

16 November 2020

Open letter to G20 Heads of State and Government

Now is the time to put women at the heart of the economy

We are just days away from the G20 Leaders' Summit, the first to take place in the throes of a global pandemic. Fully cognizant of the many pressing concerns before G20 leaders later this week, we, the Women's Engagement Group ([W20](#)), recognize that the focus on women's empowerment and gender equality are fundamental and essential components of the path towards our mutual goals for a full and equitable recovery from the twin health and economic challenges we face.

In these final days, we ask Your Excellencies to challenge yourselves to live up to The G20 Leaders' promises of the past, seize this critical moment, and make women's economic equality a reality. The disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the lives and livelihoods of women may have added as many as 51 years to the time it will take to reach gender equality.

The W20 Communique makes incisive and timely policy recommendations for both a near-term economic recovery from COVID-19 pandemic as well as the long-term realization of sustainable development as envisioned by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Now is the time for G20 Leaders to adopt W20 recommendations as commitments in your own declaration so as to turn our calls into concrete actions.

The pandemic is having a devastating impact on the society at large, but with more impact on women, in their multiple roles and responsibilities. So far, relief packages adopted by governments across the world fail to take into account the specific financial and institutional requirements for women to integrate fully into their countries' economies. The [W20 Communique](#) offers policy recommendations to overcome these policy shortfalls and achieve sustainable and lasting change for women.





Your Excellencies know that when women thrive and are included in their countries' economies, all communities, men and women, young and old, thrive as well. By adopting the W20's policy recommendations as enabling tools, your national and global efforts would lead to a more gender-equitable world.

As champions for women's empowerment, as respected leaders representing various communities and voices, and as concerned citizens in our global community, W20 delegates hope Your Excellencies will lend your voices to this important call for action. You can reset G20 economies by planning a recovery based on the principle of inclusiveness and an acknowledgment that the full and equitable participation of women in economic activity is critical to a faster socio-economic recovery and it is simply smart economics.

The whole world is looking for collective leadership to pull the countries out of this economic, social, and health crises as G20 has done before in 2008 and even more critically in 2020 and beyond. All efforts will be futile without the inclusion of women.

Your Excellencies, if not NOW then WHEN?

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of Women 20

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Thoraya A. Obaid'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Thoraya Ahmed Obaid
W20 2020 Chair

