living, access to assistive devices and technology, and participation of PwDs; and take urgent measures to counteract stigma, discrimination and violence.

Recommendations

- Adopt accessibility standards and Universal Design Principles in developing and retrofitting infrastructure, including: transportation systems, public buildings, housing, educational institutions, health centres, parks, sidewalks, and other essential facilities.

- Develop a time-bound plan and allocate budgets to deinstitutionalise CwDs and PwDs, through supported and independent community living options, and personalised support services.

- Set new standards and benchmarks to promote inclusive and accessible public procurement of assistive devices and technology.

- Formulate a joint policy across countries for technology transfer among member and non-member countries, specifically targeting nations that lack the capability to manufacture devices and assistive technologies.

- Subsidise costs of assistive devices through grants and low interest loans.

- Allocate resources for research and development of affordable assistive devices and technology.

- Establish partnerships with start-ups and industries to develop low- and high-tech assistive tools tailored to local languages and contexts.

- End stigma by conducting awareness campaigns and programmes to promote inclusion of PwDs in social, economic, cultural, political, and community spaces.

- Encourage participation of PwDs in public discourse by ensuring that all public communication is accessible across disabilities.

- Include PwDs in leadership and decision making at all levels of local governance and civic and public life, including international policy making forums.

- Strengthen and enforce legal frameworks to end all forms of violence against PwDs.

- Provide accessible pathways to access justice, redressal mechanisms and support services, including counselling, legal assistance, and rehabilitation, to disabled survivors of violence and abuse.

- Provide training for law enforcement officers, healthcare providers, social workers, and educators on identifying and responding to discrimination and violence faced by WwDs and PwDs.

- Collect disability and gender disaggregated data on discrimination and violence against PwDs.

This Policy Brief was developed through consultations with over 2500 persons with and without disabilities across 35 countries.

References

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3. G20 Rome Leaders' Declaration, 2021, para. 36.

4. G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration, 2022, para. 44.

5. The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, 1962, including 109 States Parties at the time of writing, protects the right to education and prohibits any form of discrimination, including any distinction, exclusion, limitation, or preference.

6. SDG 4 and Agenda 2030 provide a strong vision that has guided initiatives to foster inclusion of children with disabilities (CWDs) in schools.

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17. This recommendation is in line with ILO Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206).

18. G20 Rome Leaders' Declaration 2021, para. 7.

19. G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration 2022, para. 19.

20. World Health Organization, Global report on health equity for persons with disabilities 2023, p. 37, available online https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240063600.

21. UNCRPD Article 25 protects the rights of PWDS to the same range, quality, and standard of free or affordable health care.

22. The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has also expressed concern about involuntary treatment and confinement and has recommended States to take legal steps to abolish surgery and treatment without the full and informed consent of the patient (Art. 23, 25). The Human Rights Committee has affirmed that special protection is necessary in the case of persons not capable of giving valid consent, and that such persons should not be subjected to any medical or scientific experimentation that may be detrimental to their health. See General comment No. 20 (1992) on prohibition of torture and cruel treatment or punishment, para. 7.

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SDG16 Plus & Promoting Civic Space

Today the world is witnessing geopolitical issues that are challenging international security and multilateralism. Additionally, the global scene has pushed donor funds to focus on military expenditures rather than allocating resources towards conflict prevention, peacekeeping and improving people's lives. Finally, the limited opportunities to collaborate on SDG implementation in the sphere of existing fragmented coordination at the national level also poses its own challenges. Non-governmental actors need to be involved in projects to achieve real outcomes and sustainability. Structural obstacles, lack of political will, and lack of commitment to foster inclusive partnerships are hindering effective collaboration.

Governments have promised to reduce violence and conflict, but accountability and transparency remains a major problem. Recognition and urgency for a committed and strong partnership is needed apart from ensuring National

Commitments to SDG Transformation with transparent and inclusive platform for showcasing these commitments, helping to ensure follow-up and accountability.

Introduction

The year 2022 was confronted with an increase in global instability that included increased violence, persecutions, demonstrations, and divisions. No region or continent is free from conflict and this has escalated and expanded with instability, military coups and perilous humanitarian conditions where civilians are the primary target of armed conflicts and violence. The Russia Ukraine conflict further highlights that even states upholding strong democratic credentials have been forced to engage with security dilemmas rather than build on conflict resolution strategies.

Recognizing the geopolitical challenges, the world is facing today, we are witnessing an increasingly global trend the shrinking civil society space. While social media and the digital paradigm

has given a voice to the voiceless, it has also given a stronger voice to calls for armament and securitization. This in turn has led to polarized perspectives that impact global governance institutions. The collateral damage from this is backsliding of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Another collateral damage of this polarization is that facts-based discussions are countered with value-laden claims resulting in misinformation.

Recognition and urgency for a committed and strong partnership to take action as stated in the previous Rome Civil Society Declaration SDG16+ in 2019, 2021 and 2022 is urgently needed in order to reduce the gap between different polarized viewpoints.

1. Promises that couldn't be achieved

Despite multiple promises, many people still lack access to justice, particularly the poor, vulnerable and marginalized communities in different parts of the world Governments have committed to building effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions, but many institutions are still weak and ineffective. For example, the police and judiciary in many countries are often accused of being corrupt and lacking independence. Notwithstanding commitments to promote gender equality, women and girls continue to face discrimination and violence in many parts of the world with child marriage and female genital mutilation still prevalent in many countries. Despite commitments to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, governments have not been able to deliver and are found to be lacking in multiple dimensions, as mentioned above.

2. G20 and the SDG 16 Plus Agenda

The G20 signed up for the SDGs in 2016 by adopting the G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Without the support of all G20 countries to SDG16+, the international community's collective commitment to fostering peaceful, just, and inclusive societies is deemed to fail. Member countries have committed to work across the relevant G20 working groups and streams to contribute to implementing the 2030 Agenda and follow up on collective actions through existing accountability processes and follow-up mechanisms.

In 2018, the G20 made commitments to review progress on its Action Plan. G20's commitment to empowering local grassroots civil society groups is crucial to ensuring the implementation of SDG16+ and that the 2030 Agenda is community-led. As we reach the halfway point to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, civil society has called on the G20 to intervene and take bold actions - including through substantial financial commitments. Steps taken by the Indian G20 Presidency in its Action Plan 2023 such as the High-Level Principles, Financing for Accelerating Progress on SDGs, Targeted Actions for Transformative Transition Areas and the High Level Principles on Data for Development would assist in planning the next steps for achieving the 2030 Agenda.

3. Analysis

In line with the UN Secretary-General's calls, we urge Member States, UN bodies, multilateral agencies, donors, the private sector, CSOs, think tanks, academic institutions, and others to congregate and collectively work on advancing and bringing progress on SDG16+ for the realisation of peaceful and inclusive societies with the following priorities for 2023, G20 Presidency.

A. Promoting Civic Space

It is essential that sufficient civic space is available for civil society around the world to enable it to fulfil the role envisaged for it as part of a multi-stakeholder approach to the implementation, follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

Despite the clear aim of target 16.10 to protect fundamental freedoms, existing global-level indicators adopted to date by the international community to assess progress do not adequately measure the extent to which these basic freedoms are being protected. Unfortunately, the Voluntary National

Reviews submitted by UN Member States between the years 2016-2022 have not addressed the issue of closing civic space or how the challenges and systemic barriers facing civil society in achieving the SDGs are being tackled.

The United Nations has identified participation and civic space as one of the key areas to focus it attention. Under the overall aspiration of the Call to Action, the Guidance Note on the Protection and Promotion of Civic Space adopted emphasises that strategic and effective civic space action hinges on stepped up action around the 3 Ps-Participation in UN processes, Protection of civil society actors through clear protocols and procedures and Promotion of civic space and participation in national decision making processes, both online and offline.

B. Preventing illicit financial flows, stolen assets and organized crime

The latest trade related illicit financial flows (IFFs) from a report published in 2020 by Global Financial Integrity (GFI) estimates $8.7 trillion between 2000 and 2018. It is estimated that $20 billion and $40 billion in stolen assets are moved across borders every year, and the growing influence of criminal networks in the digital realm, as well as the increased use of violence by criminal groups to maintain control over their operations have cost implications highlighting the significant scale of this problem and the impact it has on achieving the SDG 16+ targets. There is an urgent need for action to promote greater transparency and accountability through measures such as strengthening anti-corruption laws and policies, increasing financial transparency and accountability, and supporting international cooperation to prevent

illicit financial flows, stolen assets and organized crime.

The G20 Indian Presidency has included asset recovery, information sharing and integrity and effectiveness of public bodies under its anti-corruption priorities for 2023. In the past, the G20 has adopted various High-Level Principles, including on Cooperation on Persons Sought for Corruption and Asset Recovery, Mutual Legal Assistance, Beneficial Ownership Transparency, Public Procurement. It created a Step-By-Step Guide to Requesting Mutual Legal Assistance from G20 Countries and formed the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE). It has also sought to address these issues by making specific commitments to

1. implement the The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which includes provisions related to asset recovery, anti-money laundering, and cooperation between law enforcement agencies.

2. implement high-level principles on asset recovery, which provide guidance on issues such as asset tracing, asset freezing, and mutual legal assistance.

3. promote greater transparency around beneficial ownership of companies and other legal entities, which can help prevent illicit financial flows and money laundering.

4. strengthen efforts to counter the financing of terrorism, including through implementation of enhanced cooperation between financial intelligence units and law enforcement agencies.

5. promote greater transparency and accountability in public sector institutions, including through measures such as open data initiatives, public reporting on budget and spending, implementing anti-bribery laws, enhancing whistle-blower protection, and promoting competition, enhancing transparency, and preventing conflicts of interest in public procurement.

However, there are still significant gaps in implementation and progress. The G20 ACWG 2020 Accountability Report, for instance, highlighted the lack of timely provision of mutual legal agreements, inflexibility in legal measures, the absence of minimum tools to trace, freeze, and confiscate the proceeds of corruption, and undefined

focal points for cooperation on issues of AML and asset recovery. There is a lack of coordination and cooperation among G20 member states on addressing illicit financial flows, including in terms of information sharing and enforcement apart from a lack of political will to address illicit financial flows.

5. Udaharans

India's efforts towards the G20 accountability of Anti-Corruption Working Group

India gave a Nine Point Agenda for Action Against Fugitive Economic Offences and Asset Recovery to the Argentina G20 presidency where It called for strong and active cooperation across G20 countries in legal processes and mechanisms to deny safe haven to all fugitive economic offenders.

Indian Presidency is now focussing on five broad themes in G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group namely International cooperation for strengthening fight against corruption, Integrity and Effectiveness of Public Bodies and Authorities Responsible for Preventing and Combating Corruption,

Role of audit institutions in anti-corruption, Leveraging Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for combating corruption in the public sector and most importantly gender and corruption. India is also preparing a compendium of good practices of G20 ACWG members regarding enhancing the role of auditing in tackling corruption.

Localizing SDGs and Whole of Society Approach in Japan

According to Hamamatsu City Plan for Human Right Policy Promotion, in order to prevent child abuse and for improved early detection and response, personnel are actively put in place including social workers, clinical therapists, and public health nurses, aiming to expand support based on more expert knowledge and techniques, and as part of measures to provide family care environments for victims of child abuse, the city is raising public awareness on its foster parent system.

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU)

CJEU issued a ruling on beneficial ownership registries in the case of Austria v. Germany (C-648/17) in October 2019. The CJEU ultimately ruled that EU law does not prevent member states from requiring companies to disclose information on their beneficial owners to a central register, as long as certain conditions are met. The ruling is significant for the fight against money laundering and other financial crimes, as beneficial ownership information is a critical tool for identifying and tracing illicit financial flows.

Recommendations

a. Promoting Civic Space

◆ Key international bodies should encourage national governments to enact laws which regulate in a fair way ensuring the existence of healthy civic and democratic spaces. In this regard, the adoption of civic space indicators as part of the monitoring framework of SDG 16+ would provide important leverage for civil society organisations to communicate with the governments to demonstrate progress on the promotion and protection of civic space nationally as part of annual review processes.

◆ We call on governments and the international community to expand citizen-generated data and all other "non-official" data sources.

b. Preventing illicit financial flows, stolen assets and organized crime

◆ Ensure faster, wider, and more effective use of mutual legal assistance through the application of a Mutual Recognition Agreement among G20 Members. These should include mutual enforcement of "freeze and confiscate" orders, authentication of public records, and transparency of documents. When assets are returned they need to be aligned to GFAR principles, including through the engagement of civil society and community groups to support the transparency of this process.

◆ Define and commit to global standards on beneficial ownership transparency, i.e. the disclosure of the ultimate owners of an entity- in a central, public registry with free and open data, and supported by international cooperation on these issues among law enforcement agencies.

