

BUILDING A FAIRER FUTURE: JOINT ACTIONS FOR POVERTY, HUNGER AND INEQUALITY REDUCTION BY G20 NATIONS

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The Group of Twenty (G20) countries, representing two-thirds of the global population and 85% of gross domestic product (GDP), play a crucial role in addressing pressing global challenges, including poverty, hunger, income inequality and climate change. The 2023 Indian summit underscored the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), fostering a green development agenda, and reinforcing multilateralism, with a strong emphasis on technological transformation, gender equality and financial inclusion to ensure that “No One is Left Behind”. Efforts also targeted to eradicate hunger especially by promoting research collaboration on climate-resilient and nutritious grains. As the G20 prepares for the Brazil 2024 summit, the focus will shift to enhancing social inclusion, energy transitions, and reforming global governance institutions. Key priorities include promoting eradicating poverty and hunger, financial inclusion, gender equality, and multilateralism, encapsulated in the motto “Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet”. This upcoming summit aims to foster a people-centred approach to development, emphasizing the interconnections between poverty eradication, hunger alleviation, and climate action. This article explores collaborative strategies for G20 nations to mitigate global inequalities, highlighting the historical commitment of G20 summits to these issues since the launch of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. It assesses individual progress among G20 members towards these shared goals and presents selected policies that have shown promise in addressing poverty, hunger and inequality. By identifying successful country-level initiatives, the article aims to provide insights into effective, coordinated actions to tackle global disparities. Ultimately, it emphasizes that reducing inequalities is essential not only for promoting social equity but also for fostering sustainable economic and environmental practices worldwide.

Keywords: G20; poverty; hunger; income inequality; Sustainable Development Goals.

CONSTRUINDO UM FUTURO MAIS JUSTO: AÇÕES CONJUNTAS PARA A REDUÇÃO DA POBREZA, DA FOME E DA DESIGUALDADE PELAS NAÇÕES DO G20

Os países do Grupo dos Vinte (G20), que representam dois terços da população global e 85% do produto interno bruto (PIB), desempenham um papel crucial no enfrentamento dos desafios globais urgentes, incluindo pobreza, fome, desigualdade de renda e mudanças climáticas. A cúpula indiana de 2023 destacou os Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS), promovendo uma agenda de desenvolvimento verde e reforçando o multilateralismo, com forte ênfase na transformação tecnológica, igualdade de gênero e inclusão financeira para garantir que “ninguém seja deixado para trás”. Os esforços também foram direcionados para erradicar a fome, especialmente por meio da promoção da colaboração em pesquisa sobre grãos nutritivos e resistentes ao clima. À medida

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que o G20 se prepara para a cúpula do Brasil 2024, o foco mudará para aumentar a inclusão social, as transições de energia e a reforma das instituições de governança global. As principais prioridades incluem a promoção da erradicação da pobreza e da fome, a inclusão financeira, a igualdade de gênero e o multilateralismo, encapsulados no lema “Construindo um mundo justo e um planeta sustentável”. Essa próxima cúpula tem como objetivo promover uma abordagem centrada nas pessoas para o desenvolvimento, enfatizando as interconexões entre a erradicação da pobreza, o alívio da fome e a ação climática. Este artigo explora estratégias colaborativas para as nações do G20 mitigarem as desigualdades globais, destacando o compromisso histórico das cúpulas do G20 com essas questões desde o lançamento da Agenda de Desenvolvimento Sustentável 2030. O artigo avalia o progresso individual entre os membros do G20 em direção a essas metas compartilhadas e apresenta políticas selecionadas que se mostraram promissoras no combate à pobreza, à fome e à desigualdade. Ao identificar iniciativas bem-sucedidas em nível nacional, o artigo tem como objetivo fornecer *insights* sobre ações coordenadas e eficazes para combater as disparidades globais. Por fim, ele enfatiza que a redução das desigualdades é essencial não apenas para promover a igualdade social, mas também para fomentar práticas econômicas e ambientais sustentáveis em todo o mundo.

Palavras-chave: G20; pobreza; fome; desigualdade de renda; Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável.

CONSTRUYENDO UN FUTURO MÁS JUSTO: ACCIONES CONJUNTAS DE LOS PAÍSES DEL G20 PARA REDUCIR LA POBREZA, EL HAMBRE Y LA DESIGUALDAD

Los países del Grupo de los Veinte (G20), que representan dos tercios de la población mundial y el 85% del producto interno bruto (PIB), desempeñan un rol crucial a la hora de abordar los acuciantes retos mundiales, como la pobreza, el hambre, la desigualdad de ingresos y el cambio climático. La cumbre de India de 2023 destacó los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), fomentando una agenda de desarrollo verde y reforzando el multilateralismo, con un fuerte énfasis en la transformación tecnológica, la igualdad de género y la inclusión financiera para garantizar que “Nadie se quede atrás”. Los esfuerzos también se dirigieron a erradicar el hambre, especialmente promoviendo la colaboración en la investigación sobre cereales resistentes al clima y nutritivos. Mientras el G20 se prepara para la cumbre de Brasil 2024, la atención se centrará en mejorar la inclusión social, las transiciones energéticas y la reforma de las instituciones de gobernanza mundial. Las prioridades claves incluyen promover la erradicación de la pobreza y el hambre, la inclusión financiera, la igualdad de género y el multilateralismo, encapsuladas en el lema “Construir un mundo justo y un planeta sostenible”. Esta próxima cumbre pretende fomentar un enfoque del desarrollo centrado en las personas, haciendo hincapié en las interconexiones entre la erradicación de la pobreza, la mitigación del hambre y la acción por el clima. Este artículo explora las estrategias de colaboración para que las naciones del G20 mitiguen las desigualdades mundiales, destacando el compromiso histórico de las cumbres del G20 con estas cuestiones desde el lanzamiento de la Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible. El artículo evalúa el progreso individual de los miembros del G20 hacia estos objetivos compartidos y presenta políticas seleccionadas que han demostrado ser prometedoras a la hora de abordar la pobreza, el hambre y la desigualdad. Al identificar las iniciativas nacionales que han tenido éxito, el artículo pretende aportar ideas sobre acciones eficaces y coordinadas para hacer frente a las disparidades mundiales. En última instancia, subraya que reducir las desigualdades es esencial no sólo para promover la equidad social, sino también para fomentar prácticas económicas y medioambientales sostenibles en todo el mundo.

