



UNTUK MASA DEPAN YANG LEBIH  
SEJAHTERA, BERPERIKEMANUSIAAN  
DAN INKLUSIF

**[FOR A MORE PROSPEROUS, HUMANE  
AND INCLUSIVE FUTURE]**

Enabling Recover Together, Recover Stronger  
*Hamemayu Hayuning Bawana*

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CIVIL 20 Presidency of Indonesia 2022  
SGDs and Humanitarian Working Group's Policy Papers Proposal

# **From Indonesia, Doing More to the World's Vulnerable Citizens**

For A More Prosperous, Humane and Inclusive Future

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## Abstract

### **The G20 Presidency of Indonesia is happening at a strategic “critical point”.**

After more than two years the world endures a once-in-a-century pandemic, it is evident that the world lacks experience to make wise and careful policy scenario options for a worldwide pandemic incident. Any decision taken under the leadership of President Jokowi in the G20 today, will be decisive in determining the most effective solutions and responses for the future of this world to recover and revive jointly in pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals 2030. As a middle-income country, Indonesia plays a bridging role that connects developed countries and low and middle income countries. Indonesia’s Presidency in G20 must prove that Indonesian leadership will not only drive a more productive and effective G20 but also the one that caters to the interests of all parties (inclusive).

### **Business as usual is no longer workable to cope with the challenges of the increasing global systemic risks.**

The interlinkages of health crisis and economic crisis, social conflicts and environment devastation and climate change hamper the realization of global development and exacerbate the gaps in access to resources and inequalities among countries when dealing with the pandemic. The escalating inequalities and risks can undermine sustainable recovery initiatives. Global economic recovery agendas should be complemented with humanitarian and climate change mitigation agendas. G20 countries should play a pivotal role in strengthening the humanitarian development nexus by shaping targeting strategies that address both immediate needs and the long-term development goals of the population affected by the crisis.

### **G20 Countries should broaden their vision with humanitarian considerations.**

The G20 should not only confront the existing challenges, but also assure that the most vulnerable citizens around the world and those who, owing to particular circumstances, are at-risk of not being able to make it, will be taken into account (empowered) in the implementation of all of the G20 commitments. During a pandemic response as it is equally important during the recovery, the upholding of the dignity of, and protection to, such vulnerable citizens is mandatory so as to prevent any omission, neglect, or even violation against their rights. G20 Countries play a leading role and must use their significant power to influence and, even, to create new international norms that lead to a post-pandemic world society that is prosperous, humane, and inclusive.

### **G20 Countries need to revise global economic architecture with remittance cost reduction.**

Economic inequality will likely negate development results achieved during the last decade, especially, for low and middle income countries, which presently remain entangled in a cycle of poverty, hunger, debts and other hardships of tight savings amid pandemic. With a more integrated global economy, labor migration will play an equally important role in eradicating poverty through

remittances. As a development financing alternative, remittance costs for money transferred from abroad should be more affordable for and more accessible by migrant workers. G20 Countries should guarantee access to universal health services particularly for migrant groups, including migrant workers as stated in the previous presidency in Rome.

**G20 Countries should adopt adaptive social protection, which is more favorable to women as well as children as the generation that owns the future.** G20 Countries need to gain a better understanding on how this pandemic-induced socio economic crises impact more severely on women and children, and that unless a more robust and adaptive social protection is put in place, similar crisis threats may pose similar if not worse impacts in future. In this respect, scenarios to mitigate the impacts, and to recover from, the pandemic should cover crisis likelihood projection analysis with, for example, the application of strategic foresight for women empowerment and a child-friendly environment.

## Challenges

**Multidimensional crisis resulting from Covid-19 in this century has inflicted devastating impacts to workers.** Health services and social protection are the sectors most visibly disrupted. Countless livelihoods of citizens around the world have been destroyed, and pushed into forced employment transitions to informal sector, small and medium enterprises, self-employment and footloose employment and even domestic workers. While the global economy is steadily recovering this is not equally enjoyed in many countries due to the differing economic realities. In the G20 Declaration in Rome last year, the leaders of the world's major economies admitted that Covid-19 pandemic became a grave challenge for communities throughout the world. Pandemic has aggravated disparities in labor forces bringing various impacts to vulnerable workers (see Declaration; #35; 2021).