◆ Ensure all member countries are party to the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention and private sector bribery is criminalized in line with UNCAC provisions. Policies and procedures for several acts of high-risk corruption- including bribery toward domestic and foreign civil servants, bribery towards a third party, facilitation payments, gratification, political donations, and social donations- should be in line with the G20 High-Level Principles on Private Sector Transparency & Integrity.

c. Financial Commitments towards the Delivery of SDG 16 Plus

◆ The flow of global aid, and in particular an increased percentage of ODA flows should be targeted at funding the promotion and protection of human rights and civic space, increasing the sense of security for communities everywhere, and promoting fair access to the law and to information.

◆ Civil society actors, especially grassroots communities, face structural financial barriers that must be addressed by the financial architecture of public development banks.

◆ The G20 must also come to the SDGs Summit with financial commitments

– including around domestic resource mobilisation and budgetary commitments to deliver on the SDGs. For donors, this also includes financial commitments towards SDG16+ and the 2030 Agenda, which can also play a key role in helping donors meet their commitments to 0.7% of GDP for development cooperation.

◆ We strongly support the Secretary-General's call for an ambitious "SDGs Stimulus Plan", which calls for an additional $500 billion per year towards sustainable development financing.

◆ We reiterate our call from the 2023 Rome Declaration for donors to develop and invest in a comprehensive donor-collaborative " Global SDG16+ Fund".

◆ We support the call for expanding measurement of economic progress to a "Beyond GDP" model.

◆ G20 and the international community must make efforts to solve the increasingly urgent sovereign debt crisis. To do so, debt cancellation or restructuring must be considered, as well as other innovative mechanisms such as "debt swaps" that will further incentivize action towards SDG16+ and the 2030 Agenda overall.

◆ The G20 countries should take measures to effectively involve companies, international financial institutions and communities in the implementation of global agendas and demand transparency and credibility around their contributions

d. Recognizing and utilising SDG16+ as an enabler for achieving the 2030 Agenda & responding to current global crises

◆ We call on the United Nations and its partners to ensure that "National Commitments to SDG Transformation" called for by the Secretary-General are adequately compiled and tracked around the SDGs Summit, including by providing a transparent and inclusive platform for showcasing these commitments, helping to ensure follow-up and accountability.

◆ We reiterate our call for SDG16+ to be reviewed annually at the HLPF going forward, including through the negotiations around the review of the HLPF modalities taking place in 2024. This affirms that SDG16 strongly links with all other goals, in line with the integrated and indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda.

Human Rights as Human Values

The Preamble of United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. Whereas it is essential if the man is not compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law". [1]

The UNESCO Valencia Declaration of Responsibilities and Human Duties (1998) states that "States have a general responsibility to implement and respect all the provisions related to Human Rights". If people are duty conscious, the country and its institutions automatically follow the duties without any deviance. The human rights debate necessarily calls us into the sense of shared responsibility and the common good. Rights and duties have an inseparable relationship. If people do their duty according to the established norms of society and their conscience, they can have a better life. While such norms may not be common to all societies, they must adhere to accepted norms such as those established under the International Covenants of Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as well as Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Evolution of Human Rights

The genesis of the modern concept of human rights may be traced back to the ideas of the French philosophers, which triggered the revolution in France in the late eighteenth century. The slogan of the French Revolution, i.e. "liberty, equality and fraternity", was the first formal declaration of the dignity of humanity. Human rights enshrined in ancient Indian literature reflect the message of equality and brotherhood. The Rigveda, which is regarded as the oldest spiritual tract in India calls on all humanity to "live together, talk together, and know each other's minds; may your consultations and assemblies be unified, may your minds and intellects be common; may your resolutions be united, and your hearts beat in unison; may your minds unite to make you happy." It shows that the Indian value system discusses equality, harmony, and fraternity. Human dignity is the tradition and culture of ancient India.

Ancient Indian texts (Vedas, Dharmashastras, Ithihasas and the Arthshastra) speak of the duties of kings, judges and subjects, as well as of norms of justice and judicial procedures. The foundation of human rights in these ancient times revolved around the concepts of Dharma (duty) and Danda, which regulated the governance of the state and the duties of citizens. The foundation of human rights in Sanatan Dharma encompasses a moral code, righteousness and responsibilities.[3] Human rights have always been paramount in India's rich legacy because India believed in the principle of "Vashudhaiva-Kutumbakam" (*The world is one family*).

Education & Human Rights

Human rights and fundamental freedoms help us to develop our intrinsic qualities, intelligence, talents, and conscience to meet our material and spiritual needs. It is pertinent to underline that, without recognizing the right to education, realisation of the right to development of every human being is impossible. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that "education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms".[4] Moreover, education promotes understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations and social or religious groups. Historically, education has been an instrument of development and an important factor in social change. Human rights and education are inarguably two of the most important factors in realising other human rights, ranging from protection of the environment to empowerment of children, women, and other vulnerable sections of society. The right to education and its relevance for nation-building and holistic development of societies require the child to gain knowledge in a safe and discrimination-free environment that protects her from exploitation.

Human Rights and Gender Issues

The preamble to the United Nations Charter sets forth women's equality with men, as does Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which describes that "women are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Moreover, women and men are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood." [5] At the very heart of this concept is the understanding that women are autonomous individuals fully capable of determining the course of their lives, and possessing independent agency to act for themselves and for others. Indian philosophical belief is that man and woman make absolute human beings, as symbolised in the concept of Ardhanaareeswara, where Iswara, the creator, is depicted as half-man and half-woman. Notwithstanding the elements of patriarchy in the Hindu philosophical tradition, women occupied superior positions on par with men. In the Sanskrit language, strength and power are feminine qualities - 'Shakti' means "Power" or "Strength" and all powers, including in males, were said to originate from the feminine. The position of women in a society is the true index of its social, economic, cultural and spiritual attainment. India is moving fast from the concept of women's development to women-led development. Women's economic empowerment is an important agenda of the G20 summit.

Divyang (Disabilities) and Human Rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) has reframed the nature of the disability from a personal impairment, resulting in activity limitation, to a form of social oppression caused by discrimination and a denial of citizenship and civic participation. Disability inclusion and enhancing accessibility are crucial to achieving Sustainable Development Goals and health for all. It is difficult to achieve "Universal health coverage" and health for all without providing quality health services equally to persons with disabilities.[6] Therefore, investing in universal health coverage for persons with disabilities will benefit individuals and communities.

Environment and Human Rights

Protection of the environment and protection of human rights are global issues affecting people, communities and our planet worldwide. The environment and human rights are closely inter-connected, as environmental degradation adversely impacts human rights, such as the right to life, health, hygiene, sanitation, sustainable lifestyles, access to resources, and, generally, a clean environment. Therefore, protecting the environment is important to safeguard human rights, ensure sustainable development and live together peacefully. The right to life, human dignity, health, food, shelter, and water is at risk when communities are forced to migrate due to climate change. Environmental pollution, including air and water pollution, also significantly threatens human rights.

Media and Human Rights

Article 19 of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." [7]

"The hallmark of a strong democracy is an active civil society. Civil society and media serve as an important link between governments and the public, as they provide public concerns to authorities, press governments to share critical updates and promote government accountability and transparency." [8]

The advent of the internet has introduced "new" media, including information communication technologies, the internet, websites, and social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. Media has an important role when it comes to promotion and protection of human rights. It gives people a platform or means for their voices to be heard, raises awareness of specific human rights issues, exposes violations and acts of discrimination, and empowers people to act.

LGBTQIA and Human Rights

LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual /Agender) individuals face discrimination and violations of their basic rights in many parts of the world. They also face barriers to accessing education, employment, housing, and healthcare due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. The principles of human rights such as non-discrimination, equality, and freedom from violence and persecution apply to all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Advocating for LGBTQIA rights and ensuring their protection is essential to promote human dignity, social justice, and equal treatment under the law.

Democracy, Good Governance and Human Rights

Human rights are inextricably linked with democratic governance. Nurturing good governance underpins and is essential to ensuring respect for human rights. History teaches us that transparent, responsible, accountable, and participatory governance is a prerequisite to enduring respect for human dignity and fundamental freedoms. Democracy is an essential condition for the protection of human rights. Human rights cannot be respected and protected sustainably without good governance.

Cultural Rights and Human Rights

Human rights and cultural rights are inter-related concepts that play a crucial role in ensuring the dignity and well-being of individuals in society. Cultural rights include practising one's religion or language, participating in cultural events and celebrations, and accessing cultural education and resources. The rights identified in the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) are essential to a just, equitable, harmonious society.

Indigenous peoples are often marginalized and face different kinds of discrimination in the State's legal systems, violence, and abuse. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) states in Articles 9 and 33 that indigenous peoples have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned and that they have the right to determine their own identity."[9] At the same time, human rights provide the foundation for a society that respects the dignity and worth of every individual and cultural

rights, and recognise the importance of cultural diversity and how culture is expressed in varying ways. The challenge is in ensuring these rights are protected and promoted in a way that respects and preserves different communities' cultural identity and heritage while upholding universal human rights principles. While cultural practices are an important part of cultural identity and heritage, they cannot be allowed to violate universal human rights norms.

Child Rights and Human Rights

Children's human rights are violated every day in many parts of the world. Human rights related to children are often disproportionately impacted by the highest risks arising from poverty, malnourishment and abuse. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights stipulated under para of Article 25 states that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance.

Recommendations

The C20 policy brief on Human Rights invites G20 leaders to adopt a stronger position towards promoting and protecting Human rights. The recommendations call upon G20 members,

1. To promote education as an innovative vision and mission for the cornerstones of sustainable growth and stability. All G20 members should encourage cooperation in education for sustainable development. Furthermore, it is expected to advance women's and girls' equal access to inclusive and quality education. In addition, they have to promote coordination between employment and equitable, quality education policies.

2. To identify that gender equality is critical for economic growth and equitable and sustainable development. Therefore, G20 leaders should commit to promoting initiatives to end discrimination against women. It will help to reduce gender gaps and inequality, as envisaged under the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. To protect and advance democratic values and human rights by promoting democracy, human rights, and good governance programmes at various levels. The G20 countries should initiate such programmes as to ensure these values are imbibed by the individuals in their day-to-day lives.

4. To provide all necessary assistance to the countries that cannot afford quality health services for persons with disabilities. The G20 members must ensure access to equitable and effective health services for persons with disabilities across the world.

5. To protect the rights of LGBTQIA persons, G20 members must play a constructive role, at both bilateral and multilateral levels, to promote and protect the human rights of LGBTQIA people and work closely with civil society organizations to advance their human rights.

6. To promote harmonious and cooperative relations between State and indigenous peoples. The G20 members should work towards accepting the rights of the indigenous people.

7. To expand the civic space by ensuring the inclusion of civil society and making them a stakeholder in the policy formulation. The G20 members should regularly consult the civic society and prepare a

multi-layered model of policy formulation.

8. To address climate change and other environmental issues, the G20 members should broaden their scope encompassing economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of human rights. Climate change should be addressed not just at the macro level but at the micro level. LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) must be promoted by the G20 members.

9. To adopt a holistic approach to protecting human rights in both the physical and digital realms. This will need to be done through differentiated actions to address new and emerging risks. As work is done to advance technical skills and competencies, G20 countries may need to ensure respect for human rights and non-discrimination in the digital world through adequate attention, legislative provisions, regulatory frameworks, and mechanisms for their effective implementation.

10. To promote cultural diversity and respect multilateralism through dialogue, G20 members should encourage an atmosphere of engaging in open and respectful discussions for the individuals and communities through which they can develop relationships based on mutual respect and understanding enabling them to work together to promote human rights and cultural diversity.

11. To promote respect for democratic values as well as for diversity, inclusion and mutual respect with special reference to preserving the interests of the weaker sections of society.

12. To protect all human rights in an era where non-State actors often play a negative role. Globalization has meant that non-State actors are more involved than ever in violations of human rights. While globalization has enhanced the ability of civil society to function across borders and promote human rights, other actors have gained the power to violate human rights in unforeseen ways. The G20 members must create conditions and put in place policies that would reduce the adverse impact of market forces and gross violations of human rights.

13. To follow the principle of Vasudhaiva Katumbakam (the world is one family) and promote values of co-existence. The G20 members must promote value-based education that can shape various perspectives and norms. Values and norms could play a very important role in protecting Human Rights.

CONCLUSION

As global citizens, it is our duty to promote humanity and the sustainable future of the planet. To achieve this, our foremost objective should be to become good human beings. We appeal to the G20 leaders to protect human rights as human values, stressing our duties towards the planet and to all its creatures, to reduce inequalities and protect the most vulnerable. Our priority must be the sustainability of life and the welfare of all.

