



## **Joint L20-W20 Engagement Partners Statement**

### **Fostering Women's Economic Empowerment and Ensuring Decent Work in an Interconnected World**

We welcome the theme of the German G20 Presidency, "Shaping an interconnected world". The global financial crisis demonstrated the degree and the intensity of interconnectedness among the countries of the world; it also showed the importance of international cooperation. Achieving stable financial markets as a foundation for stable employment and income security across the globe requires stable, gender-equal societies. Over the course of the last century, gender equality has improved substantially, but recently progress has slowed. For example, the gap in participation rates between men and women in G20 countries declined by 0.6 percentage points per annum between 2012 and 2015. Key impediments to women's full labour force participation include their larger share of unpaid domestic and care work, the gender wage gap, lack of adequate childcare, regressive tax measures, poor labour standards, and low wages. We support the G20 leaders' efforts to foster gender equality and are calling for concrete action to improve equality of employment, increase female labour market participation, close the gender wage gap, and share care and domestic work more equally between women and men.

#### **Improve equality of employment and ensure decent working conditions**

All too often, working women are rewarded with poverty-level wages and precarious jobs. Sometimes they are subject to violence in the workplace. Women make up a much larger proportion of part-time workers than men, often not out of choice. Informal work is often the only option available to poor women. Even minimum wages, if they exist, do not guarantee an income above the poverty line. Women are overrepresented among minimum wage workers, too. Poverty continues to be a women's issue, and there is still an urgent need to ensure an adequate standard of living for women and girls throughout their lifetime, including by strengthening social welfare systems. We call on the G20 to ensure that women's work is paid, valued and equal.

#### **Increase female labour market participation and implement "25 by 25"**

We urge G20 member states to put in place policies for achieving the "25 by 25" target (a 25 percent improvement by 2025) set by the G20 for reducing the labour participation gap. We call on each

member to devise a national plan of action and monitor its progress. Meeting the “25 by 25” target will require a comprehensive set of national-level activities and global commitment, in addition to formal legislation and informal changes in attitudes and norms that discriminate against women.

### **Close the gender gap in wages and pensions for equal and equivalent work**

On average, women are paid less than men. Women are often employed in jobs that are less valued; they receive lower wages, and they are offered fewer opportunities for advancement than men. In those areas where women do have access to the same jobs as men, they are underrepresented in high-quality, well-paid jobs in expanding sectors and overrepresented in the informal sector. Occupations carried out by women are usually lower paid. If current trends continue, the International Labour Organization estimates it will be 75 years before the principle of equal pay for equal work becomes a global reality; the World Economic Forum estimates 115 years. Women are also more vulnerable to poverty in old age than men: the unequal distribution of unpaid domestic and care work significantly impedes women’s and girls’ ability to stay in education, enter or re-enter the paid labour market, or pursue economic opportunities and entrepreneurial activities. As a result, there are often massive gaps in social welfare payments and pensions. As G20 populations age, this will place an additional burden on member state governments. We call on the G20 to implement concrete action to close the wage and pension gap by enacting, improving and enforcing laws and regulations that uphold the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value in the public and private sectors. We also urge the G20 to promote legal, administrative and policy measures that ensure women’s full and equal access to pensions, and reduce gender gaps in social welfare payments.

### **Share care and domestic work more equally between women and men**

The G20 must acknowledge the disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work placed on women, including caring for children, older persons, and the sick and disabled. Unpaid domestic and care work should not be discounted: it is socially and economically essential. Yet it is still undervalued and excluded from national accounting, resulting in a lack of appreciation for its economic value. If we do not properly consider how the paid and unpaid sectors relate to one another, gender inequality will endure. Men’s involvement in caregiving is increasing in some parts of the world, but nowhere does it remotely approach that of women. We call on the G20 to provide the necessary infrastructure for unpaid care work to be shared more equally between women and men. Furthermore, the G20 should promote the shared responsibility of women and men for unpaid care and domestic work.

## SIGNATORIES



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### About G20

The Group of 20 (G20) is an important forum for international economic cooperation. Within the G20, 19 leading industrial and emerging economies as well as the European Union coordinate their policies and agree on joint actions and principles. The G20 economies account for 85% of the global economy, 80% of world trade, and two-thirds of the global population. Those facts underline the significant potential of the G20 as a global platform to enable international economic co-operation and policy-making. The G20 is thus an important forum for building political will. It must lead in the implementation of the UN's ambitious Agenda 2030, focussing among other on women's economic empowerment, financial inclusion and prosperity for all.

### About L20

The Labour 20 (L20) represents the interests of workers at the G20 level. It unites trade unions from G20 countries and Global Unions. L20 Germany is facilitated by DGB - German Trade Union Confederation (Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund).

### About W20

The Women20 (W20) is the official G20 dialogue focussing on women's economic empowerment. W20 joins the global experiences of women's civil society organizations, women's entrepreneur associations and academia. W20 Germany is jointly organised by the National Council of German Women's Organizations (Deutscher Frauenrat) and the Association of German Women Entrepreneurs (Verband deutscher Unternehmerinnen, VdU).