

Save the Children Manifesto ahead of the G20 2021 Leader's Summit

Save the Children asks the G20 Leaders to drive progress for children on the following priority areas that we hope to see reflected in the G20 Final Communiqué:

1- Financing the future of children worldwide

- **Extend the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) at least until the end of 2022** to prevent many countries to divert critical spending on health, education, and poverty reduction to debt repayments.
- **Ensure the Common Framework on Debt Treatments is fit for purpose.** Nearly one year on from the announcement of the CFDT, no country has successfully agreed relief through it from both public and private creditors. Reasons, including lack of private creditor agreement and fear of credit rating downgrades, need to be understood and addressed.
- **Address the lack of private creditor participation in both debt initiatives, including through legislation,** which has been used to great effect within the Highly Indebted Poor Country Initiative (HIPC).
- **Commit to recycling a significant portion of the G20's Special Drawing Rights allocation** to benefit Low- and Middle -Income Countries (LMICs) that have the least capacity to meet public spending needs for children's health, nutrition, education, protection and wellbeing. This should include the G20 meeting the G7, EU and African heads of state ambition of an initial reallocation of at least \$100bn in 2021 and a continued significant scale up in the years ahead.
- **Support multilateral mechanisms to aid recycling** so that it can commence immediately, including via the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT), and a potential new Resilience and Sustainability Trust, in addition through other channels, such as multilateral development banks.
- **Increase aid, with countries meeting the 0.7% GNI target, and ensure that resources are used to secure maximum impact for children**

2- Strengthening health and nutrition systems worldwide

- **Ensure at least 0.1% on ODA for health to support resilient health systems** that can prepare for and respond to public health emergencies, while delivering – and expanding access to – good quality essential services for all including Oxygen, as part of universal health coverage (UHC). Only strong and resilient health systems can deliver essential services, roll out Covid-19 vaccines, and support pandemic preparedness and response.
- Increase **domestic public investment by** national governments towards a target of 5% of GDP, with at least 1% on primary health care, prioritising progressive and redistributive taxation.
- Support countries' **domestic resource mobilisation** efforts to increase fiscal space available for strong national health systems and support governments to **remove out-of-pocket payments** for health so that quality essential services accessible by all, especially vulnerable populations and so far, excluded groups such as migrants, refugees and internally displaced people.

- Support countries efforts to provide for and invest in **equitable health and nutrition systems**, such as by prioritising primary healthcare and community systems. This includes to focus on health system gaps that need to be addressed (e.g., health workers, including CHWs, oxygen) and key services that must be strengthened and/or fully integrated into national health systems such as nutrition.
- By 2022 it is estimate that an additional 9.3 million children will be wasted because of the impacts of the pandemic. The Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit in December this year will prove a critical test of the G20's approach to nutrition. Urgent action is needed. Long-term and flexible financing for nutrition, including to address malnutrition across humanitarian and fragile contexts, is vital. G20 members should make ambitious commitments as part of the Nutrition for Growth Year of Action, and in line with Nutrition Accountability Framework.

3- Equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines and pandemic preparedness

- **Commit sufficient resources to fund ACT-A** to support the roll out of all Covid-19 interventions in LMICs, as well as in humanitarian contexts, by mid-2022.
- **Deliver global equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines** and address the shortcomings of the recent G7 summit by:
 - Urgently redistributing excess secured vaccine doses with LMICs through Covax so that all countries can access vaccines to protect their populations, prioritising front line workers and the most vulnerable around the world first.
 - Committing resources to support global vaccination efforts by funding and supporting WHO's global Covid-19 vaccination strategy, which estimates that at least US\$50-66 billion will be needed to deliver up to 16.2 billion doses in 2021 and 2022 to achieve universal vaccination.
 - Support governments to strengthen logistics, infrastructure, and supply chains and to integrate the delivery of Covid-19 health technologies through existing health systems in a way that optimally balances pandemic response with existing health priorities.
- Use all the tools at your disposal to **unlock bottlenecks** and **increase global vaccine manufacturing capacity** to unleash supply, including supporting the sharing of patents, information, technology and knowhow through the Covid-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP), supporting the WTO trips waiver proposed by South Africa & India and prioritise investment and collaboration with emerging market manufacturers to boost manufacturing capacity in LMICs.
- **Build on existing multilateral systems** and organizations to **drive global efforts for pandemic preparedness and response**, rather than undermining, duplicating them or creating new, parallel systems.
- Prioritize a **whole of government approach** in preparing for and responding to health emergencies. The Covid-19 pandemic has not only killed millions of people, it has also pushed millions into poverty and hunger.
- Provide for **long term, sustainable financing**, a trained and motivated workforce, particularly at the community level as well as equitable service delivery as an essential foundation for effective preparedness and response to public health emergencies.