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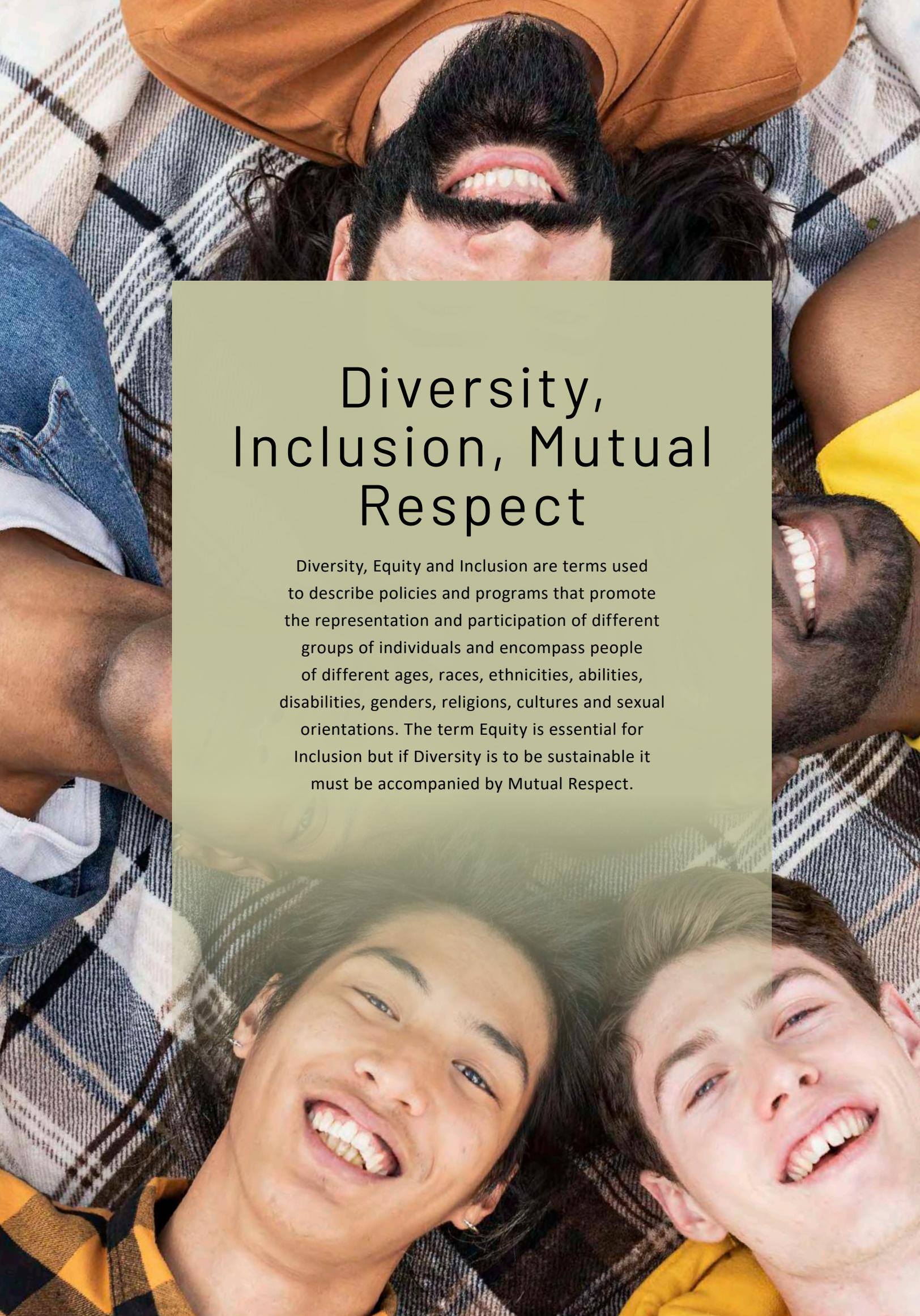
Diversity, Inclusion, Mutual Respect

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are terms used to describe policies and programs that promote the representation and participation of different groups of individuals and encompass people of different ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, disabilities, genders, religions, cultures and sexual orientations. The term Equity is essential for Inclusion but if Diversity is to be sustainable it must be accompanied by Mutual Respect.

This is the rationale that led this year's C20 Working Group to adopt the theme of Diversity, Inclusion, and Mutual Respect. 'Mutual Respect' is essential for Diversity and Inclusion to flourish in a harmonious society. The need for a diverse approach to development was recognized by the leaders of G20 for the first time in 2005. The G20 communique of 2005 said, "We recognized there is no uniform development approach that fits all countries. Each country should be able to choose the development approaches and policies that best suit its specific characteristics...". The recognition of diverse approaches and methods further needs to be taken forward in other areas of social life.

The Diversity Inclusion and Mutual Respect Working Group considered four sub-themes:

1. Respecting native traditions all over the world and their representation

The combination of imperialism, commercialism, and exclusive religious and political ideologies have driven various native traditions to the wall to the extent that some have almost become extinct. But these traditions (including Indian traditions) have prominently contributed to protection of environment and biodiversity by their very practices. Their traditional wisdom about protection of environment, harmonious social life, herbal knowledge and skills are very important for the world. They should be supported and given the place and prominence in international forums. The world saw biased research towards traditional cultures, customs, communities discrediting them as evil, false, backward and superstitious with governmental machinery being used to establish these biases. The tangible and intangible damage caused to these communities has affected them profoundly and remains unrepaired to this day.

Today it is generally acknowledged even by the United Nations that "there is an urgent need for new approach... which emphasize(s) harmony among people and between humans and nature, equity, dignity, well-being and sustainability. These new approaches should fully acknowledge the role of culture as a system of values and a resource and framework to build truly sustainable development.... We recognize that one size does not fit all and that different cultural perspectives will result in different paths to development. At the same time, we embrace an understanding of culture that is open, evolving and strongly framed within a rights-based approach and respect for diversity, free access to which enables individuals "to live and be what they choose", thus enhancing their opportunities and human capabilities while promoting mutual understanding and exchange among peoples." [1]

Recommendations

G20 governments must:

◆ **Establish research centres** for the study of diverse indigenous communities to find solutions from traditional wisdom of indigenous/ traditional communities, solving complex global problems.

◆ **Voice and support the traditional communities** in the remotest parts of all countries who have been practicing sustainable development with unique mechanisms suiting their environmental, material, intellectual and spiritual needs.

◆ **Legislate "Right to Culture"** or way of life by governments all over the world- it forms a fundamental principle of cultural freedom, freedom of thought, well-being, expression, religion, faith, forms, etc.

◆ **Stop religious intolerance**, terrorism, intolerance towards ancient ways of life by means of vandalism of ancient monuments, places of worship, academic terrorism by academically disputing and misrepresenting ancient cultures.

◆ **Establish a department** for the promotion of indigenous faith and culture.

◆ **Include ancient native philosophy and cultural value**s included in textbooks to make it a part of the educational system to mould the future generations to save natural resources, degradation of earth, environmental pollution, and to prevent conflicts, wars, etc.

◆ **Bring the native medical knowledge and practices** into the mainstream to help over-burdened modern medical system, which will be a low cost–high benefit method to help the world.

◆ **Have a G20 forum for networking and exchange** among traditional communities where representatives of native cultures of the world would meet annually to support native skills, wisdom traditions, regional herbs and food for better health, to save species at the brink of extinction, reduce global warming, prevent ethnic strife, restore ecological balance, etc.

2. Persons with physical and mental disabilities, economically backward sections, and children born with HIV/AIDS who need special care and acceptance in the society.

About 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability, of whom 2-4% experience significant difficulties in functioning [1]. Around 970 million people suffer from mental disabilities [2]. It is acknowledged that many social, economic and infrastructural changes have been witnessed in the 21st century to suit persons with disabilities. However, these are not adequate to address the needs of persons with disabilities (PWD). People affected by various physical, sensory, motor, neuro-physiological, behavioural, cognitive or multiple challenges have impediments to live life with happiness and to contribute to the progress of a family and society when they are not treated with holistic care. When their impediments are well-handled, then, instead of dependency, the PWDs can contribute in multiple ways and shoulder bigger responsibilities. The imparting of value education should include information about disabilities and how society/family should care for it and work for its cure.

Recommendations

♦ **Early identification and early intervention** with AI apps, referral network, eco-system for functional independence, technology-solutions catering for special needs, tax incentives for the products that are vital for successful rehabilitation.

♦ **Knowledge bases** relevant to disability and intervention systems should be built and libraries with information and databases should be accessible in most global languages.

◆ Measures to give concessions and reservations for education and jobs to the economically weaker sections to cross over the poverty line.

◆ **Rehabilitation training:** Educational curriculum at school level should include inputs about different types of disabilities and their management. For example, medical education should accommodate the

basics of early interventions and rehabilitation services.

◆ **HIV- affected children** since birth should be provided with timely medical support at hospitals/ health-centres. Designated medical facilities in a district can nominate a section to treat HIV-affected persons

3. Persons irrespective of their biological sex identity, sexual orientation and gender identity and expression need to live with respect in society by respecting each other.

Though under the acronym LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual etc.) all the persons with different sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGEISC, as they are now referred to) are included it was found that the needs of each group is different. Thus,

to take care of the rights and needs of all these persons the formulation of policies should be more diverse, precise and purposeful. All should not be subjected to fit in the needs of one or other group. Many European countries are adopting a very cautious approach towards gender treatment

for children[12]. Many countries have banned the irreversible surgeries for the children or have adopted very restricted approach, even 18 states in USA have banned surgeries on children. We need to take a long-term view that protects family and society, along with material and spiritual well-being of human beings and their rights to live life happily and purposefully. In India and many other countries, intersex have their own systems, temples, festivals etc., which give them spiritual succour. These temples and festivals need to be protected as these give spiritual identity and path to this group of people[14].

Recommendations

G20 governments must:

- **Make different policies** to take care of diverse needs of the persons combined in the term LGBTQ+.

- **Provide hostels/shelters for intersex children** who are generally discarded by families.

- **Ban treatments** such as puberty blockers, life-long hormones, and irreversible surgeries for gender transformation among transgender children as many countries have already done.

- **Protect the indigenous religious traditions** of the persons covered in the term LGBTQI+.

- **Preserve living spiritual traditions** for the intersex and gender non-conforming persons as done in India, Thailand and other countries are doing to provide them spiritual succour and space. 'International Study Center' should be established in India for the study, protection and promotion of these indigenous traditions existing amongst intersex and gender non-conforming persons all over the world.

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4. Respecting the methods and approaches adopted by various countries, cultures, and communities to solve their problems and interpret terms like human rights, etc. in the light of their cultural ethos

Today, the discourse on human rights needs further refinement. In protecting the rights of the accused whether in cases or terrorism or in those involving violence against women, the right to dignity and privacy as well as the right to life of the victims often gets overlooked. Further, in-depth protection of rights of all is required.

The human rights discourse has evolved in the United Nations system over the past four decades. While recognising that the human rights machinery is mostly treaty-based, that is, anchored in international law, where the State that ratifies the treaty willingly assumes legally binding obligations under the treaty and submits periodic compliance reports to the respective treaty body, subjecting itself to scrutiny by the treaty body for monitoring of compliance. and while accepting that it must not give any member State a pass in the name of cultural ethos or freedom to "interpret" human rights,

it is perhaps time to launch a discourse that looks upon human being not only as an individual but in terms of his connections and responsibilities towards his family, society, nature, etc. Many traditional societies even today are not just contract-based but also relations-based. Thus, the diverse ways in which various issues related with human life are dealt with within various cultural contexts need to be respected.

The G20 communique of the year 2005, says,

We recognized there is no uniform development approach that fits all countries. Each country should be able to choose the development approaches and policies that best suit its specific characteristics, while benefiting from their accumulated experience in policy making over the last decades, including the importance of strong macroeconomic policies for sustained growth.

The time has come that, not only in economic development, but in all round development 'no one size fits all' is to be adopted. The diversity of ways of development also are to be recognized. Every culture must have the right to follow one's own civilizational values through vision of life, values of life and develop systems to implement the same, not on the basis of uniformity or mechanical sameness but a living Oneness where the care of all is taken and the diversity of individuals as well as communities and the methods adopted by them to protect the freedom and happiness of all is respected.

Recommendations
G20 governments must:

◆ **Declare** as was done in case of economic development in the communique of 2005 that there is no one model that fits all even in the development of human beings and society and culture.

Udaaharans or Best Practices

- 'Microsign', an enterprise at Bhavnagar, Gujarat is a successful example of how differently abled persons are sought after and constitute preferred staff. It's 60% workforce are differently-abled as preferred HR. Harvard business review mentions it in its publication March 16, 2016, based on the study of IIM Ahmedabad.

- A residential school at Rang a very remote part of East Kameng district, Arunachal Pradesh is a living example of imparting of modern education with cultural ethos. The students learn modern subjects based on a curriculum prescribed by the Central Board of Secondary Education. Subjects such as indigenous arts like dances, songs, etc., sports, crafts like weaving, basket making, and environment, chanting hymns-verses, singing devotional songs, folklores and tales comprise of cultural and traditional wisdom. It has caught the attention of many other tribes in that part as the right way to 'development with culture'; i.e. to develop in modern way as well as to retain the diverse cultural identity.