Palabras clave: G20; pobreza; hambre; desigualdad de ingresos; Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible.

JEL: F02; F50; I30; I31; I32; D63; O15; Q01; Q18.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Group of Twenty (G20) countries account for two-third of the world's population, 85% of global gross domestic product (GDP), participate in 80% of international trade, and hold substantial shares of almost 80% global greenhouse gas emissions and resource consumption (Alexander, 2014). While initially centred on economic and financial matters, the agenda has expanded over time to encompass a wide range of topics including security, development, and environmental concerns. The consensus among G20 countries is crucial due to their collective representation. It brings together international cooperation to tackle a wide range of global challenges through a dynamic and adaptive approach, allowing it to respond swiftly and effectively to evolving global circumstances. The origins can be traced back to Group of Seven (G7) and later Group of Eight (G8) summits. Until 2008, the G20 convened as a forum primarily for finance ministers and central bankers. In response to the global financial crisis of 2007, the group elevated its meetings to include leaders – Presidents and Prime Ministers – to tackle the crucial global challenges (*idem, ibidem*). In 2009, the G20 was recognised as the foremost forum for international economic cooperation.

1.1 Selected G20 summits addressing 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The G20 summits demonstrated remarkable success in addressing the financial and economic crisis of 2008 since its London and Pittsburgh summits in 2009, by swiftly implementing crucial fiscal and monetary stimulus measures. By prioritising macroeconomic stability, the G20 significantly contributed to societal well-being.

With the adoption of the universal and ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the United Nations in September 2015, the G20 Summit in 2016 held in China committed to contribute to its implementation. The Action Plan promoted robust, sustainable, and balanced growth, safeguarded environmental integrity, and enhanced collaboration with low-income and developing countries. The forum committed to advancing sustainable agriculture and rural development, enhancing global food security and nutrition for all, particularly focusing on impoverished and vulnerable populations. They aimed to address food price volatility and minimise food loss and waste across food value chains by endorsing the G20 Technical Platform

on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste. Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the G20 Food Security and Nutrition Framework prioritised three key objectives over multiple years: Promoting Responsible Investment, Enhancing Incomes and Quality Employment Opportunities, and Improving Productivity Sustainably. This framework was actively implemented through initiatives such as the Implementation Plan and the Action Plan on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems, building on outcomes from the 2016 G20 Agriculture Minister's meeting.³

Since 2021, the global economy faced multiple setbacks due to persistent and widespread inflationary pressures that have compelled many major economies to implement tighter monetary policies, subdued growth momentum in China amidst sporadic pandemic-related lockdowns and challenges in the property market, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequent sanctions that exacerbated supply disruptions, heightened food insecurity, and raised energy concerns, particularly in Europe due to a significant reduction in Russian gas supply (IMF, 2022). Despite efforts to assist the most vulnerable, the poorest continue to shoulder a disproportionate burden from soaring food and energy prices. Moreover, increased borrowing costs has heightened vulnerabilities stemming from elevated levels of public and private sector debt (idem, *ibidem*). As a result, the pace of economic growth slowed down and multiple economies had fallen back into recession, increasing greater levels of inequality for the most vulnerable population and economies. Partial labour market recoveries, employment losses, disruptions to education especially for the children belonging from poorer households, frequent extreme temperatures and climate-related disasters especially in sectors like agriculture which are climate sensitive etc. have left a relatively larger impact on the vulnerable population. If left unaddressed, this would likely raise the inequality levels, increase the number of people living in extreme poverty and create higher rates of food insecurity globally. The United Nations projects that an additional 75 million people will fall into extreme poverty this year compared to pre-pandemic expectations.⁴

Approximately 12% of Sub-Saharan Africa's population is expected to face acute food insecurity, a situation exacerbated by the effects of climate change (Baptista et al., 2022). Disasters often result in impoverishment, potentially initiating a cycle of setbacks, poverty traps, and a hindrance to poverty alleviation efforts. However, the long-term impacts vary significantly across different contexts. Recovery can be swift in certain countries compared to

3. Available at: <https://g20.utoronto.ca/2016/g20-action-plan-on-2030-agenda.pdf>.

4. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2022/Goal-01/>. Accessed on: July 9, 2024.

others, highlighting distinct differences among socio-economic groups.⁵ Climate change and increasing exposure to natural hazards pose significant challenges in achieving the goal of eradicating poverty globally by 2030 (Shepherd et al., 2013). According to World Bank estimates (2020), the fortunes of the top 1,000 billionaires in the world rebounded to pre-pandemic levels in just nine months, whereas it may take more than a decade – 14 times longer – for the world’s poorest people to achieve recovery (Berkhout et al., 2021). The same report estimated an annual increase of 2% inequality across all countries and a decelerated economic growth. A new Oxfam analysis⁶ revealed that income inequality is a significant concern in 60% of low- and middle-income countries (64 out of 106) receiving grants or loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

The ongoing post-pandemic situation with disruptions in energy and food markets due to conflict and unprecedented monetary tightening aimed at combating historically high inflation that decelerated the global economy (Gourinchas, 2023). The silver lining was that growth persisted at a modest pace without coming to a halt, displaying uneven patterns that exacerbated disparities among economies. According to IMF projections, global economic growth was anticipated to slow from 3.5% in 2022 to 3% in 2023, with a further decrease to 2.9% in 2024 (IMF, 2023). These indicated a continued deviation below the historical average growth rate. Though the same report projected a deceleration of inflation from 9.2% in 2022 to 5.9% in 2023 and subsequently to 4.8% in 2024, most countries were not expected to bring inflation back to their target levels until 2025.