**Pandemic has pushed at least 20 million people into extreme poverty.** This is on top of 82.4 million people who were forcibly displaced and 161 million people who have to suffer acute food shortages (see UNOCHA, 2022). Due to the ongoing pandemic, the world's citizens who live in extreme poverty are expected to increase by 70 millions. It has retarded poverty eradication progress for several years back (IMF, 2022), and undermined development progress that had been achieved for the last decade, particularly for low and middle income countries, which currently remain impoverished and trapped in a cycle of poverty, hunger, debts and other hardships of tight savings amid pandemic (IATF, 2021). The United Nations had warned of prolonged, unequal and uncertain economic recovery from the pandemic and expected that around 750 million people across the world be plunged into severe poverty in 2030, and quarter of which or some 169 million people would sustain extreme poverty situation as direct consequence of pandemic (see UNDP, 2021).

**One of 29 world's citizens now needs more humanitarian assistance and**

**protection.** Amongst a total of up to 274 million people, implying an increase of 39 million people from last year, out of whom 184 million are groups of really underprivileged (see Global Humanitarian Overview, 2022). Children, particularly girls, have been deprived of their education. The rights of women and girls are threatened, and the development decade is in jeopardy. Mobility restriction and disrupted global supply chain not only adversely affect prosperity, but also mental health as a result of unemployment, food shortages, isolation, intensifying violence to women and children and limited access to education, including sexual health and reproduction.

**Progress toward expanding rights and opportunities for women is continually tested and hampered.** It is evident that only 1 of 18 indicators (including sub-indicators) being assessed is close to the targets (UN Women, 2021). Without significant acceleration, the world's citizens will fail to fulfill the promised gender equality and women empowerment by 2030. G20 countries must reaffirm their commitment to give special attention on women and girls and other vulnerable citizens who are in need of attention (see Declaration; #8; 2021).

**Humanitarian assistance becomes more important.** Amid the outbreak of new variants of Covid-19 and the third wave of pandemic, emergency situations continue to be of a serious concern due to disaster and climate crisis as well as conflicts in some regions throughout the world. Climate crisis needs urgent international actions that otherwise will double the risks to the global economy. Natural disasters have further harmed global supply chains amid minimum commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emission effect and to limit global warming increase to 2 degree Celsius above pre-industry rate. Disrupted supplies in energy, food and commodity markets have incited price increase with immediate consequence of severe blow to poor households. More coordinated policy directions are urgently necessary to achieve new goals set during the climate change conference in Glasgow (COP26) and to prevent any further global climate-related extreme events (see IMF, 2022). Most if not all of those event induce more and more world's citizens to be at risk of being deprived of the fulfillment of basic needs and unmet rights for basic protection as well as deprivation for participating and enjoying the fruit of development and pandemic response and recovery.

**Meanwhile, the volume of international humanitarian assistance is stagnant.** The developed countries have decided to cut their funding for non-pandemic humanitarian assistance. For the last decade, funding needed for humanitarian assistance increased exponentially, i.e. from USD 9.2 billion in 2012 to USD 41 billion in 2022. (op.cit. Global Humanitarian Overview, 2022). A report published last year showed that, on average, only 60 percent of total funding needed for humanitarian operation was fulfilled, and this percentage further declined to 50 percent in the last two years (see UNOCHA, 2021). In 2020, the committed Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) was just to reach 0.32% of GNI (see OECD, 2021).

**Conversely, remittances during the pandemic record the highest growth.**



With more than 7 percent growth since 2008, (see KNOMAD, 2021) remittances has become a pandemic coping mechanism for world's citizens trapped in humanitarian crises. However, with the already limited fiscal space, remittance cost inequality architecture just further curtails initiatives that may be taken by low and middle income countries as reliable measures. In practice, global remittances grow proportional with inequality and minimum commitment of development financing.

**Migration as a potential for development financing mechanism has been disrupted.** Economic crisis caused by Covid-19 may continue for a longer time, and vastly broaden from the lens of migration. Repeated waves of pandemic with mobilization restrictions are unavoidable even until early 2022. Based on the previous summit, The leaders of G20 countries have expressed their commitments to take any measures to support the migrants, including migrant workers in response to and for recovery from pandemic inspired by spirit of international cooperation and in compliance with national policies, laws and regulations and conditions to guarantee full respect to human rights and basic freedoms irrespective of their status (see Declaration 38; 2021). The fulfillment of civil and political rights during a pandemic is dependent on compliance to economic, social and cultural rights. However, migrants including migrant workers have been stigmatized in public discourses as carriers of virus. Discriminative statements attached to them only exacerbates insecure feelings (see Crépeau and Vezmar, 2021) and deprives their right to universal healthcare from the recipient countries. As an international community, G20 countries play a significant role and have enormous power to influence and even to set new international norms. As agreed in the previous presidency, the leaders of G20 countries further affirmed their commitments on safe, orderly and regular migration, while dealing with humanitarian issues and looking for the roots of migration. This migration policy cooperation has become specific topics of dialogue in the G20 Presidency of Indonesia 2022.