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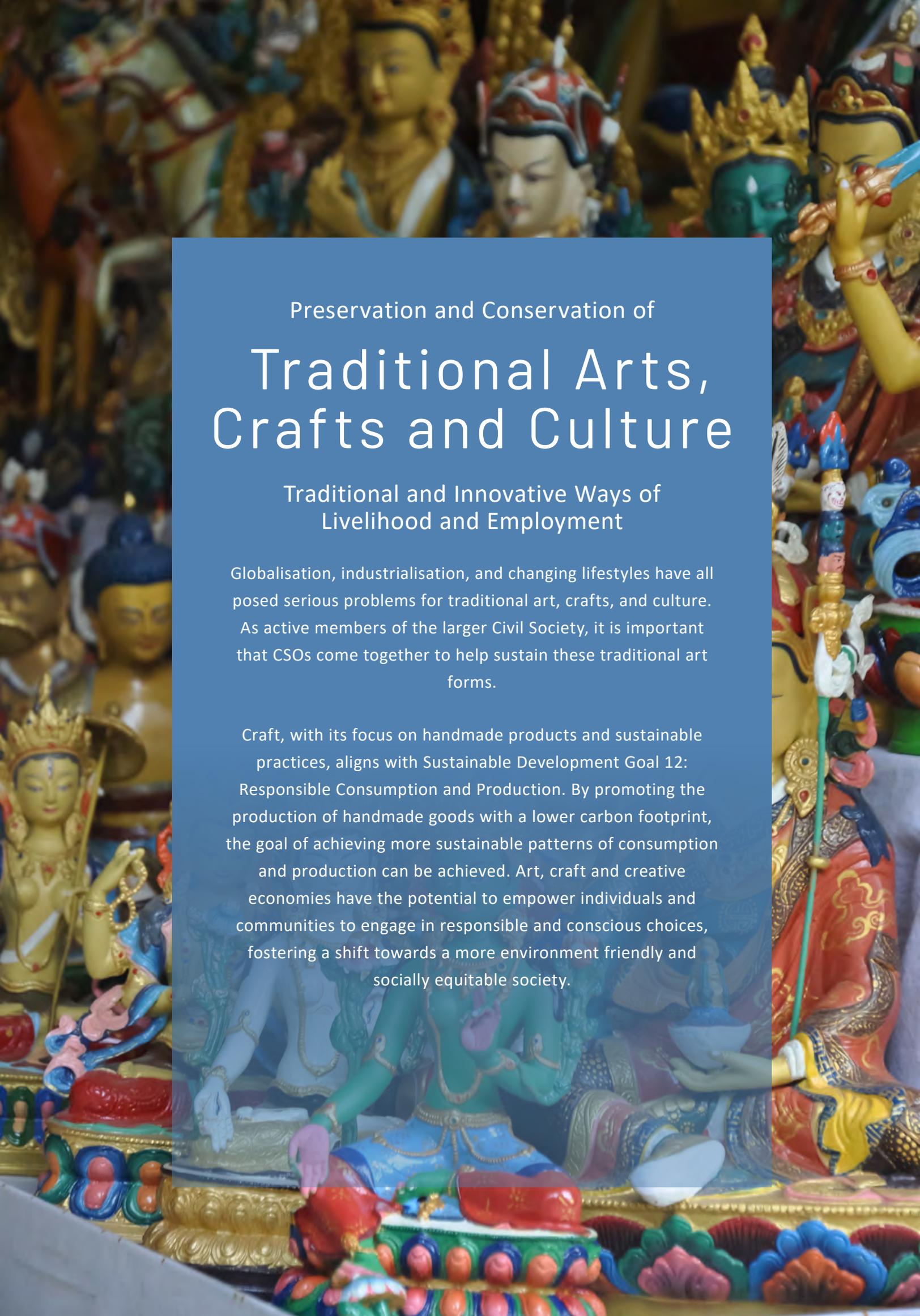
Preservation and Conservation of

Traditional Arts, Crafts and Culture

Traditional and Innovative Ways of Livelihood and Employment

Globalisation, industrialisation, and changing lifestyles have all posed serious problems for traditional art, crafts, and culture. As active members of the larger Civil Society, it is important that CSOs come together to help sustain these traditional art forms.

Craft, with its focus on handmade products and sustainable practices, aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. By promoting the production of handmade goods with a lower carbon footprint, the goal of achieving more sustainable patterns of consumption and production can be achieved. Art, craft and creative economies have the potential to empower individuals and communities to engage in responsible and conscious choices, fostering a shift towards a more environment friendly and socially equitable society.

Traditional craftsmanship is perhaps the most tangible manifestation of intangible cultural heritage. Traditional craftsmanship can be seen in many forms, including tools, clothing, jewellery, costumes and props for plays and festivals, storage containers, objects for transportation and shelter, decorative art, ritual objects, musical instruments, household utensils, and toys for both entertainment and education.

Handicrafts have existed in accordance with the prevailing environmental conditions since man's earliest days. The first examples were necessities such as clothing or protection. Handicrafts were later improved and adapted in response to environmental factors, eventually becoming "traditional" and accepted as an art form reflecting a society's artistic sense, feelings, and cultural characteristics.

G20 member states should use measures to promote and maintain traditional art, crafts, and culture to solve these issues and further their preservation and conservation.

The policy brief aims to:

- Identify and preserve traditional art, crafts, and culture

- Promote traditional art, crafts, and culture as a means of livelihood and employment

- Promote innovative ways of livelihood and employment that preserve and promote traditional art, crafts, and culture

- Create a sustainable ecosystem for the preservation and promotion of traditional art, crafts, and culture

- Develop a cultural foundation and engage the people of all backgrounds to foster pride in their cultural heritage and engage cultural exchange

- Promote research and innovation: Invest in research, data mapping and development initiatives focused on traditional art, crafts, and culture.

- Foster intergenerational knowledge transfer: Implement programs and initiatives that facilitate the transfer of traditional art and craft skills from older generations to

◆ younger ones. This will help ensure the continuity and preservation of valuable techniques and cultural practices.

◆ Strengthen market linkages: Support artisans and craftspeople by establishing direct market connections, both domestic and international.

Preservation and Conservation of Traditional Arts, Crafts, and Culture:

1. Documentation & Digitization

The first step in preserving and conserving traditional arts, crafts, and cultures is to document them. G20 member states should undertake an extensive documentation exercise to identify the different traditional arts, crafts, and cultures prevalent in different regions of the country. This documentation should be carried out with the help of experts and scholars in the field. Once the documentation is complete, the G-20 should undertake a digitization exercise to ensure that these traditions are accessible to people worldwide. This digitization exercise should include creating an online repository of information, including videos, images, and articles on these traditions.

training and support to artisans and craftspeople and encourage them to pass on their skills to future generations. G20 should also provide grants and funding for research and development in traditional arts, crafts, and cultures.

2. Establishing Centres of Excellence

The G-20 should establish centres of excellence in traditional arts, crafts, and cultures in different parts of the country. These centres should act as hubs for the promotion and preservation of traditional arts, crafts, and cultures. They should provide

3. Providing Training and Support

G20 should provide training and support to artisans and craftspeople to enhance their skills and knowledge. G20 states should also provide financial assistance and marketing support to help these artisans and craftspeople to promote their products and earn a decent livelihood.

4. Encouraging Entrepreneurship

G20 should encourage entrepreneurship among artisans and craftspeople by providing support, including but not limited to, access to finance, training, and mentoring, to artisans and craftspeople to start their enterprises.

5. Market Development

Developing markets for traditional arts and crafts are critical for their sustainability. This can be done through establishing markets, promoting them through e-commerce platforms, and encouraging local tourism. Apprenticeship programs should be developed that provide aspiring fashion designers and artisans with opportunities to learn from experienced craftspeople.

6. Collaborations

Collaborating with other organizations, groups, and communities can help to preserve traditional arts and crafts. This can involve partnerships with museums, galleries, and cultural institutions.

7. Promotion and Education

Promotion and education of traditional arts and crafts can be done through public events, exhibitions, and festivals. This will help to raise awareness and appreciation of traditional arts and crafts. There is also a need to foster collaborations between traditional artisans and design institutions, such as fashion schools and universities.

8. Inclusivity and Diversity

Preserving and promoting traditional arts and crafts should be inclusive and diverse. This can include supporting artisans and craftspeople from marginalized communities and promoting gender equality in the industry.

9. Promote Skill Development

G20 could promote the skill development of artisans and craftspeople by organizing workshops, training programs, and apprenticeships. This can help to preserve traditional techniques and ensure that they are passed down to future generations of craftspeople.

10. Encourage Innovation

G20 should encourage innovation in traditional arts and crafts by supporting the use of modern technologies and designs while preserving the traditional techniques. This can help to make traditional arts and crafts more accessible and appealing to younger generations.

11. Promote Market Access

G20 should promote market access for traditional artisans and craftspeople by creating online marketplaces, promoting tourism, and establishing markets for traditional products. This can help to increase the demand for traditional arts and crafts and provide more opportunities for artisans and craftspeople to sell their products.

12. Support Marginalized Communities

G20 should support marginalized communities by providing skill development opportunities and promoting the use of traditional arts and crafts in sustainable livelihoods. This can help to empower marginalized communities and ensure that their cultural traditions are preserved.

13. Promote Environmental Sustainability

G20 can promote environmental sustainability in traditional arts and crafts by supporting the use of eco-friendly materials, reducing waste, and promoting sustainable livelihoods for artisans and craftspeople. Advocate for the adoption of circular economy principles in the art and craft sectors. Encourage the recycling, repurposing, and upcycling of materials to minimize waste and reduce the environmental footprint of the industry. This can help to ensure that traditional arts and crafts are produced in an environmentally sustainable way.

Udaaharans

Traditional Turkish handicrafts

Create a rich mosaic by combining genuine values with the cultural heritage of the various civilizations that have passed through Anatolia over the millennia. Carpet-making, rug-making, sumac, cloth-weaving, writing, tile-making, ceramics and pottery, embroidery, leather manufacture, musical instrument-making, masonry, copper work, basket-making, saddle-making, felt-making, weaving, woodwork, cart-making, and so on are examples of traditional Turkish handicrafts. Wool, mohair, cotton, bristles, and silk are common weaving materials in traditional Turkish handicrafts.

Gzhel is a Russian ceramic style

It has been producing pottery since the 14th century and is known as one of Russia's oldest and largest producers. It is the true birthplace of Russian ceramics. It is shipped both domestically and internationally. Gzhel rose to prominence in the Eighteenth Century. It was well-known for its beautiful majolica-coloured clay with polychrome paintings on white glaze, but it wasn't until the Nineteenth Century that Gzhel's Golden Era began.

The key recommendations on traditional and innovative ways of livelihood and employment are:

◆ Recognize and preserve traditional occupations, skills, and knowledge systems by providing support for training, upskilling, and infrastructure development.

◆ Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship that fosters an ecosystem towards innovation and entrepreneurial activities by providing access to resources, mentorship, and financial support.

◆ Ensure that both traditional and innovative livelihood options are accessible and inclusive, particularly for marginalized communities, women, and youth.

◆ Promote sustainable practices: Encourage environmentally sustainable livelihood options, promote conservation, and support the use of clean technologies.

◆ **Skill development and capacity building**

- Establish skill development programs: Develop comprehensive skill development programs that address the needs of traditional and innovative livelihood sectors. Collaborate with industry experts, educational institutions, and local communities to design and implement these programs effectively.

- Promote apprenticeships and internships: Facilitate apprenticeships and internships to provide hands-on training and experiential learning opportunities for individuals pursuing traditional and innovative livelihood options.

◆ **Access to finance and resources:**

1. Establish dedicated funds: Create dedicated funds to provide financial assistance, grants, and loans at affordable rates to individuals and communities engaged in traditional and innovative livelihood practices.

2. Support infrastructure development: Invest in the development of infrastructure, such as marketplaces, incubation centres, and technology hubs, to facilitate the growth of traditional and innovative enterprises.

3. Support Artisan Cooperatives: Establish and support cooperatives that bring together artisans and craftspeople to collectively produce and market their products. Provide them with training, access to resources, and marketing support to enhance their business skills and increase their market reach.

◆ **Knowledge preservation and promotion:**

1. Document traditional knowledge: Undertake comprehensive documentation of traditional livelihood practices, including techniques, tools, and cultural significance. Create digital repositories and databases to preserve and disseminate this knowledge.

2. Promote cultural tourism: Encourage cultural tourism initiatives that showcase traditional livelihood practices to domestic and international visitors, generating income for practitioners and creating awareness about India's rich cultural heritage.

◆ **Entrepreneurship and innovation support:**

1. Establish incubation centres: Set up incubation centres and innovation hubs to support aspiring entrepreneurs in traditional and innovative sectors. Provide mentorship, networking opportunities, and access to market linkages.

2. Provide technical assistance and advisory services: Offer technical assistance, business advisory services, and mentorship programs to individuals and enterprises engaged in traditional and innovative livelihood practices.

◆ **Policy and regulatory framework:**

1. Review and revise existing policies: Continuously review and update existing policies and regulations to align them with the needs of traditional and innovative livelihood sectors. Simplify procedures, reduce bureaucratic hurdles, and ensure consistency across different regions.