Amidst the unprecedented challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and heightened geopolitical tensions such as Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the G20 summit in Bali, Indonesia (2022), emerged as a crucial platform to demonstrate the dedication of major world economies in upholding multilateral rules and fostering intergovernmental cooperation. Another significant outcome of 2022’s summit was the increasing influence of emerging economies from the Global South. These nations played a pivotal role in bridging differences among major geopolitical players. The Bali Summit marked the beginning of a series of G20 presidencies held by countries from the Global South; especially the following years of presidencies to be held by members of the BRICS Group. Three main priority areas were emphasized: enhancing the global health architecture, promoting a sustainable energy transition, and advancing digital transformation.

5. Available at: <https://www.preventionweb.net/understanding-disaster-risk/risk-drivers/poverty-inequality>. Accessed on: July 10, 2024.

6. Available at: <https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/income-inequality-high-or-rising-60-percent-countries-loans-imf-and-world-bank>. Accessed on: July 11, 2024.

Macroeconomic measures to tackle global economic challenges, including boosting public and private investments, strengthening multilateral trade frameworks, and enhancing the resilience of global supply chains were focussed upon.

Leaders pledged coordinated action to address food security challenges and committed to accelerating the transformation towards sustainable and resilient agriculture and food systems. International initiatives aimed at endorsing the functionality of food supply chains and the establishment of a secure maritime humanitarian corridor under the Black Sea Grain Initiative, facilitated by the United Nations and Turkey (Jütten, 2022). Deeply concerned by the global food security challenges intensified by the political tensions, the Bali declaration quoted, “We commit to protect the most vulnerable from hunger by using all available tools to address the global food crisis. We will take further coordinated actions to address food security challenges including price surges and shortage of food commodities and fertilizers globally” (G20, 2022). Endorsements to maintain international efforts for the functionality of food supply chains during challenging circumstances were recognised, addressing food insecurity by ensuring that food and food products were accessible, affordable, and sustainable for those in need, particularly in developing countries and least developed countries.

1.2 Strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth: commitments from India’s G20 Presidency

In the middle of the ongoing global complexities, on 1st December 2022, India assumed the G20 presidency from Indonesia on the chosen theme “*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*” or “One Earth, One Family, One Future”. Priorities of this summit focussed on providing inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented, and decisive agendas to global challenges. The primary G20 priorities included advancing SDGs, fostering a green development agenda for a sustainable future, promoting multilateralism, driving technological transformation, advancing gender equality and empowerment, and enhancing financial inclusion ensuring “No One is Left Behind”, while working to end poverty by reaching out to the poorest and most vulnerable; ensuring equality and inclusiveness; promoting accountable and transparent institutions; and caring for the community (G20, 2023).

A highlight of the summit was advocating for the African Union’s permanent membership in the G20 and promoting democratisation within the group ensuring a focus on reaching the most marginalized populations first. This initiative also reinforced India’s reputation as a committed advocate and reliable partner for Africa, facilitating enhanced bilateral and multilateral strategic and economic collaborations (Puri, 2023). Additionally, it set the stage for continued cooperation on mutual priorities such as reforming the United Nations Security Council. The Indian presidency focussed on “human-centric development” and

the principle of global solidarity to foster a fairer financial, economic, social, and environmental order, as well as highlighted the goals of inclusive summitry focused on people.

Among many of its objectives, it pledged to “Eliminate Hunger and Malnutrition” in line with the G20 Deccan High-Level Principles on Food Security and Nutrition 2023 to “Accelerate Progress on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”. To achieve it, joint declarations related to initiatives to enhance research collaboration on climate-resilient and nutritious grains, including millets, quinoa, sorghum, as well as staple crops like rice, wheat, and maize, highlighting the significance of enhancing access to, availability of, and efficient utilisation of agricultural inputs and fertilizers, bolstering local fertilizer production, with a focus on enhancing soil health, expediting more sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture and food systems through innovations and investments in agricultural productivity were emphasized.

Minimising food loss and waste throughout the value chain, and enhancing marketing and storage capabilities, ensuring affordable, safe, nutritious, and healthy diets which are accessible specially to assist developing countries in enhancing their capabilities to tackle food security challenges were also focussed upon. Promotion of open, fair, predictable, and rules-based trade in agriculture, food, and fertilizers and reducing prohibitions or restrictions that minimise market distortions in line with relevant World Trade Organization (WTO) regulations and enhancing the transparency and effectiveness of the Agricultural Market Information System (Amis) and the Group on Earth Observations Global Agricultural Monitoring (Geoglam) were committed to mitigate food price volatility.

To address “Macroeconomic Impacts of Food and Energy Insecurity” a joint consensus was taken to substantiate replenishment of resources for the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in combating food insecurity globally at the G20 New Delhi, 2023.

Under the goal of “Enhancing Economic and Social Empowerment”, the forum advocated for women-led development and affirmed commitment towards fostering women’s full, equal, effective, and meaningful participation as decision-makers in addressing global challenges inclusively which in turn would enhance global GDP growth. Commitment to achieve the Brisbane Goal of reducing the gender gap in labour force participation, ensuring universal access to affordable, inclusive, equitable, safe, and high-quality education from early childhood through higher education and lifelong learning, by promoting increased enrolment, participation, and leadership of women and girls, including those with disabilities, in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

fields and emerging digital technologies were joint consensus taken to promote active and equitable participation of women in an evolving world of work.

