

Women 20 Meeting Communiqué

Xi'an, China

26 May 2016

1. We, representatives of the 2016 Women 20 (W20) Meeting, met in Xi'an, China, from 24 to 26 May 2016 to discuss gender equality perspectives in global economic governance; women's employment, entrepreneurship and social protection; women's role in the digital economy; and interconnected and innovative women's network.
2. We reaffirm that gender inclusiveness, gender equality, and women's rights are essential for strong, sustainable and balanced growth.
3. We are pleased that the G20 Leaders acknowledged the crucial role of women in achieving economic prosperity and reaffirmed their commitment to taking concrete actions for ensuring gender equality and women's full participation in economic and social affairs and for their economic empowerment.
4. We welcome the establishment of Women 20 as an outreach group of the G20, and appreciate Turkey's hosting of the first W20 Meeting in October 2015.

A Gender Equality Perspective in Global Economic Governance

5. Since the global financial crisis in 2008, the world economy has undergone profound and complicated changes and the road to recovery has been uneven across countries, with some still experiencing the negative effects of the global financial crisis. In addition, new issues, risks and challenges continue to emerge. Therefore, it is increasingly important to ensure strong, sustainable and balanced growth by improving global economic governance and making it accessible to women and more equitable and inclusive. The potential for the participation in and contribution of women to the economy is not being fully realized, nor is their representation and voice in global economic governance. It is critical that the G20 acknowledge that gender-based inequalities are a systemic aspect of the current functioning of the world economy. We, therefore, encourage G20 members to take the following measures:

Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, promote women's economic empowerment and participation, and work to integrate gender perspectives into all activities of G20;

Integrate gender mainstreaming into macroeconomic policies, and gender perspectives into global economic governance, and implement and advocate for gender-responsive budgeting;

Study the negative impacts and cost of violence against women on national economy, and adopt and ensure the implementation of laws and measures to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls and to ensure safety in public and private spaces to facilitate their economic participation,

Take effective measures to increase opportunities for equal representation of women in decision-making and leadership positions in both public and private sectors and in the composition of G20 delegations.

Significantly increase financing for gender equality and women's empowerment to reduce the gender gap in development policies as called for in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

Take special measures to encourage inclusive sourcing policies by governments and by corporations to include more women as suppliers in local and global value chains by establishing baseline data, setting targets and reporting on progress.

Women's Employment and Entrepreneurship and Social Protection

6. Women are still lagging far behind men in terms of economic participation and are not fully reaping the benefits of economic growth. Among G20 members, the average labor participation rate is 56% for women and 86% for men. Women continue to concentrate in sectors, industries, occupations, and jobs with lower job security and wages. They are overrepresented in small businesses, often with low profitability, and in the informal economy with limited, if any, access to social security, and receive inadequate recognition for their unpaid work. Compared with their male counterparts, women still face more obstacles in accessing land, funding, loans, markets and other productive resources in their entrepreneurship efforts. Women entrepreneurs find it difficult to gain necessary market and financial information, operating skills and other services and support. We, therefore, encourage G20 members to take the following measures:

Request G20 Labour and Employment Ministers to work with the W20 on the implementation of the agreed target of reducing female labour force participation gap by 25% by 2025, and urge member states to publish their strategies towards the target and adopt a transparent and rigorous monitoring process with, if necessary, the technical support of international organisations;

Strengthen the legal framework and its enforcement in order to eliminate the gender wage gap, improve women's employment opportunities, working conditions and benefits, promote reconciliation of work and family life and strengthen the social security systems in order to increase female labour force participation, recognise and regulate all forms of new and flexible work and ensure adequate social protection;

Continue to increase social infrastructure investments for care of children, the elderly, the disabled and the sick. Take active measures to encourage equal sharing of family responsibilities between women and men;

Make a commitment to systematically recognizing and measuring all forms of work and embark on national income accounting that includes unpaid care work;

Encourage the B20 to foster gender equality and good governance in the private sector, including, inter alia, calling on companies to implement the United Nations Women's Empowerment Principles and report on progress;

Support entrepreneurship and launch specific programs to help women overcome business start-up barriers, grow and sustain their businesses, including through trade. Improve women's access to credit and other means of production, and the provision of relevant training, information services and technical support;

Ensure women's equal access to and ownership of land and assets, and their access to water and energy, food security and nutrition, quality infrastructure. Encourage rural women's role in the improvement of global food security by promoting investment in agriculture and food systems;

Encourage women and girls in the study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), finance, entrepreneurial, green and creative industries, including life-long learning in STEM jobs;

Enable women's engagement in cross-border trade and participation in global economic development;

Provide economic and trade incentives for businesses that are at least 51% owned, managed and controlled by one or more women.

Provide incentives to investors, and in particular to women investors, who support women-owned or led companies.

Women's Role in the Digital Economy

7. The rapid development and widespread use of information and communication technology (ICT) has enabled women to enhance development capabilities and competitiveness in the labor market, created new and tremendous opportunity for women's entrepreneurship and employment, and facilitated women's access to market information, social networks and finance. On the other hand, the digital gap has also widened gender disparity in the labor market participation and wealth creation, and restricted women's role in the digital economy. Women still encounter many constraints in entrepreneurship and employment and face obstacles in full and equal participation in the digital economy. We, therefore, encourage G20 members to take the following measures:

Encourage and support women and girls in their efforts to seize the opportunity brought by the New Industrial Revolution and to actively participate in and benefit from the digital economy;

Invest in the digital empowerment of women and girls and encourage public and private investment in women-led digital ventures;

Conduct gender analysis of the impact of the digital economy on the labor market and on labour rights, and implement policies favorable to women for their entrepreneurship and employment in the digital economy era.

Interconnected and Innovative Women's Network

8. Women's networks play a crucial role in promoting gender equality and the development of women, and together with women entrepreneurs' associations can create more employment opportunities and new sources of economic growth. However, due to lack of human, material and financial resources, women's organizations and professional associations cannot play their role effectively. In addition, there is potential for greater cooperation among organisations. In this connection, we encourage G20 members to take the following measures:

Support and strengthen capacity building of women's networks nationally, regionally and internationally;

Strengthen trans-national and cross-regional exchanges between women's organisations and women's professional associations as well as their cooperation with governmental institutions, workers' and employers' organisations and relevant intergovernmental organisations.

Conclusion

9. We reaffirm the importance of the monitoring framework included in the Istanbul W20 Communiqué to track G20 members' progress in delivering on their gender equality commitments.

10. W20 will continue to work with intergovernmental organisations, including UN Women and ILO.

11. We will submit this W20 Meeting Communiqué to the 2016 G20 Summit.

12. We thank China for its leadership in 2016 and look forward to our next W20 Meeting.

Source: http://g20.org/English/Documents/Current/201606/t20160628_2346.html