2. Incentivize sustainable practices: Introduce incentives and rewards for traditional and innovative livelihood practices that promote sustainability, environmental conservation, and the use of clean technologies.

3. Ethical Supply Chains: Encourage transparency and ethical practices in the supply chains of crafts and fashion products. Advocate for fair wages, safe working conditions, and sustainable sourcing of materials. Promote certifications and labeling systems that verify the ethical and sustainable practices of artisans and craftspeople.

♦ **Implementation and Monitoring**

a. *Implementation authorities*: Designate a dedicated authority, such as a Livelihood and Employment Promotion Agency, to oversee the implementation of this policy. This agency should work in coordination with relevant departments, industry associations, and community representatives.

b. *Monitoring and evaluation*: Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress and impact of the policy. Regular assessments should be conducted to identify challenges, address gaps, and make necessary improvements.

c. *Stakeholder engagement*: Foster active engagement with stakeholders, including traditional practitioners, entrepreneurs, community organizations, NGOs, and academia.

♦ **Promote Cultural Exchange:**

G-20 Nations should promote cultural exchange programs that allow artisans and craftspeople to share their skills and techniques with other communities. This will help to preserve traditional arts and crafts and promote cultural diversity.

♦ **Support in Research and Documentation:**

G-20 Nations can support research and documentation of traditional arts and crafts. This can involve providing funding for research projects, creating databases of traditional crafts, and promoting access to these resources. This can include sharing best practices, conducting joint research projects, and organising international events and exhibitions.

Delivering Democracy

The Delivering Democracy Working Group (DDWG) seeks to ensure engagement from all the concerned stakeholders in generating a platform for discussions for strengthening democracy, and for members of civil society organizations across the world to voice people's aspirations before world leaders who are members of the G20 nations. The DDWG has anchored various knowledge assimilation events such as International Conference, International Webinar Series, Campus 20 Poster Competitions, etc. through both in-person and virtual mediums.

Structural features like multi-party elections, an independent judiciary, and free media - are important instruments of democracy. However, the basic strength of democracy is the spirit and ethos that lie within its citizens and societies. Democracy is not only of the people, by the people, for the people but also with the people, within the people.

For countries like India, democracy is a sacred and shared value. It has evolved over a long time, and taken various forms and systems. Through history, however, one thing is clear. Democracy has been the spirit that supports

equality and dignity; the idea that has welcomed debate and discourse; the culture that has given wings to thought and expression.

Different parts of the world have followed different paths of democratic development. There is much we can learn from each other. We all need to constantly improve our democratic practices and systems. And we all need to continuously enhance inclusion, transparency, human dignity, responsive grievance redressal and decentralization of power.

Strengthening and Deepening Democracy: Youth Media and Civil Society

Strengthening democracy is a responsibility, not only of the government but also of core societal stakeholders such as the youth, media and civil society organizations

(CSOs). What is needed is an enabling environment and strong support to be provided to enable these stakeholders to contribute effectively to the strengthening of democracy.

Recommendations

Youth

1. Technology should be leveraged to increase youth participation in democratic processes. For example, building online voting systems for young people to exercise their right to vote.

2. G20 nations should use participatory training and engagement tools to inculcate democratic values and competencies in young people. Exemplars include UNICEF India's YuWaah!'s which has initiated gamified tools combining knowledge development and on-ground action to nurture the capacities of young people to lead volunteerism.

3. Schools in G20 nations should include civic education in the younger generation. Legislation should require countries to develop basic content and benchmarks of achievement for civic education.

Departments of Education should make funding available for civic education that focuses on democratic principles[1]. There should be pedagogy on democracy, democratic institutions, and responsibility of citizenry which should be practical and provide experiential learning from class 6th onwards. In Sweden, the school curriculum includes lessons on the theory and practice of democracy. Representatives of political parties visit schools, helping students to learn about the political system. This model may be referred to.

4. Local Governments should introduce mandatory youth outreach programs. Youth can be engaged to solve local issues (such as traffic congestion, design innovation, etc.). This engagement should also be credited academically as well.

5. Introducing student politics on university campuses is key to facilitating youth engagement in decision-making processes. However, the implementation of reforms for free and fair student elections and politics is a must for improving youth perception of campus politics.

6. Have fellowship programs for youth to engage them on issues of democratic values and democratic processes e.g. have youth fellows in local self-governing institutions

7. Youth Empowerment Ministry in Governments, present in different countries should keep Governance and Democracy as the major agenda items in the department's programs.

Civil Society Organizations

1. G20 States should focus on strengthening civil society; there should be institutional mechanisms set up for smooth coordination with and capacity building of CSOs, with dedicated funds for the same.

2. In some countries, CSOs sit in the panel or in government committees to contribute to policy-making and implementation; these mechanisms can enable civil society to help find pragmatic solutions on various issues of national importance. These practices should be encouraged in all G20 states.

Media

1. G20 states must support independent and public interest journalism by designing incentives for philanthropic donations to the news sector and considering tax concessions to support public interest journalism[2].

2. Citizen journalism and participatory video-making, wherein people disseminate information using websites, blogs, and social media, should be encouraged and fostered.

Responsible Citizenry and Responsive Governance: Effective Voting and Beyond

1. Creating Electoral Literacy Clubs in educational institutions and planning activities like Each One Reach One (every youth to educate one voter) are recommended.

2. G20 State should create a Democracy Coalition including members of Civil Society to plan and implement democracy campaigns beyond the election period. Training programs should be conducted for communities and community-based organizations to enhance their understanding of democracy and their role as stakeholders in the decision-making process.

3. CSOs should assist to enhance the number of registered voters and to encourage registered voters to cast their ballots.

4. Performance indicators and measurement systems for legislators should be developed and implemented, for independent evaluation of performance. Such indicators may include attendance and frequency of speaking in parliament/legislature[3], decorum and parliamentary speech and conduct, and contribution to the development of the electoral constituency.

5. More important documents or policies prepared by the government should be floated in the public domain by employing the aid of technology. Placing the draft bill in the public domain for a suitable period of time should be followed diligently and for a larger number of bills.

6. On the lines of the UN General Assembly, there should be Global Citizen's Assemblies for debating issues of global importance. Both in-person and virtual participation mechanisms for the same should be made available.

Decentralization and Grassroots Democracy

Challenges

Empowered Deliberative Democracy (EDD) involves public meetings or deliberative forums in local governance, whereby local residents gather, discuss and decide on governance issues affecting their lives.

EDD forums such as Village Assemblies in actual practice are constrained by certain challenges such as low attendance in meetings and inability to exercise any decisive influence on decision-making.

1. CSOs should conduct capacity building and sensitization of members of the community for more active and effective participation in deliberative forums such as Village Assemblies.

2. Innovations in grassroots democracy and people's participation such as habitation/micro level assemblies should be implemented for effective grassroots-level community participation even in remote areas.

3. Each Village Council/unit of local government can think of a community radio station that can be used to hear the problems of the public directly.

4. There is a need for suitable training of elected representatives of rural local self-governing institutions:

   • Training should use suitable participatory pedagogies so that the lessons are found engaging by the participants. It should engage peer networks of elected representatives from vulnerable communities for mutual learning.

   • Social audits carried out by villagers be supported and institutionalized, and made active in their functioning with the support of CSOs.

Digital Democracy

1. Digital literacy campaigns should be customized and implemented for different age groups, genders, social categories and education levels.

2. For citizens to better understand policies, and have informed opinions on them for better accountability, more infotainment content on policy matters should be developed and disseminated through social media.

3. Digital Dignity Volunteers at the grassroots level are required to upkeep sanity and sanctity on the social media platforms.

4. Digital technology should be well utilized to make governance more transparent, innovative and participatory (see Udaaharans section).

Inclusive Democracy

1. Evidence shows that gender quotas have helped enhance women's participation in political governance forums[4]. G20 countries that have not adopted such quotas as per the law should take steps to do so.

2. Governments should incentivize the participation of citizens from social and economic sections of the population via non-monetary means in the decision-making process.

3. There is a need for democratic empowerment of the most vulnerable sections of society, for example through voter education of specially-abled individuals, which also use role models from the community of PwDs.

4. Migrants should be empowered to participate in the democratic process. In Australia, the government has invested on educating the migrants in several languages through the Democracy Ambassadors Program. In this process, migrant women have become the most active participants in voting.

Democratising Development

To make development more responsive, participatory mechanisms should be adopted at the local or hyper-local levels for enabling local communities to participate actively in decision making, resource allocation, implementation and monitoring of services in various domains such as health, education, etc. This section provides several best practices and Udaaharans that shed light on such mechanisms adopted in India, Brazil, Thailand, and other countries.

Udaaharans

Digital Platform for Community Participation

Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, Govt of Karnataka, India is contemplating live streaming Gram Sabha (Village Assembly) on social media platforms. This would enable the community members out of the village to join these assemblies from wherever they are and have their say as well.

Community Monitoring for Strengthening Responsible Participation Leveraging ICT – Experience of Arogya Shreni in Karnataka

GRAAM, India has pioneered a technology-based citizen participation model, bringing community ranking cards for strengthening community participation and accountability of primary health care services in the states of Karnataka ('ArogyaShreni') Arogyashreni - an action research project implemented by GRAAM across Mysore District of Karnataka covering 112 rural Primary Health Centres (PHC)s, involved building the capacity of communities for monitoring the PHCs with the aid of technology. The community representatives responded to a questionnaire about the availability and quality of services of their PHCs using Interactive Voice Response technology (IVRS) through their mobile phones. The responses were analyzed and used to rank PHCs in Mysore district. The innovation in the whole process of community participation described above lies in how the project leverages simple communication technology for unbiased, free and efficient monitoring and empowering communities.

International Best Practice

1. The Ostbelgien Model of Belgium providing a permanent Citizen's Council

In 2019, a permanent Citizens' Council was established in Ostbelgien (Eastern Belgium).

24 randomly selected citizens form the Citizens' Council[5].

Every six months, one-third of the cohort of members of the council is rotated out, to be replaced with randomly selected citizens.

The Citizen's Panel can also constitute ad-hoc Citizens' Panels on the most pressing policy issues of their choice.

The obligation of the authorities to consider the recommendations of the Citizen's Panel is a noteworthy feature of the system. The Ostbelgien model is thus an example where citizens are given a genuine voice in setting the policy agenda and empowered to actively explore issues of their choice.

2. Participatory Budgeting for the participation of and enhancing allocation of resources towards the poor in Porto Alegre Brazil[6]

Participatory Budgeting is a participatory tool to allow local residents to shape decision-making and allocation of resources in their areas. Participatory Budgeting (PB) in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil, is widely considered to be the most noteworthy use of PB in the world.

PB in Porto Alegre involves three streams of meetings: neighborhood assemblies, thematic assemblies, and meetings of delegates for citywide coordinating sessions.

Through the PB process, each of the 16 districts in the city gives rankings of priorities at the end of the deliberations. They also elect delegates who proceed to the Council of the Participatory Budget (COP) with the districts' suggestions. In the PB process, women, ethnic minorities, low-income, and low-education participants were overrepresented, and as a result, funding shifted to the poorest parts of the city.

3. Institutionalized Engagement of CSOs with Health Systems: National Health Assembly of Thailand

In Thailand, the National Health Assembly has helped build civil society's capacity to engage with the policymaking process[7].

The National Health Assembly in Thailand is based on the concept of the 'triangle that moves the mountain'. The 3 points of the triangle, all of whom have to be consulted in the policy process, are the 'government sector; civil society, communities, and the population ('people's sector'); and the academia, think tanks, and research institutions ('knowledge sector'). (WHO, 2021).

The National Health Commission Office associated with the NHA invests efforts in building the capacity of the 'people's sector' so that they are able to better and more effectively engage in the NHA and other participatory spaces. The NHA has obtained legal status and its sustainability as a participatory structure is a lesson for other health systems[8].

4. People's Committee to Communitise Development

School Development and Monitoring Committees (SDMCs) in the public schools of Karnataka, India are a useful platform for community and parental participation not only in school management but also in school development and monitoring. However, in practice, the functioning of these committees often lack inclusion and participation and is dominated by head teachers. In this context, GRAAM, India under its **Sugamya Shiksha** program, has taken up the sensitization and capacity building of stakeholders for more active, inclusive, and participatory SDMCs.

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Special Mention

The world views of civil society organisations of various countries evolve along with the ethos of their respective countries. Naturally, they reflect the civilisational values and principles of their respective countries more prominently. It may be noted, in this backdrop, that the following three Policy Briefs prepared by the respective Working Groups on Sewa, Lifestyle for Environment or LiFE, and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam are reflective of the world view as well as the ethos essentially that of the Civil Society Organisations from India, the host country. Notwithstanding reservations of CSOs of some other countries, briefs on these themes have been included in this policy pack with a view to generating a larger conversation in the larger interest of the global community.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

(One Earth One Family One Future)

We envision a future where people from diverse backgrounds co-exist with mutual respect and understanding.