Facilitating inclusive access to employment opportunities and prioritising efforts to close the gender pay gap, providing equal access to decent work and quality jobs to women, and also encouraging investments in enhancing the availability and accessibility of social protection and affordable care infrastructure for both paid and unpaid caregiving and domestic work were some initiatives that were emphasized upon to sustain women's ongoing participation in education and employment. By eliminating gender-based violence in all forms, and promoting women's inclusion in formal financial system by strengthening access to economic resources in digital and micro-finance, gender stereotypes and biases can be effectively put to an end, while transforming norms, attitudes, and behaviours that perpetuate gender inequality.

The forum committed to promote and implement policies to foster a digital economy that empowers and includes women-led and -owned businesses, including MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), and encouraging funding opportunities to generate income security of women under the objective of "Bridging the Gender Digital Divide".

An important dimension in promoting gender equality was the objective of "Securing Women's Food Security, Nutrition, and Well-Being". In this regard, the council promoted investments in agriculture and food systems that are inclusive, sustainable, and resilient, focusing on accessibility, affordability, safety, and nutrition in school meal programs, and fostering innovation in agri-value chains by and for women farmers. It supported and focussed on gender-responsive and age-sensitive promotion of nutrition and food system interventions, utilising innovative financing and social protection systems to eliminate hunger and malnutrition.

The last declaration under this objective was the "Creation of a Working Group on the Empowerment of Women" which commits to establish as a new Working Group on Women's Empowerment and anticipates its inaugural session under the Brazilian G20 Presidency.

1.3 Brazil's G20 Presidency and The Agenda for Change (2024)

Emphasizing on commitment to uphold multilateralism and fostering a unified consensus, with a motto of "Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet", the upcoming G20 2024 summit in Brazil prioritises on: i) social inclusion and the fight against hunger and poverty; ii) energy transitions and the promotion of sustainable development in its economic, social, and environmental dimensions; and iii) reform of global governance institutions. Among the several Working Groups in the

summit like that for Trade and Investment, Health, Women's Empowerment, Education, Digital Economy etc. the Development Working Group will "(...) act upon the interdependence of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development by prioritising three pillars: Fighting Inequalities, Access to Water and Sanitation Services and Trilateral Cooperation" (G20, 2024).

Inequalities become complicated as they persist across various dimensions like income, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnicity, religion, and opportunities. At the same time global inequalities persist among countries, creating a mesh of inter and intra sector unequal scenario, posing a barrier in achieving sustainable, inclusive, and just global transitions by undermining efforts in poverty reduction and diminishing people's sense of dignity and fulfilment. Consequently, they can exacerbate issues like crime, disease, and environmental degradation. The centre of Brazil's presidency pivots around addressing inequalities for advancing all SDGs, and highlights that progress across various SDGs contributes to reducing inequality (SDG 10).

This G20 summit aims to promote the social, economic and political inclusion for all in a universal integrated manner, focussing on people-centred approaches. It presents another chance to focus on advancing discussions on climate action, sustainability, and the development of Global South nations. The objective of reducing inequalities is important as it is the only means to collaterally bridge the gap between poverty eradication which in turn would reduce hunger and the requirements for climate mitigation. Brazil's commitment to fight against food shortages and nutritional insecurity led to the launching of a Task Force for the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty (GAAHP)⁷ which proposed to raise resources and knowledge for implementation of public policies and social technologies like low-carbon agricultural research and farming insurance reforms, especially in food-insecure countries, with financing support from other nations.

In the light of the above, this article attempts to explore some collaborative strategies for G20 members to effectively mitigate global inequalities, poverty, and hunger. It acknowledges the historical commitment of G20 summits in addressing these challenges, particularly since the inception of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The subsequent sections delve into assessing the individual progress of G20 nations towards achieving these goals. Following suit, a set of selected policies at the country level are presented that attempts to address the challenges in a successful manner. These will provide valuable insights into mitigating inequalities and suggest collaborative and coordinated ventures to effectively eradicate global disparities.

7. Available at: <https://www.g20.org/en/tracks/shepa-track/hunger-and-poverty>.

2 PERFORMANCE OF G20 COUNTRIES ON ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG REPORT 2023)

To understand global trends, challenges, and areas where countries may need to emphasize their efforts for improvement, global indices help in assessing and comparing various aspects of the nations' performance on a global measure. These often focus on different dimensions of development, well-being, and sustainability. In this context, the SDG Report 2023 (Sachs et al., 2023) details out the diverse stages of transformation across various countries, promoting sustainable development across sectors which were not covered earlier. It takes stock of progress so far achieved and discusses priorities to restore and accelerate the SDG progress. Since 2020, the progress towards achieving the SDGs has stalled globally due to a convergence of health crises and geopolitical turmoil. In this article we have put forward the status of the G20 countries in achieving the SDG progress based on the published report on the dimensions of poverty, hunger and inequalities.

2.1 Poverty

Among the G20 nations, Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States have successfully achieved the targets set under SDG 1 – No Poverty (Sachs et al., 2023). These achievements include eradicating extreme poverty (measured as living on less than \$1.25 a day), reducing poverty by at least 50%, implementing social protection systems, ensuring equal rights in ownership, access to basic services, technology, and economic resources, building resilience to environmental, economic, and social disasters, mobilizing resources to implement policies to end poverty, and creating pro-poor and gender-sensitive policy frameworks by 2030. Most European nations rank high, with many having achieved the SDGs or facing only a few remaining challenges regarding SDG 1. Argentina and Brazil, India, Indonesia, and Mexico have significant challenges to overcome.

The European Union, consisting of 27 nations, predominantly ranks high in achieving the SDGs, with most countries on track to maintain or moderately improve their SDG performance. However, Germany is an exception, as it shows stagnation and, in some metrics, a decline. Among the nations having achieved the No Poverty targets, Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom seem to be stagnating in their current trends along with Mexico while the poverty trend seems to be decreasing in Argentina. Brazil and India despite having challenges, maintains their SDG achievement whereas Indonesia showed moderate improvement in the SDG achievement levels.