4- Build more resilient education systems

- **Ensure all children can return to school safely and get their learning and wellbeing back on track by investing in:** flexible and inclusive distance learning programmes while

schools are closed; child protection and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services for children, young people and teachers; cash transfers to families most in need so they can afford to send their children back to school once they re-open; food to children who normally rely on school meals; holistic learning and wellbeing assessment on their return to school and catch-up classes; gender-sensitive water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools.

- **Ensure children facing discrimination and who were out of school before the pandemic can access safe learning opportunities:** establish an inclusive, flexible registration system that allows students to enrol in school even if they lack the usual documentation and by providing cash transfers. This also includes removing gender-based barriers and limits on time spent out of education.
- **Urgently fill the education financing gap and adjust financing modalities to enable anticipatory action:** Donors should take a coherent approach to end the cycle of vulnerability, funding interventions that address urgent, humanitarian needs, as well as contribute to longer-term development and peace outcomes. Governments and donors should also maintain and increase education funding from their 2019 budgets, dedicating 6–10% of their humanitarian budget to education in emergencies and protracted crises, and fully fund Education Cannot Wait with \$400 million to its global fund and \$1 billion in-country to support multi-year resilience programmes by the end of 2022.
- **Focus on equity and participation and reach the children most affected by inequality and discrimination first.** Prioritise the engagement of children most impacted by inequality and discrimination in each context, then address the systemic barriers that prevent their engagement within civil society and education, and their access to protective services.
- **Promote girl's education and empowerment** also by increasing funding commitments to child and gender sensitive social protection programming to address high levels of school dropouts for girls because of teenage pregnancies and child marriages.

5- Address the climate crisis in ways that works for children

As governments prepare to meet at the COP26 climate talks in November, assess progress, and accelerate their commitments to the next five-year cycle of the Paris Agreement, the rights and best interests of children must be front and centre, including by:

- **Increasing climate financing**, in addition to existing ODA commitments, to fulfil the unmet pledge to mobilise at least \$100 billion annually by 2020, allocating at least 50% of investment to adaptation, resilience, and disaster risk reduction measures, particularly those that specifically benefit the children most affected by inequalities and discrimination.
- Take ambition and urgent action now to **limit warming to a maximum of 1.5°C** above pre-industrial levels, including by rapidly phasing out fossil fuels
- **Scale up social protection systems** to address the increasing impacts of climate shocks on children and their families, with the ambition to move to universal child benefits over time as a way to improve child well-being and build resilience.

6- Protecting children's rights in Afghanistan and ensure an urgent humanitarian response

- **Support the protection of human rights, in particular girls and women's rights**, and pave the way for the eventual resumption of bilateral development funding to Afghanistan. To do this, the donor community should work towards the development of a common framework

that outlines principled engagement with the Taliban and a multilateral agreement to stabilise the Afghan economy.

- **Ensure appropriate funding for the humanitarian response in Afghanistan**, sufficient to meet the rapidly rising humanitarian need in the country and to ensure that vulnerable Afghans have access to vital life-saving services such as education, healthcare, shelter and food support, as well as protection services. To do so aid agencies, financial institutions and the private sector has to ensure that transactions and other economic services are excluded from the scope of counterterrorism regulations and sanctions regimes.
- **Demonstrate leadership by clearly, unequivocally and publicly supporting Afghan women's meaningful and equal participation in leadership** and decision-making processes, including across all levels of government, peace-building processes and humanitarian efforts. Equal participation of female staff in humanitarian operations is indispensable in relation to the ability to carry out principled humanitarian aid and reach people in need and **access for girls to education is absolutely necessary for the recovery of Afghanistan.**

Moreover, we ask governments to provide for legally mandated spaces for civil society organisations and communities, including children, to engage in all levels of governance, such as decision-making, implementation and monitoring of service provision for children's health, nutrition, education, protection and well-being. **Children should be recognized as agent of change** and child-friendly mechanisms and platforms should be established to facilitate and support children's formal engagement and inter-generational co-leadership.