अयं बन्धुरयं नेतिगणना लघुचेतसाम्।
उदारचरितानाम् तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्॥

(This one is my relative and that one is not – this is the calculation of small-minded people. But for noble-minded people, the entire cosmos and all beings in the planet Earth are but one family – Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.)

Mankind has exploited Mother Earth and its beings to a point where extinction seems to be an inevitable outcome, if corrective measures are not undertaken immediately.

The spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam derived from the Maha Upanishads of India, envisages a world where the virtues of empathy, mutual respect and harmonious coexistence would guide mankind in protecting itself from extinction by restoring the beatitude of Mother Earth.

It would be pertinent to note that the common man would require some orientation to attain the desired level of calmness that is essential for a human being to appreciate the subtlety contained in the Upanishadic philosophy. The intuitive Rishis, the thinkers of the oriental world, realised this truth early on and successfully institutionalised its practice by connecting all day-to-day actions of the common folk with the divine – thereby ensuring that Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam becomes a way of life!

The recommendations included in the Policy Brief have been framed with the same objective of creating a platform for people to practise this concept seamlessly as part of their day-to-day lives. We wish to submit that if effective steps are taken to implement them over a short term, these measures would be pivotal to the achievement of the transformative vision in about 25 years.

Vision

We envision a future where people from diverse backgrounds will co-exist with mutual respect and understanding. The declaration Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam finds its origin in the 'Maha Upanishad', which the 'Rishis' (visionaries), of the past in India, realised and shared for the welfare of mankind. This essentially means that the whole of creation is one family, and it calls upon mankind to set aside all differences and live in harmony with all other forms of creation.
It is a statement of fact and not a mere ancient saying of ornamental importance. While diverse knowledge systems speak of the essential oneness of all entities, human beings, and nations are divided along multiple identities. The time has come for us to hand over an undivided, integrated, and harmonious world to our children.

Most ancient civilizations focused on preserving mother earth for thousands of years. However, gripped by selfishness and greed, mankind has become negligent and irresponsible to the point where living on the planet

has become difficult. This situation must change. To protect mankind from extinction, it is time for us to commence a measured U-turn.

The recommendations included in this Policy Brief have been framed with the objective of enabling the common people to internalise and practise the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam seamlessly as part of their day-to-day lives, and we believe that this transformative vision can be achieved in about 25 years. However, the success of this project will be dependent on the effectiveness of its implementation over the next two to three years.

Together, we have the power to shape a narrative that fosters inclusivity, compassion, and shared responsibility for the betterment of our global community. To promote discussions and deliberations around this concept, the Working Group conducted 75 seminars and conferences across countries, featuring international experts from various fields, on nine major sub-themes. The speakers who dwelt on these sub-themes included public figures, bureaucrats, educators, scientists, environmentalists, sportspersons, artists, and sages.

Recommendations

As explained, humankind's most ancient philosophical values advocate the spirit of co-existence with love, mutual respect and acceptance. Thanks to the vision of its Rishis, India has been successfully able to put this into practice in all aspects of their lives. India's initiatives towards extending support in the form of vaccines to multiple countries during Covid as well as during natural calamities are

examples of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in practice. People across the world can build the spirit of co-existence in their lives but for that to happen, sustained effort will have to be made in the form of education, discussion and deliberation over the coming years. The following five key recommendations are suggested apart from subtheme-based recommendations, for consideration and implementation by the G20:

1. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam should be a permanent Working Group in future G20 summits, involving discussions and deliberations as part of its agenda.

2. Each G20 nation should form a 10-member Core Committee on Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (CCVK). The Committee should comprise influential members from the respective countries for immediate engagement with the citizens on the theme of co-existence and civilizational appreciation. These discussions can be undertaken on the nine sub-themes and beyond. After that, it can be implemented in those countries in a phased manner in alignment with their civilization values.

3. Every G20 nation should select five ambassadors for each sub-theme, who can be exposed to online orientation programs and one physical orientation before the 2024 Summit in Brazil.

4. The CCVK of the G20 nations should have bi-monthly online meetings and one physical meeting in Brazil at least two months before the G20 2024 Summit for further action.

5. India has, over many centuries, successfully practiced connectivity with the divine in all aspects of social life, and this worked very well for the nation, despite diverse lifestyles.

For every Indian, connectivity with God is a way of life – every day begins with early morning prayers, and every action/function performed during the day – from something as simple as buying new clothes, vehicles, land, or even a pen, is treated as an offering unto the Almighty.

Other G20 nations can consider connecting various aspects of their social life with the divine or any other higher ideology that is culturally acceptable to their society.

Our recommendations under sub-themes:

1. Dharma (Religion/Spirituality)

- Governments, educational institutions, and CSOs should actively encourage public dialogues and discussions on the importance of co-existence with nature.

- Representatives of different religious institutions should assemble on a common platform to discuss matters impacting the lives of ordinary people and suggest constructive solutions to promote harmony.

- The G20 nations should consider taking initiatives enabling their citizens to shift their focus toward duties rather than aggressively pursuing their rights.

The G20 countries should consider adopting appropriate Resolutions that would facilitate changes to their constitutions to foster tolerance for all religions.

2. Ecology and Earth Revering Traditions

- Governments should proactively adopt responsible measures to aid people to live together, such as establishing a minimum family size for property acquisition and providing assistance programs for joint families.

- The G20 nations should consider amending their respective constitutions for providing constitutional protection to the animal and plant kingdoms, to ensure lawful and legitimate usage by the human population.

- Members of society should be encouraged to go back to the era of 'circular usage'-reduce, reuse, and recycle, rather than 'use and throw.'

- The Government, jointly with CSOs, should pro-actively introduce programmes to educate the urban population about the sustainable practices adopted by the indigenous communities, through experiential learning.

3. Art, Culture, and Literature

- Different art forms, focusing on exchanging knowledge and best practices, should be included in the education curriculum for students at different stages.

- A cultural festival on the civilizational celebrations of G20 countries should be included as part of the ongoing G20 activities as an annual feature.

- The G20 nations should also actively focus on art exchange programs involving established practitioners of various art forms across all the countries.

4. Education

- The G20 countries should consider including a common subject on co-existence as part of the school curriculum. Efforts should be made for the leaders from these countries to interact with the students on this topic at least once a year.

- School curriculum should include specific portions to acquaint children on the importance of need-based living, varied art forms and cultural practices.

- Schools can run special recognition programs to incentivise children who exhibit prudence in their consumption patterns, exhibit tolerance towards others from diverse backgrounds and show sensitivity towards the animal and plant kingdoms.

- Children should be encouraged to learn multiple global languages that will ensure a seamless connection with the worldwide community.

- Educational institutions should actively focus on the attitudinal development of the learners by including spiritual lessons as part of education.

5. Sports

- The G20 countries should embrace opportunities to appreciate talent by forming unified teams comprising players from multiple nations in sporting events. This G20 league approach will promote admiration for skill rather than fostering mere rivalry.

- Initiatives to ensure easy mobility of sportspersons across geographies, like a more straightforward visa process, should be guaranteed.

- The G20 countries should encourage cross-country training programs for athletes to train with each other, enabling them to learn about people and cultures.

6. Business and Economy

- There should be a more significant representation and broader consultation from across countries on ESG-related matters. The G20 nations should broad base the platform to ensure effective compliance and prevent the weaponization of any kind.

- The G20 nations should consider constituting a disaster relief fund to support the sustainability of the pandemic affected smaller and poorer nations to ensure an uninterrupted supply of food and resources to the deserving sections of the world population.

Udaaharans

Conserving Natural Resource

- Faith and conservation go hand-in-hand. For thousands of years, temple ponds have played an essential part in water conservation efforts in India. Not only did they serve as a source of water supply, but they also served to recharge groundwater. The spiritual connectedness of Bharatiyas with nature is evident in that every temple is associated with a tank, tree, and local history. The temple tree is considered a single genetic resource for conserving species diversity. Further extending this concept, entire groves of trees (like kavus in Kerala and kaadus in Tamil Nadu) have been declared as places of worship, thereby conserving nature.

- Indigenous communities like the Bishnois, Bhils, and Swadhyayas have shown how parched lands can be converted into lush fields. The Saurashtra region of Gujarat constantly suffers droughts where the deepest wells run dry. The Swadhyayas harvested rainwater into inter-connected wells that were dug at strategic spots. They mobilized the villagers to build Nirmal Nirs (collection wells) that recharged the wells and raised the water table.

A Way of Life that has enabled Conservation

- 18% of the world population lives in India, but India is responsible for just 3% of total greenhouse gas emissions.

- Despite having only one-fifth of the world's agricultural land, India can manage its food needs and supply food to the world, primarily because of traditional and responsible food habits. The per capita meat consumption of Indians is only about 3.1 kg per head compared to 84 kg per head in the European Union. Cereals form the bulk of the Indian plate. Combined with faith-based practices that restrict eating meat on certain days and seasons, sustainability has been a lived tradition.

- Living practices in India have directly contributed to economic and infrastructure requirements. The concept of living together with family and extended family has led to the average number of occupants in a house being 4.9 per home. If this number were to drop to 3.9 per home, India would need 51 million more homes. A living practice has thus unburdened the government and the world.

Providing Hope During a Crisis

- Amidst the pandemic's peak in January 2021, when developed nations stockpiled vaccines, India emerged as a beacon of generosity. The country selflessly gifted its indigenous Covid-19 vaccines, medical supplies, and medications to over 100 nations worldwide.

- Operation Dost - During the disastrous earthquake at Turkiye and Syria in February 2023, India was one of the first nations to extend support towards search and rescue operations, in addition to a Field Hospital set up by the Indian Army.

- The Government proactively facilitated food security for vulnerable sections of society through the Public Distribution System (PDS). From April 2020 to December 2022, the government provided 5 kg (11 lb.) of subsidized food grains monthly, costing approximately $47 billion, to underprivileged families as part of the program. Additionally, under the National Food Security Act, nearly 75% of the rural and 50% of the urban population received highly subsidized food grains, with the government spending two trillion rupees ($24.16 billion).

Resource Conservation

- To sensitize and create awareness among people to conserve resources and adopt a need-based way of life, an eminent 3 times Grammy award winner has popularized ReWear4Earth. Repeating your clothes to make a fashion statement is sustainable fashion – Fashion can be trendy twice.

Admiration through Sport

- The Sporting Leagues in cricket, soccer, badminton, and hockey have allowed sportspersons to develop a sense of togetherness and admiration for each other's skill sets and talent.

Sewa

(Sense of Service, Philanthropy and Volunteerism)

Civil society globally thrives on values of empathy, selflessness, and mission-orientation. It is designed for sustainability, executed by volunteers, and driven by communities. This scalable and sustainable model embraces the idea of selfless service, known as "Sewa" in multiple cultures across the world. Our working group aims to conceptualize a Sewa-model of development, uniting individuals on Earth as one family with the tools of volunteerism and philanthropy.

Global Relevance of the Working Group

1. Re-imagining Development: The Sewa working group advocates a regenerative development paradigm that goes beyond the limits of sustainable development. It emphasizes community-driven approaches, resource preservation, and optimum utilization based on the values of selfless service for the ecosystem by keeping a spiritual perspective of development.

2. Nurturing Civic Engagement: The working group fosters empathy, selflessness, and mission-orientation within civil society organizations. It cultivates a culture of service and philanthropy, instilling a sense of responsibility towards communities and the planet.

3. Integrating Traditional Wisdom: Recognizing the significance of traditional wisdom and cultural values, the working group incorporates local development needs, goals, and practices. Rooted in the inherent concept of selfless service, it harnesses diverse cultural perspectives for a more inclusive and holistic approach to societal progress.

4. Strengthening Civil Society's Role: The working group expands the role of civil society organizations beyond implementation. It promotes community-owned and driven development through philanthropy and volunteerism. By engaging with governments, international organizations, and stakeholders, it shapes development agendas, delivers quality services, and drives transformative change at all levels.

5. In summary, the Sewa Working Group envisions a development paradigm centred on selfless service, empathy, and sustainability. By embracing community-led approaches, integrating traditional wisdom, and strengthening civil society's role, we can create a more inclusive and regenerative world. The working group provides a platform for CSOs to collaborate, advocate for change, and contribute to the development agenda, ultimately fostering a sense of service and selfless love for one another within societies across the globe.

Policy Recommendations

Re-imagining & Redefining Development

1. **Shifting from GDP to an Ecosystem-Centric Index:** Recognize the limitations of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a sole measure of development and prioritize the development of an ecosystem-centric index. This index should consider the ecological balance, sustainable resource utilization, and preservation of biodiversity. It should measure the well-being of both human societies and the natural environment, fostering a holistic approach to development.

2. **Strengthening Bottom-Up Development:** Encourage governments to adopt policy frameworks that prioritize community engagement and participation in decision-making processes. This can be achieved through regular consultations, participatory rural/urban appraisals, and participatory budgeting exercises. Establish mechanisms for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to actively engage in policy formulation, implementation, and monitoring at the local level. This can include the creation of advisory committees or the inclusion of CSO representatives in relevant government bodies.