2.2 Hunger

The second SDG target is assessed using a variety of indicators, including the prevalence of undernourishment, stunting in children under five, wasting in children under five, obesity in adults, energy intensity of adult diets, cereal yield, nitrogen use efficiency, land use efficiency, and exports of hazardous pesticides.

All G20 nations except India have met the SDG targets of reducing undernourishment. After the achievement of the SDG targets, the trend of undernourishment remains stagnated in Argentina, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, and South Africa, while that in India is on a decline.

On the basis of stunting of children under the age of five years, Argentina, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa have yet to achieve the SDG target. Among these countries, India, Indonesia, Mexico, and South Africa presently face major challenges while China, Japan, South Korea, Turkiye, and the United Kingdom are successfully staying on track on maintaining the SDG target.

Except for India and Indonesia, all the other G20 nations have achieved the SDG target in reducing prevalence of wasting in children under the age of five years, with South Korea and Saudi Arabia maintaining their SDG achievement in reducing the said vertical.

The situation is quite different for obesity metrics; China, India, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea have reached the SDG targets, while advanced economies of Europe such as France, Germany, and Italy face significant challenges. However, overall trends for obesity show stagnation or decline among all G20 members.

For the Human Trophic Level, only China has been successful in achieving the SDG targets. Advanced economies including Australia, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States, along with Argentina, are facing major challenges. China is trending positively towards maintaining SDG achievement, while Turkiye and Canada are making moderate progress, while India, continues facing ongoing challenges in meeting the SDG targets and showed a stagnating trend for some time.

Based on the Cereal Yield metric, all G20 nations have met the SDG targets, although Brazil, Canada, Germany, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye experienced stagnating trends.

Importantly, only Argentina achieved the SDG targets for Sustainable Nitrogen Management. China, France, and Germany continue facing significant challenges, while the remaining G20 nations encounter major difficulties. Currently, the United States is on track to maintain SDG achievement, with India and South Africa showing moderate improvement in their present trends. The remaining nations show a stagnant trend in achieving their SDG targets.

In SDG two, most European nations achieved the goals. However, they face stagnation in certain metrics like addressing obesity, particularly the Western European countries.

2.3 Inequalities

The SDG 10 focuses on addressing the income inequalities prevailing in the countries. In addition to this, under the Inequality theme, we have tried to examine the inequalities related to gender (SDG 5) and water and sanitation services (SDG 6) in this article, keeping at par with the critical issues to be addressed at the Brazilian Presidency.

SDG 10 measures income inequality based on two indices: the Gini coefficient and the Palma Ratio. Based on the Gini coefficient, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Mexico, Turkiye and the US face major challenges, while China, India, Indonesia, Italy, Russia and the United Kingdom have significant challenges to overcome. On the other hand, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan and South Korea fared better in achieving the SDG targets. Though challenges prevail in these countries, they are decreasing over the period.

As per the Palma Ratio, Canada achieved the SDG 10 target. Both developed and developing nations faced major challenges in overcoming income inequality including Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa, Turkiye, the United Kingdom and the United States. Australia, Italy, Japan, South Korea and Russia alongwith France and Germany face significant challenges to achieve the targets but the later are showing moderate improvement in achieving the goals. Data for Saudi Arabia was unavailable for this SDG.

The recent addition of the African Union, consisting of 55 member states and 9 observer states, to the G20 list is a noteworthy achievement of the Indian presidency. Most of these nations have significant to major challenges to overcome and have stagnating or decreasing trends when the top five nations from the continent (by GDP) namely Egypt, South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria and Ethiopia are considered. Algeria among them fare much better, displaying that the nation has achieved the SDG 1: No Poverty target. The rank and trends to achieve the SDG targets remain almost similar among the countries within the Union.

3 EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN ACHIEVING SDG 1, 2 AND 10 AND CO-BENEFITS FOR OTHER SDGs

The following section documents few of the noteworthy policies and commitments taken by G20 countries individually over the years, which have been significant in addressing the SDG targets in the region. The strategic vision and/or action to implement the goals are being presented under the different sub themes.

A collaborative approach and the exchange of insights from these plans could be highly beneficial in tackling the global issues of poverty, hunger, and inequality in the long term. Countries could actively learn from one another and strive to implement best practices to achieve sustainable well-being.

3.1 The Family Hope Program (PKH) of Indonesia in addressing poverty reduction (SDG 1)

Indonesia showcased three effective strategies for eliminating extreme poverty at the G20 Forum Task Force. These strategies emphasized the convergence and complementarity of poverty eradication programs, targeted approaches utilizing data from the Targeting for the Acceleration of the Elimination of Extreme Poverty (Penargetan Percepatan Penghapusan Kemiskinan Ekstrem – P3KE), and lessons drawn from initiatives like the Family Hope Program (Program Keluarga Harapan – PKH) and Government Food Reserve (Cadangan Pangan Pemerintah – CPP) assistance. These efforts were put forward under GAAHP framework.

The Family Hope Program (PKH) in Indonesia, known internationally as Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT), was launched in 2007 to accelerate poverty reduction, covering approximately 10 million households. The program provides conditional social assistance to underprivileged families, encouraging better access to health and educational services to help break the cycle of chronic poverty. By addressing both immediate and structural causes of poverty, PKH ensures basic needs in health, nutrition, education and social welfare services. This multifaceted strategy is crucial for developing nations where poverty is deeply entrenched and is multi-dimensional. Approximately 40% of PKH beneficiaries are located in urban areas, demonstrating the program's significant impact on addressing urban poverty and catering to the unique socio-economic challenges prevalent in towns and cities.

The program also includes services towards improvement in health and nutrition by improving access to basic healthcare, particularly for pregnant women and children, and enhancing the nutritional conditions of poor children. Educational objectives focus on increasing the net enrolment rates of children from poor families in elementary and junior secondary schools, specifically targeting those who are out of the school system. The emphasis on education helps to equip future generations with the knowledge and skills necessary to improve their economic circumstances. Additionally, the integration of support for the elderly and persons with disabilities ensures inclusivity, addressing the varied needs of vulnerable populations.