**The pandemic has also caused setbacks for other vulnerable groups.** Prior to the pandemic, the United Nations reported that more than half of the world population or at least four million people had no access to social protection (see UN, 2019). Among those who have no access to social protection, the elderly are proven the most affected group by Covid-19. Elderly people are often neglected in development and humanitarian strategies, especially in financing the funding they need. More than 65 percent of people aged 65 and over currently live in poor and developing countries and face more barriers to realizing their right to health (see UNDESA, 2019). In those countries, the quality of services is relatively poor and limited, where the elderly persons often face more access barriers such as affordability, accessibility and age-based discrimination. It is predicted that by 2050, more than two-third or around 1.1 billion of the world elderly will be living in developing countries (ibid, UNDESA, 2019).

**The pandemic has widened gender and economic gaps.** Crisis impact is never gender-neutral, likewise the impacts of Covid-19. Women and girls are the most socially and economically affected parties. They lose their jobs or suffer working hour reduction, meanwhile health treatment needs and domestic works, physical and mental pressures are intensifying with minimum social assistance or protection from the government or non-government organizations (see UN Women, 2021). In 2021 around 435 million women are expected to fall in poverty due to Covid-19 (see UN Women, 2020).

**Close to half billion children are predicted to live in extreme poverty or sustain multidimensional poverty from Covid-19** (see UNICEF, 2021). These numbers may be twice as high as adults who experience extreme poverty. Before the pandemic, one in five children lived in extreme poverty and the negative effects of poverty would bring consequences that might not be eradicated during their life (see WB and UNICEF, 2016). According to Save the Children (2020) school closures during pandemic had disrupted education of 1.6 billion children and, the past experience, i.e. during Ebola plague, girls was likely will never went back to schools because of mounting pressures to them to work, forced child marriage and restrictions for pregnant students to go to schools and lost contact to education. The same report also states that gender-based violence is an epidemic that has existed long before Covid-19, where an estimated one in ten girls worldwide have experienced rape or sexual violence. Pandemic has exposed the world tip of the iceberg of gender-based violence issues in this world.

**Actions must be taken now without any delay to end the setback** encountered by such various vulnerable people. They should be the architects and, at the same time, the beneficiaries of every initiative to rebuild stronger and better Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

## Recommendations

- 1. to adopt a rights-based approach to lessen international development disparities and global economic recovery gaps.** Upholding the principles of “leaving no one behind” by eliminating any discrimination causing and perpetuating poverty so as to prevent the further widening of the recovery inequality. Perspectives of civil and political rights as leading themes in poverty eradication should be broadened. G20 countries should ensure that the most affected and needy citizens of the world have their basic needs met and their basic protections provided for while establishing a monitoring mechanism to ensure this principle is embedded in all policy options and other initiatives being proclaimed in G20 declarations. This political stand is consistent with firm stance taken by President Jokowi for Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 (see The Speech of the President of Republic of Indonesia in UN General Assembly Meeting, 2020);

- 2. to increase quality investments for resilience and humanitarian funds.** G20 countries must ensure adequate amounts, multi-years and flexible humanitarian funding while, corollary, building the capacity of local leaders to ensure sustainable pandemic recovery. Funding requirements necessary for humanitarian response that are getting higher and higher to build resilience investments must be met. Long-term response and recovery initiatives that have been taken must be responded to by the Overseas Development Assistance commitment at the level of 0.7% of GNI. This is to be coupled with new concessional financing for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as well as more capitals of Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) as necessary;
- 3. to issue global policies on remittance cost reduction as potential sources of up to 3% of funds for development (SDGs 10.c).** G20 countries, either as sending or receiving countries, must accept that remittances can make a significant contribution in enhancing the quality of human development. G20 countries must facilitate safe, low-cost and fast remittance transfer process with the adoption of digital technology and to close migrant workers to financial inclusion;
- 4. to strengthen adaptive social protection that is responsive to the world's vulnerable citizens (GEDSI and its intersectionality).** G20 countries must provide adaptive social protection to informal workers, vulnerable workers (precariat), migrant workers and unpaid care work through the promotion of de-commodification and flexibility policies as universal protection (SDG 1.3, 3.8, 5.4), including to ensure the flexibility of social security policy under specific vulnerability situation, such as, humanitarian crisis or disaster crisis, especially for migrant workers, older persons, women and children who are lack of know-how and skills to survive. Social protection schemes must ensure access equality to health services including long-term medical treatment, social support and explicitly identify, consider the needs and challenges and involve them at every tier and situation. Scenarios to abate disaster impacts must cover strategic foresight, which is friendly to women as well as to children being the generation who own the future, including the promotion of *Universal Child Benefit*.

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