3. **Promoting Cultural Sensitivity and Localization:** Encourage governments to design and implement social schemes that take into account the unique cultural practices and traditions of local communities. This can help ensure that policies are more effective and resonate with the target population. Support research and documentation of local practices and traditional knowledge that contribute to community development. This can be done through partnerships between government institutions, academic institutions, and CSOs.
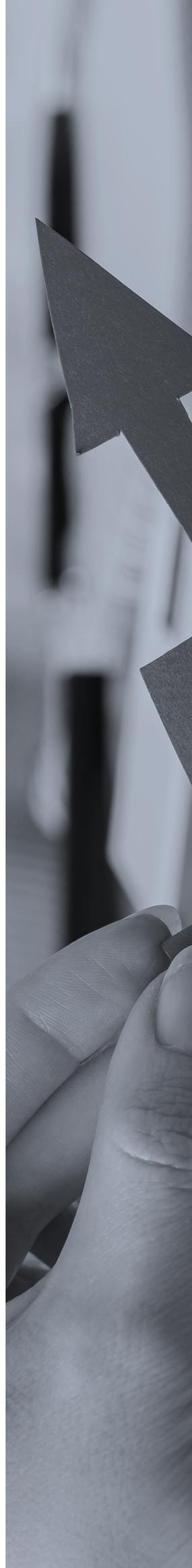
Role of Civil Society in Development

1. **Strengthening Civil Society's Role in Policy Formulation:** Expand the role of civil society beyond ground-level implementation to meaningful participation in policy tables. Ensure their representation and active engagement in decision-making processes at local, national, and international levels. Foster inclusive and participatory governance models that value the input and expertise of civil society organizations in shaping development policies.

2. **Promote multistakeholder partnerships for social development:** Governments should facilitate and promote multistakeholder partnerships for social development projects involving pooling of resources from government agencies and corporate social responsibility initiatives, policy design and contextualization by civil society organizations, academic best practices, and active participation from the corporate sector. Such collaborations can leverage the strengths of each stakeholder and result in more effective and sustainable social development outcomes.

3. **Cultivating a Sense of Responsibility and Reducing Dependency:** Integrate civic education and awareness programs into school curricula to promote a sense of responsibility, active citizenship, and community engagement from an early age with a sense of service towards the society. Encourage programs and initiatives that empower individuals and communities to address local challenges, such as community gardens, cooperative enterprises, and self-help groups. Governments can provide support through capacity building, technical assistance, and access to markets.

Strengthening Civil Society Organizations

1. **Real-Time Information Sharing and Collaboration:**
   Create a digitized dashboard that provides real-time public access to comprehensive information on CSOs' performance and integrates activities from the government and civil society. Establish district-level administration platforms for streamlined coordination of public good initiatives.

2. **Transparent Funding and Performance Assessment**:
   Develop indicators for each Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) to measure CSOs' performance and promote transparency in funding allocation. Collaborate with CSOs and subject matter experts to create a rating system for social development projects based on community involvement, women's participation, volunteerism, civic engagement, environmental sustainability, and outcome/impact goals.

3. **Streamlined Documentation and Reporting:**
   Minimize documentation requirements for fund allocation to CSOs and simplify reporting formats for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Consolidate and standardize reporting formats to reduce administrative burden. Allocate funding specifically for organizational development and capacity building.

4. **Recognition for Seasonal Volunteer Groups:**
Establish a system to recognize and provide temporary registration to volunteer groups that work during specific periods, such as cultural celebrations or important national days. These groups should be eligible for tax benefits for a shorter period with fewer regulations, recognizing their significant contribution to nation-building and encouraging sustained participation in community service initiatives.

5. **Global Training and Certification System:**
Create a global training body or certification system for individuals in the social sector, providing standardized skills and qualifications recognized internationally.
This system enhances mobility, encourages cross-border collaborations, and improves employment prospects in the social sector.

6. **Clear Classification System:**
Implement a clear classification system to differentiate between development organizations, CSOs, and NGOs. This classification system enables accurate identification and understanding of active organizations, facilitating targeted policies and support mechanisms

Sewa in Education System

1. **Education Institutes as Catalysts for Local Development with Sewa:**
Reimagine educational institutions as centres for Sewa, creating responsible global citizens. The curriculum and extra-curricular activities should instill a sense of responsibility and Sewa Bhaav (selfless service) in students. Engage with community organizations to address local challenges, fostering ownership and social responsibility.

2. **Formal and Informal Sewa in Daily Life:**
Encourage organized Sewa through programs like the National Service Scheme (NSS) and volunteering initiatives. Promote informal acts of Sewa in daily life, such as kindness towards animals, serving elders, and assisting those in need. Recognize and reward volunteer services, highlighting the importance of community-building efforts.

3. **Teacher Training for Value-Based Learning:**
Provide comprehensive training for teachers to deliver value-based education, emphasizing empathy, compassion, and Sewa principles. Incorporate service-learning projects and activities into lesson plans. Incentivize teacher trainees to engage in Sewa activities during their induction period, fostering practical experience and understanding.

4. **Parental Guidance for Inculcating Sewa**:
Guide parents to instill Sewa values through their behavior and storytelling. Encourage involvement in family and community service activities, fostering a culture of Sewa at home.

5. **Integrating Sewa as a Mindset Shifter:**
Shift the education focus to emotional growth and Sewa, moving beyond material achievements. Prioritize values, ethics, and responsibility through curriculum revisions.

   a. Fostering a Shift from Ego-centric to Eco-centric Thinking:
   Promote Sewa as a transformative tool for shifting mindsets towards caring for the environment and society. Emphasize interconnectedness, gratitude, and sustainable living.

b. Sewa as Interdisciplinary Thinking Rooted in Empathy: Integrate Sewa across subjects, demonstrating its relevance to various disciplines. Foster holistic understanding of social issues and problem-solving through compassion.

6. **Promoting Hands-on Learning for Sewa:** Incorporate field visits and purposeful learning experiences that cultivate abundance, divinity, and resilience. Address mental health and build a compassionate society.

a. Peer Teaching and Education Imparting: Encourage peer teaching initiatives, where college students impart education to underserved children. Promote mutual learning, empathy, and responsibility.

b. Neighbourhood Sewa to Encourage Small Sewa Initiatives: Promote small-scale Sewa initiatives within schools, such as mentoring and local service projects. Develop responsibility, leadership skills, and awareness of individual impact.

c. Activity-Based Learning: Promote Sewa through age-appropriate activities, stories, and discussions that foster empathy and compassion.

Globalization of Selfless Service, i.e., Sewa

1. **International Year of Sewa:** Declare a specific year as the "International Year of Sewa" to promote and recognize the importance of Sewa activities globally. This year-long campaign will serve as a platform to raise awareness, foster collaboration, and inspire individuals and organizations to engage in meaningful service-oriented initiatives.

2. **International Day of Sewa:** Designate a specific date as the "International Day of Sewa" to commemorate and celebrate the spirit of selfless service globally. This annual observance will provide an opportunity to showcase diverse Sewa activities, recognize outstanding contributors, and inspire individuals to engage in acts of service in their respective communities.

3. **International Sewa Awards:** Institute international Sewa awards to recognize individuals, organizations, and initiatives that demonstrate exceptional commitment and impact in the field of Sewa. These awards will not only celebrate achievements but also inspire others to follow suit and make a difference through their own service endeavors.

Promoting Volunteerism

1. **Individual Social Responsibility (ISR):** Introduce the concept of Individual Social Responsibility (ISR) where every citizen is encouraged to actively engage in volunteer activities. Incentives and recognition should be provided to individuals who participate in volunteering efforts. Pilot programs can be implemented to assess the effectiveness of ISR initiatives.

2. **Integrating Volunteerism into Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Encourage companies to incorporate volunteerism as a core element of their CSR activities. Emphasize that volunteering should go beyond office-based initiatives and encourage employees to actively participate in community-based projects and activities.

3. **Leveraging Volunteerism for Social Development Programs:** Governments should recognize the power of volunteerism in driving social development programs. Establish platforms, such as National Youth Corps (NYC) or Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK), to mobilize and engage volunteers in activities aimed at addressing social challenges. Provide necessary

support and resources to facilitate the implementation of these programs.

4. **Legal Frameworks for Volunteerism for Working Professionals:** Develop and enhance legal frameworks that support and facilitate volunteering activities. This includes providing incentives, protections, and recognition for volunteers, as well as creating a conducive environment for organisations to engage in volunteer work. It can also be extended to bring provisions for volunteer leave, recognition of volunteer work in employment records and legal protections for volunteers.

5. **Behavioural Change Research on Volunteerism:** Collect comprehensive data on volunteering to identify levers of change and understand the impact of volunteer efforts. The information can help shape policies and strategies that promote and expand volunteering initiatives. This can be achieved through surveys, research studies, and collaboration with relevant organisations.

Deepening Philanthropy

1. **Prioritize and incentivize CSR spending in backward areas:** Governments should encourage companies to prioritize and allocate a significant portion of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds to backward areas, rather than focusing solely on resource-rich areas. This will help address regional disparities and promote balanced development.

2. **Support tech-enabled giving platforms:** Governments should support the expansion of the donor pool by encouraging the use of technology-enabled giving platforms such as crowdfunding platforms and social stock exchanges. These platforms can facilitate easier and more transparent access to philanthropic funding, thereby encouraging increased participation from a wider range of donors.

3. **Foster a regulatory framework that promotes human and social capital development:** The regulatory framework should encourage philanthropy and giving that not only focuses on investing in capital infrastructure but also prioritizes the creation of human and social capital. This can be achieved by supporting initiatives that enhance education, healthcare, skills development, and social empowerment.

4. **Explore philanthropic social investments:** Governments should explore and promote philanthropic social investments, such as zero coupons and zero principle instruments, which bridge the gap between traditional donations and investments in the stock exchange. These innovative financial instruments can attract more private capital for social development projects while still generating positive social impact.

5. **Promote the community philanthropy model:** Promote and scale up the community philanthropy model, which emphasizes mutual support and collaboration within communities. Governments should encourage the establishment and growth of community foundations that can mobilize local resources and address community-specific challenges. This model encourages self-reliance and

sustainable approaches to social development.

6. **Promoting Self-Sustainability in Civil Society Organizations:** Governments should promote self-sufficiency in finances for NGOs, with enabling and encouraging laws to promote generating self-sufficing income through sustainable means. Encouraging self-reliance among NGOs will contribute to the long-term sustainability of their work.

Udaaharans

♦ **Shivganga, Madhya Pradesh, India:** Shivganga is a movement based out of the Bhil Tribals of Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh to restore the ecosystem to promote sustainable living through holistic village development. With 12,000+ youth as community volunteers constructing 160,000 contour trenches conserving 8700 million litres of water, planting 500,000+ trees, Shivganga represents the values of volunteerism, community philanthropy, sense of service and cultural sensitivity.

◆ **Sewa International Inc, Houston, United States of America:**
Sewa USA is a Hindu-faith-based humanitarian organization specializing in disaster response, based out of the United States of America, with service projects in 12+ countries. As a major civil society organization, Sewa USA has 150,000 registered volunteers, and donors who wish to experience oneness through selfless service or sewa. With a tech-enabled platform for fundraising and multi-stakeholder partnerships for social development projects, Sewa USA represents the values of sewa and selfless service.

◆ **Fyunli Kauthig, Uttarakhand, India:** Fyunli Kauthig is a celebration of womanhood in the state of Uttarakhand in India. With 5000+ women participants across 400+ villages in the Himalayas, this festival celebrates the sense of service women exhibit for their environment, land and other natural resources. Recognized even in the textbooks in the United Kingdom, this festival represents the values of community participation, eco-centric development, and Bottom-up Development.

◆ **Baripada, Maharashtra, India:** As a winner of the India Biodiversity Awards by UNDP, Baripada exemplifies the community-ownership model for environment sustainability. The villagers, through community participation, have planted 1100+ acres of forest improving the groundwater levels, precipitation rate, and natural resource availability in the village. Baripada exemplifies Individual Social Responsibility (ISR), Bottom-up Development and Community Philanthropy.

◆ **Youth For Seva, Karnataka, India:** As a pre-eminent volunteer engagement platform, Youth For Seva has engaged 1,10,000+ volunteers across 250+ Civil Society Organizations across 15+ states of India. With its unique, selfless service-based volunteer engagement model, Youth for Seva exemplifies corporate volunteerism, hyper-local problem-solving and inter-disciplinary thinking.

◆ **Food for Life, ISKON, Global:** ISKCON, or the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, is a global spiritual organization that promotes the practice of Bhakti

Yoga. ISKCON runs its Food for Life program to provide nutritious vegetarian meals to millions of people around the world who are suffering from poverty, hunger, or disaster. With over two billion meals in over 60 countries in the last 50 years, it is one of the largest food relief organizations in the world. ISKON exemplifies multi-stakeholder partnerships, prioritized CSR, and Selfless Service

Conclusion

In conclusion, the policy recommendations put forth by the Sewa - Sense of Service, Philanthropy, and Volunteerism working group for the C20 engagement group aim to foster a development paradigm centered on selfless service, empathy, and sustainability.