This initiative has already supported over 6 million school-aged children, approximately 4 million individuals, including pregnant women and young children, 1.2 million elderly people and 800,000 persons with disabilities, addressing their specific needs to improve their quality of life.

The program underwent significant policy adjustments in 2017 to streamline its administration. Originally, grant amounts varied based on household composition, ranging from IDR 800,000 to a maximum of IDR 3.7 million annually, which aimed to accommodate diverse family needs but posed administrative challenges.⁸ The Ministry of Social Affairs (Mosa) simplified these amounts to fixed annual grants of IDR 1,890,000 for regular beneficiaries and IDR 2,000,000 for elderly, disabled, or those in Papua and West Papua, enhancing predictability and transparency. A case study from Tapin Regency in South Kalimantan demonstrated the program's positive impact, reducing the stunting prevalence among children from 45.3% in 2013 to 13.6% in 2020 (Marantek and Sejati, 2023).

PKH also reduces the financial burden on poor families, encourages behavioural changes, and introduces recipients to formal financial products and services. Monitoring and evaluation involve collecting data on household updates, student attendance, health verifications, and complaints, which field workers enter into the PKH Programme Management Information System (Pmis). However, annual evaluations have not been consistently conducted.

The graduation process reassesses beneficiaries' poverty status after six years to determine if they should continue receiving benefits for an additional three years, complemented by other support programs like KUBE-PKH⁹ and Family Development Sessions. Since its inception, the PKH program has seen a graduation rate of around 15%, meaning that a significant number of households have improved their socio-economic status to the point where they no longer need program support. Prosperous-independent graduates often had better asset ownership, higher education levels, and a greater productive capacity. Despite the challenges, many graduates maintained positive health and education behaviours after exiting the program.

Indonesia's Family Hope Program (PKH) effectively reduced poverty and promoted social welfare. By enhancing monitoring, evaluation, and the graduation process, the effective implementation of the program was bolstered.

8. Benefits are capped at a maximum of four individuals per family.

9. Social economic empowerment program called Kelompok Usaha Bersama (KUBE).

3.2 The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation of India in addressing the inequalities in access to basic services (water and sanitation) (SDG 1 Target 1.4)

To enhance the ease of living for citizens, the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) was launched in 500 cities in 2015. The AMRUT mission aimed to achieve universal coverage of water supply by providing 13.9 million households with tap connections. Additionally, the mission proposed to increase sewer/septage coverage from 31% to 62% by providing 14.5 million connections. To date, 11.2 million tap connections and 0.87 million sewer connections were provided in the first phase. Sewage treatment plants with a capacity of 1,800 MLD were created, with 907 MLD being reused (India, 2021). This mission reduced disease load and improved the quality of life for all, especially women, by saving time and energy that can now be put to other constructive use. Further, it aims to ensure access to essential civic amenities such as water supply, sewerage, urban transport, and parks, thereby significantly improving the overall quality of life in urban areas. The key focus areas of the programme include development of Water Supply systems, Sewerage, Septage Management, Storm Water Drainage, Urban Transport improvements, creation of Green Spaces and Parks, implementation of Reforms in management and support systems, and Capacity Building initiatives. The mission prioritizes achieving universal coverage of water supply and sewerage services as its primary objective. Additionally, up to 2.5% of project costs are dedicated to enhancing parks with features specifically designed for children and the elderly. The mission also supports start-ups in the water sector through sub-Missions. To achieve SDG 6 and expand the ease of living in the water sector from 500 to all statutory towns, the AMRUT 2.0 has been launched. Additionally, Mission AMRIT Sarovar, part of AMRUT 2.0, focuses on developing and rejuvenating water bodies. Central assistance for project implementation is provided in three instalments, with the third instalment contingent upon achieving specified outcomes. With the aim of making the Indian cities "water secure" and providing functional water tap connections to all households, circular economy of water is encouraged by affecting water source conservation, rejuvenation of water bodies and wells, recycle/reuse of treated used water, and rainwater harvesting by involving community at large (idem, ibidem).

Formulation of GIS-based Master/Development Plans for 500 AMRUT Cities is one of the important reforms under AMRUT. AMRUT 2.0 mission co-opts for community participation by engaging women and youth for concurrent feedbacks about its progress. Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) are involved in water demand management, water quality testing and water infrastructure operations. The Mission encourages smart elements to be incorporated in every project. It also has a sub-Scheme on well rejuvenation. Capacity building of stakeholders

are regularly carried out and students are included in surveys of projects and outputs through gig economy model.

The Mission includes a reform agenda that must be implemented within the first four years and evaluated through third-party assessments, citizen feedback, and interviews with officials. The reforms are categorized into two types, viz. mandatory reforms which are implemented on property tax and user charges and Incentive based reforms on water conservation, urban governance and energy efficiency. Major reforms on water conservation include reduction in non-revenue water demand to below 20%, recycle of treated used water to meet at least 20% of total city water demand and 40% for industrial water demand at state level, 24/7 water supply with “Drink from tap” facility, rejuvenation of water bodies and development of green spaces and parks. Reforms on governance include, ease of getting water and sewer connections, raising funds through issuance of municipal bonds, online municipal services system, electric vehicle Charging Points in cities with population above 50,000, augmenting double entry accounting system, public private partnership (PPP) projects in non-million plus cities and involvement of community especially women SHGs in water infrastructure management. Major reforms on energy efficiency include effective Operations and Management Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for water supply and sanitation infrastructure. Successful reforms implemented in a year are awarded in the succeeding financial year.

AMRUT is essential to address the growing population in Indian cities, especially with inter-state and rural to urban migration. It aims to create sustainable, inclusive, and resilient urban environments by addressing key challenges in water supply, sanitation, and urban infrastructure.

3.3 The Zero Hunger strategy of Brazil in addressing hunger (SDG 2)

The Fome Zero Institute revealed that in 2023, 13 million Brazilians were lifted out of hunger, marking a significant improvement in absolute numbers from 2022, when 33 million people experienced food insecurity in Brazil compared to 20 million in the following year.¹⁰ The study, commissioned by the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (Ministério do Desenvolvimento e Assistência Social, Família e Combate à Fome – MDS), utilized data from the Family Budget Survey and the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua – PNAD Contínua), both conducted by Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística – IBGE).

10. Available at: <https://www.g20.org/en/news/13-million-brazilians-stopped-starving-in-2023-according-to-research>. Accessed on: July 25, 2024.

The research attributes the reduction in food insecurity to several factors, including increased income among the population due to declining unemployment rates, benefits from income transfer programs, an increase in the minimum wage above inflation, and favourable economic indicators. Initiatives like Bolsa Família, National School Feeding Program (Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar – PNAE) etc. achieved remarkable success, resulting in Brazil's removal from Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Hunger Map in 2014 and solidifying the nation's global leadership in advancing the Human Right to Adequate Food (HRAF).

The “Zero Hunger” (Fome Zero) strategy, launched in 2003 represents one of the most ambitious social policies aimed at eradicating hunger and poverty in Brazil. This comprehensive strategy emerged from the pressing need to address severe food insecurity affecting over a third of Brazilian households despite the country's significant economic growth and agricultural productivity. The program integrated various initiatives, including direct food assistance, financial support to family farmers, and educational programs, demonstrating a holistic approach to tackling the multifaceted issue of hunger. The Zero Hunger strategy started operating on several key principles: strong political commitment, combining immediate relief with long-term development, connecting rural and urban areas, adopting an intersectoral approach, ensuring civil society participation, and establishing a robust legal framework (Silva, Del Grossi and França, 2011). Central to its implementation was the creation of the MDS, which coordinated efforts across various government sectors and integrated existing programs into a cohesive strategy aimed at improving food security and supporting sustainable development (Souza, 2022).

Several pivotal programs under the Zero Hunger strategy include Bolsa Família, National Program for Strengthening Family Farming (Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar – Pronaf), Food Acquisition Program (Programa de Aquisição de Alimentos – PAA), and PNAE. Bolsa Família, a conditional cash transfer program, provided financial aid to millions of low-income families, significantly improving their purchasing power and access to food (Soares et al., 2010). The program spans all 5,570 municipalities in Brazil, providing assistance to about 21 million families.¹¹ Its main eligibility requirement is that the income per person in each family does not exceed BRL 218 per month. In 2011, the program was highlighted in a United Nations report to the Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) as a model for poverty eradication and promoting social rights among Brazil's most vulnerable population.

11. Available at: <https://www.g20.org/en/news/13-million-brazilians-stopped-starving-in-2023-according-to-research>. Accessed on: July 25, 2024.

The conditional payment scheme has garnered global attention for its innovative and bold approach, well-suited to an era marked by austerity measures, social networking, and platform development (Watts, 2013). Bolsa Família has already been adopted by nearly 20 countries worldwide, including Chile, Mexico, Indonesia, South Africa, Turkey, and Morocco.

The Pronaf, offers low-interest loans and insurance to family farmers, fostering sustainable agricultural practices and increasing rural incomes (Silva, Del Grossi and França, 2011). This initiative aims to rehabilitate degraded areas into productive land, fostering environmental compliance among family farmers while boosting the production of nutritious food and sociobiodiversity products. It focuses on family farmers, including those in land reform and traditional community settlements, aiming not only to enhance food production and generate jobs and income but also to contribute to achieving national and global climate change objectives (Productive..., 2024).

Enhancing productive restoration with improved quality and efficiency, recent updates include raising the financing limit from BRL 80,000 to BRL 100,000 and lowering the annual interest rate from 4% to 3%. In 2009, Pronaf issued nearly 1.3 million credit contracts worth approximately 5.5 billion USD. The program has significantly expanded its financial resources and beneficiaries, covering nearly 2 million families and offering the lowest rural credit interest rates in Brazil. Pronaf also introduced the Family Farming Insurance (Seguro da Agricultura Familiar – SEAF) in 2004, covering loans and expected net income against climate hazards, benefiting over 685,000 families in 2008-2009 with over 2.6 billion USD. Additionally, the Price Guarantee Programme for Family Farming (Programa de Garantia de Preço para a Agricultura Familiar – PGPAP), since 2006, protects producers against price drops, offering discounts equivalent to market and reference price differences (Brasil, 2010b).

The Brazilian Food Purchase Program or PAA program facilitated direct government purchases of food from family farms, ensuring stable incomes for farmers and supplying public food distribution programs (Anton, 2011) since 2003. It focuses on two primary objectives: enhancing food accessibility and bolstering family farming. On the consumer side, it distributes these products to individuals experiencing food and nutrition insecurity, as well as beneficiaries of social assistance network entities, food and nutrition facilities (such as public subsidized restaurants, community kitchens, and food banks), and other institutions. Between 2003 and 2009, PAA purchased nearly 2.6 million tons of food, benefiting approximately 138,000 family farmers and providing food to around 13 million people annually (Brasil, 2010a). The program significantly improved market access for family farmers and increased the availability of diverse, nutritious foods in food assistance programs.