By prioritizing an ecosystem-centric index, strengthening bottom-up development, promoting cultural sensitivity, and integrating traditional wisdom, the group envisions a more inclusive and regenerative world.

Furthermore, by expanding the role of civil society in policy formulation, promoting multistakeholder partnerships, and cultivating a sense of responsibility and reducing dependency, the working group seeks to strengthen civil society's contribution to development.

The recommendations also emphasize the importance of integrating Sewa principles into the education system, fostering a global movement of selfless service, promoting volunteerism, deepening philanthropy, and promoting self-sustainability in civil society organizations.

These recommendations are supported by examples of successful initiatives such as Shivganga, Sewa USA, Fyunli Kauthig, Baripada, and Youth For Seva, which demonstrate the values and principles advocated by the working group.

Ultimately, the working group provides a platform for civil society organizations to collaborate, advocate for change, and contribute to the development agenda, with the goal of fostering a sense of service and selfless love for one another within societies across the globe.

LiFE

(Lifestyle for Environment)

There exist numerous international multilateral framework conventions directed at reducing human impacts on the environment. These framework conventions provide scientific, economic, and political measures for environmental governance. However, the effectiveness of these treaties is limited despite the enormous resources spent and efforts put in by the global community in creating and implementing these conventions[1].

Increase in the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) missions, rising global temperature and sea level, pollution of air, water and soil, the unprecedented rate of biodiversity extinction and desertification and many more are the symptoms of the global environmental problem. Most of the international framework conventions for the environment are aimed at reducing these symptoms. Unless there are concrete global actions towards the root causes, addressing symptoms will have limited results.

Voluntary contribution by individual citizens and collectives of individuals in the form of change in lifestyle-extractive to sustainable consumption-is important in addressing the environmental problems.

Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)

LiFE is rooted in culture, traditions, customary practices, and (environmentally) conscious contemporary practices.

India has always had a legacy of environment consciousness. The Indian sub-continent has historically 'lived with nature' and promoted this environmental consciousness through its oral traditions. Coined by the Indian Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, Lifestyle for Environment or LiFE is India's contribution to find the solutions towards climate change and environmental degradation.

The larger discussions on climate change and environmental degradation seem to have reached a stalemate with development policies of States. However, addressing this challenge requires a comprehensive approach which covers education to values, and from lifestyle to developmental philosophy. LiFE, as envisioned by the Indian PM, focuses on behavioural change. Respect for nature, the judicious use of resources, reducing our needs and living within ones means have all been important aspects of both India's traditions and its present-day efforts. As Prime Minister Modi has

said, respect for nature is an integral part of our culture and protection of environment comes naturally to us. The present generation, has the responsibility to act as a trustee of the rich natural wealth for future generations.

LiFE complements scientific, political, and economic measures currently undertaken towards global environmental governance. It has close linkages with several SDGs, particularly SDG 12 pertaining to sustainable production and consumption. The global discussion on sustainable production and consumption has started comparatively recently with Italian G20 Presidency and the European Union (EU) hosting an online workshop on circular fashion on 7 June 2021. But

India has traditionally been practising this approach for centuries.

Civil society organizations are important facilitators in such situations to bring the community experiences from different countries in the global environmental frameworks.

The Foundations of LiFE

Panch Tatva (the five fundamental elements) *– They are Akash (Space), Vayu (Air), Agni (Energy/Fire), Jal (Water) and, Bhumi (Earth). These five elements form the foundation of the universe. The Atharva Veda emphasizes this fact and states that the creation of the universe is a result of the combination of these five essential elements. It is said that our existence is intricately connected to these five basic elements.*

Components of LiFE in Previous G20 Summits

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced the Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE) movement at COP 26 of the Climate Convention in Glasgow, UK in 2021. He called upon the global community of individuals and institutions to drive LiFE as an international mass movement towards

'mindful and deliberate utilisation, instead of mindless and destructive consumption'.

Environment and climate have been part of the G20 discussion process for a significant time. The last 5 Presidencies from 2017 to 2021 have reiterated

commitments towards the protection and conservation of the environment and securing the future of our planet. These commitments are in the form of improving climate finance, technology transfer, switching over to renewable energy etc.

G20 Indonesia 2022 declaration integrated nutrition, poverty, development and conservation commitments. The G20 Indonesia Environment Ministers recognized cultural diversity as a source of sustainable living. The chair summary of ministerial meeting has specific reflection towards some aspects of lifestyle and environment linkage. Continuing support towards the G20 platform for the localization of SDG is another commitment which is linked to lifestyle-related aspects. Agriculture ministers reiterated support for the technical platform on measurement and reduction of food loss and waste.

Life Working Group of C20 under India's Presidency

LiFE has been introduced for the first time as a working group theme of C20 under India's G20 presidency. It is being presented at a time when global environmental governance needs cultural and value-based transformation.

The working group deliberated on sub themes: grassroots innovations, Panchatatva, food, Indic wisdom, fashion, water, habitat, waste, industry, education, and nature-based solutions and conducted two outreach programs specially meant for community engagement (Higher

education student engagement program and LiFE, the Nandurbar way). The deliberations of the group in the form of conferences, workshops, plenaries, presentations, and web meetings were attended by various stakeholders. These deliberations covered various facets of human life and brought about recommendations pertaining to both life vision and lifestyle.

The deliberations were focused on formulating certain principles, and recommendations, building an ecosystem of CSOs and learning alliance that will continue working on LiFE in the future G20 presidencies and in other multilateral forums. It is now building the required momentum to individual and community efforts towards sustainable lifestyles and ultimately towards Sumangalam, the global well-being.

Following are the recommendations of LiFE working group based on its sub-thematic deliberations

Recommendations and Implications

1. To prepare a value-based sustainability framework to guide and assess the progress of countries.

   • Global wellbeing i.e., Sumangalam will be the universal principle of this framework. This framework will include a set of values, concepts, instruments and actionable for individuals and communities. This will bring a much-required holistic perspective to the subject of sustainability. The set of values would comprise of compassion, gratitude, respecting diversity, a sense of responsibility, decentralisation, harmony, using local resources (and not drawing from far-off places) etc. Behavioural indicators, goals and levels of progress can be defined from these sets of values.

   • LiFE along with the value-based sustainability framework aims to bring in a paradigm shift from a rights-based approach to a responsibility-based approach in global environmental governance.

2. To create a knowledge repository on LiFE: G20 member countries should set up a knowledge repository of good practices - of individuals, communities and business entities. Such knowledge repositories will be helpful in developing guidelines to bring out changes in individual lifestyles, and community lifestyles so that ecological and carbon footprint can be reduced.

3. To recognize grassroots innovations as an important asset to humanity and as a separate category in all kinds of international policy formulations. Grassroots innovators have been an important asset of humanity. They are assisting in improving resource efficiency and the effectiveness of the circular economy. Their role in the three 'R's - reuse, recycle and repair - out of the six 'R's of the circular economy is important. Recognizing their contribution and linking them in addressing environmental problems is urgently required.

4. To promote and encourage local and seasonal foods for local consumers: G20 member countries should promote and encourage consumption of locally grown,

processed, stored and value-added foods. It is desirable for human health and for the environment also. Local production – local consumption saves transportation and energy also. Local food consumed locally may support the conservation of local varieties of crop varieties. Seasonal food has less preservatives and is healthier for the populace.

5. To encourage sustainable green-fashion over fast-fashion: The global fashion industry is estimated to be responsible for 10% of global carbon emissions – more than international flights and maritime shipping combined. G20 member countries should encourage and promote sustainable-green fashion which is all-inclusive. There should be a thrust on products, processes, activities, and stakeholders (policymakers, brands, consumers) aiming to achieve a carbon-neutral fashion sector based on equality, social justice, animal welfare, and ecological integrity.

6. To encourage and incentivize mindful consumption and responsible disposal: In most of the developing and emerging countries,

waste collection and segregation value chains remain largely informal. The linkage between formal and informal waste collection and segregation should be strengthened. Lack of awareness and education hinder effective waste management. Promoting pride and responsibility and incentivizing responsible disposal in keeping cities clean can help overcome this problem.

7. To recognize that switching over to LiFE is a socio-emotional-ethical-spiritual exercise: Connection and reconnection with Nature must begin from the foundational stage (i.e., ages 3 to 8 years) itself through practical, real-life experiences. Practical and experiential, activity-based learning with hands-on engagement is required at all levels.

   i). To promote and adopt Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

8. NbS are well-known techniques (for example, sacred landscapes, traditional agroforestry etc.) with an emphasis on local-level adaptation and in many cases, building upon the traditional wisdom and techniques of communities.

- When implemented in a proper way, they have multiplier effects such as integrated watershed management resulting in soil and water conservation, improving agriculture productivity, enhancing tree cover, and strengthening livelihoods in a cost-effective manner.

9. To mandate the implementation of circular economy principles in all economic sectors.

- G20 member countries should make it mandatory in all sectors of their economy to implement the circular economy principles. They should formulate and/or bring out necessary changes in their existing policies.

- This linear economic model generates about 50 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions. Materials are transformed through production processes, used or consumed, and discarded into the environment.

- Circular economy offers a response to these challenges by reducing waste and closing material and process loops, thereby preserving natural capital.

- Industries and businesses that implement projects on efficient resource management and sustainable waste management should be given green credits which can be redeemed for tax benefits, grants, or other financial rewards.

- Adoption of less water-intensive practices – in food, crops, etc. is important.

- Effective demand side and supply side management in all sectors where water is an integral component is needed.

10. To ensure judicious use and equitable distribution of water in all walks of LiFE.

- Water is an important tatva (basic principle) in panchatatva.

- Reuse and recycle water in daily use is like creating fresh water.

Udaaharans

Recognizing Grassroot Innovators

Palle Srujana is a volunteer group based in Hyderabad, India. It is dedicated to enhancing the life of grassroots innovators. Palle Srujana undertakes shodh yatras (search expeditions) to identify and document innovators. After identifying the innovator, it supports the technical improvement of the raw innovation, validation, and patenting the same. So far Palle Srujana has identified about 78 innovators, more than 1000 traditional practices and registered them with National Innovation Foundation. Three innovators received have Padmashree Award, India's third highest civilian award for their innovations. Palle Srujana runs purely on volunteer basis. Dedicated volunteers who are passionate about grassroots innovations and have immense compassion for the grassroots innovators are key to the work of Palle Srujana.

LiFE as Sustainable Domestic Consumption

Mumbai Grahak Panchayat is a membership-based consumer organization with 32000 members based in Mumbai, India. With 3500 volunteers, this is wholly managed by volunteers. Every month it conducts cooperative buying of groceries and essential household items for its members and subsequent decentralized distribution.

Cooperative buying and decentralised distribution save considerable amounts of energy and fossil fuels. At the same time, they reduce use of plastic, make available environment friendly products at doorsteps, encourage local production- consumption cycle etc.

All these lead to a lifestyle which is eco-conscious and action oriented. Along with that it promotes a thought of connectedness and collectiveness in all its members which is key precursor for LiFE.

LiFE as a CSO initiative

Tree Plantation in Nandurbar District, Maharashtra State, India. Nandurbar is a remote district located in Satpuda mountains in Western India. The predominant population of Nandurbar is tribal and forest dependent. As a step towards LiFE, CSOs in the district have planned plantation of 25,000 plants on the 25th foundation day (1st July 2023) of the district.

Digital pledge on LiFE

LiFE Working Group of C20 in association with premier higher educational institutes and a network of CSOs has facilitated the digital pledge2 on LiFE by hundreds of citizens from various parts of the country through social media platforms and in person meetings.

A Case of Individual urban LiFE

Mr. Mayur & Mrs. Sujata Bhave and their family are residents of Pune city, India. This family of six members has adopted 5 R principles - Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Replenish. Bhave family's biogas runs on kitchen waste to fulfil 75% fuel requirement and 100% waste treatment. A terrace garden with a honeybee box provides a cooling effect and promotes pollination in the surrounding area. Bhave family has adopted multiple water saving ideas and imbibed them into their lifestyle.

Continuous conscious efforts to reduce environmental burden of everyday activity is the key for LiFE.

LiFE as community water conservation through revival of age-old tradition

Halma is an age-old practice in the Bhil community in Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh state in India. The practice is meant to help the distressed without expecting anything in return. In Jhabua district, the distressed was the mother earth. The underlying feeling of Bhil community was 'She is thirsty'. From 2010, Shivganga Abhiyan, a community organisation is calling Halma every year. Thousands of tribal villagers participate in this movement. They come with the equipment needed for the manual soil work. They prepare contour trenches on hills dig pits for plantations. All this has been done for society and not for any individual benefit. This self- initiative takes place in their own villages. This effort has shown changes on the ground in the form of improved water availability.

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CIVIL20 INDIA WORKING

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