The PNAE, provides nutritious meals to public school students, sourcing at least 30% of its food from local family farms, thus linking agricultural support with food security (Souza, 2022). Since its inception in 1955 (formerly known as The School Meal Campaign), it has evolved with time, it ensures that every student enrolled in public schools, including those in pre-school, primary, secondary, technical, and vocational education institutions, receives a daily meal that meets at least 15% of their nutritional needs. With an annual budget exceeding R\$ 4 billion (764 million USD), the Brazilian PNAE serves over 40 million students in over 160,000 schools across all 5,570 municipalities in Brazil. The program provides 50 million meals daily, meticulously planned by over 8,000 nutritionists and monitored by 80,000 School Feeding Board members (WFP, 2021). Originally conceived as an initiative to combat hunger, the program has evolved into a policy targeting overweight and obesity. By promoting nutritious and balanced meals in schools, it aims to instil healthy eating habits among students. Through the implementation of nutritional guidelines and the inclusion of fresh, locally sourced ingredients, PNAE ensures the provision of meals that contribute to a wholesome diet.¹² By creating a stable market for family farmers, it also contributes to local economic development. Brazil is interested to enhance and broaden its School Meal program, introducing a new initiative known as the “International Cooperation Strategy on School Feeding”. This initiative aims to disseminate best practices and facilitate greater access to healthy, nutritious meals in schools worldwide.

The Zero Hunger strategy expanded to the “Brazil without Poverty” Plan, launched in 2011. This initiative aimed to enhance the reach and efficiency of existing programs, focusing on the poorest populations (Chmielewska and Souza, 2011). Brazil promoted the principles of the Zero Hunger strategy through South-South cooperation, sharing its experiences with other developing countries, particularly in Latin America and Africa. Brazil has been advocating for initiatives concerning food and nutritional security, sustainable agricultural practices, and promoting a vibrant regional bioeconomy. The goal is to foster global partnerships for sharing knowledge and promoting best practices among member nations, with a focus on the comprehensive development of the Amazon region.

Brazil’s experience underlines the importance of political will, civil society participation, and an integrated approach to social policy. While challenges remain, the successes of the Zero Hunger strategy make it feasible to address poverty and inequality in a sustainable manner by integrating millions of

12. Available at: <https://www.obesityactionsotland.org/campaigns-and-policy/international-learning/brazil/from-food-for-all-to-health-for-all-exploring-brazils-school-feeding-success/>. Accessed on: July 25, 2024.

impoverished individuals into the economy and society, thereby contributing to economic development.

3.4 Labour policy of Mexico in addressing income inequality (SDG 10)

In the period between 2018 and 2019, with an insurgence in job loss in Mexico, the country adopted labour laws to implement its constitutional reforms. As a result, the labour policies adopted by the Mexican government were employment promotion, salary recovery, youth building, elimination of outsourcing, restoration of profit-sharing rights and the New Labour Model. The Labour Model brought in new principles like freedom of association and collective bargaining that provided the workers right to be included into collective agreement as well as provided rights to worker organisations for protection in an event of interference by the employer in trade union activities, protection of the democratic rights of union members, provided free choice of radius of action, trade union autonomy from government, guaranteed trade union democracy, provided accountability and transparency and provided evidence of right to represent that entitled trade unions to negotiate collective agreements (Bensusán, 2020).

The 2019 Labour Reform strengthened the individual and collective rights of workers, also leading to salary increases. Almost 80% of Mexican households saw increase in their labour income over the last six years, well above inflation (Rios, 2024). Formal employment continued to grow, reaching historical highs with over 26 million workers, excluding those employed by state and federal governments. Additionally, real wages increased by 17.7% from 2018 to 2023 (National Employment Service from October 2018 to October 2023). The current minimum wage saw a real increase of 85% nationally and 178.9% in the border zone among exporting companies from 2018 to 2023 (National Minimum Wages Commission from 2018 to 2023). These improvements have contributed to a 23.7% reduction in the number of people living in poverty (Lovera and Corella, 2023).

In 2019, the Mexican government launched the Youth Building the Future Program, targeting young people aged 18 to 29 who are not studying or employed. The program aims to integrate these youths into economic and productive activities by placing them in workplaces and companies that provide on-the-job training. Participants receive a monthly stipend and social security benefits. To date, the program has benefited 2.7 million young individuals and has involved 223,928 workplaces (Jóvenes..., 2024).

The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which replaced the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta), entered into force on July 1, 2020. Agreements between the United States, Mexico, and Canada outlined the

labour commitments of the three countries. Regional trade was made conditional on substantial socio-occupational reforms in Mexico. In 2023, following the labour reforms that impacted employee conditions considerably, additional key reforms comprised an increase in vacation days, adoption of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 190, legitimization of collective bargaining agreements, issuance of Teleworking standard NOM-037, revision of the work-related illnesses chart, and escalation of the minimum wage.

The structural changes and transformations since the 2019 Labour Reform have promoted the individual and collective rights of workers. These reforms also led to salary increases, particularly through collective contracts that underwent the legitimation process. Along with the domestic Labour Policy of Mexico, the USMCA acted to advance the government's goals of enhancing labour rights and raising wages, in turn putting efforts to reduce the income distribution in the country.

4 CONCLUSION

Addressing inequalities within the G20 framework involves concerted efforts to tackle structural barriers and systemic discrimination while promoting policies that empower marginalized and vulnerable groups to participate fully in economic and social life. To effectively address poverty, hunger, and inequalities, the nations must facilitate the exchange of successful strategies and policies within nations to tackle poverty, hunger, and inequalities. Policies and programs that have been successfully implemented in individual countries can be adapted and adopted by other G20 member nations and even countries outside the group to effectively address and combat inequalities globally. Investments in joint research and data collection to better understand and address global challenges should be encouraged and effectively carried out. Strengthening infrastructure and logistics in reducing inequalities and ensuring support to the developing nations by the developed nations to achieve the SDG Targets can foster development. Providing funds and resources in the upliftment of vulnerable populations will be relevant and effective in catalysing the progress. By supporting infrastructure projects that improve access to basic services like clean water, sanitation, and transportation, particularly in underserved areas and promoting balanced urban-rural development ensures equitable growth and opportunities. International cooperation is need of the hour to ensure holistic development globally. This can only be achieved by sharing best practices and strengthening grassroot organisations that can make significant progress in reducing poverty, hunger, and inequalities, while fostering a more inclusive and sustainable global economy.

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