



## **Summary of meeting**

### **The Recovery We Want: For People and Planet**

A virtual working breakfast briefing and interactive discussion in preparation for the 2021 FfD Forum

**Organizer: NGO Committee on Financing for Development, A substantive committee of CoNGO**

**Date: January 15, 2021; Time: 8:30 am - 10 am**

**Location: By Zoom**

### **Welcome and briefing on the 2021 Financing for Development FfD Forum and the Financing for Sustainable Development Report**

- **Welcome remarks:**  
Anita Thomas, Chair of the NGO Committee on Financing for Development
- **Preparations for the 2021 ECOSOC FFD forum and SDG Investment Fair: Opportunities for civil society engagement:**
  - Mr. Navid Hanif, Director, Financing for Sustainable Development Office (FSDO)
- **A briefing on the 2021 Inter Agency Taskforce Report on Financing for Development and proposed measures to tackle the impact of COVID-19:**
  - Ms. Shari Spiegel, Chief, Policy Analysis & Development Branch, FSDO
- **Updates on contribution to the Inter Agency Taskforce Report on Financing for Development and areas for strengthened advocacy in the aftermath of COVID-19:**
  - Ms. Beate Andrees, Special Representative and Director of the ILO Office for the UN
  - Mr. Robert Powell, Special Representative to the United Nations, International Monetary Fund
  - Ms. Audrey Liounis, Senior External Affairs Officer, The World Bank Group

### **Summary of points shared:**

- COVID-19 has revealed the vulnerabilities and offers an opportunity to identify areas that need urgent action especially with regard to the state of unemployment, economic contraction, displacement, the mounting debt burden, and reimagining and restructuring the global financial architecture.
- Macrolevel finance policies with a human centered approach is crucial for meaningful impact to address climate challenges, inequities in access to health and social protection based on one's own financial capabilities, violence against women, digital exclusion, and unemployment, especially for youth and older persons.
- The High Level Event on Financing for Development at the initiative of Canada, Jamaica and the United Nations Secretary General highlighted the issues of liquidity challenges, increasing security risks, the need for concessional finance alongside closing gaps created by illicit financial flows, expanding investments in infrastructure, mobilizing climate financing aligned with the Sustainable

Development Goals and the Paris Agreement, as well as the need for public sector to confront changes necessary to ensure inclusive digital technology.

- The upcoming FfD Forum must build on the political momentum from last year. The Forum is expected to generate commitments to advance actions in the areas generated as a result of the High Level Event on FfD. It is also important not to deviate from the goal of financing for equitable distribution and trade and to identify specific actions with clear time frames. The situation is not irredeemable, with political will, we will get back on track to achieving the 2030 agenda.
- The Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance recently developed a sharply focused program with five deliverables: develop investments platforms for moving money and Shifting incentives and habits towards achieving long-term objectives, create medium-long term objectives with incentives for people's welfare and the planet's health, support development and implementation of matrices and impact measurements, advance advocacy and engagement of which the first three are the most important. Companies are committed to shifting their investments around these areas.
- The SDG Investment Fair will take place alongside 2021 FfD Forum. The primary focus of the Fair will be: 1) presentation of projects, 2) policy spotlight to attract investment and meet key goals, and 3) encourage conversations about potential areas for investment, even when concrete projects are not available. How do we ensure that we manage risks, both foreseen and unforeseen?

#### **2021 Financing for Sustainable Development Report (FSDR):**

- The report will start with the global context and then move into thematic chapters. It will include a thematic chapter that uses a risk lens to analyze COVID-19 impact and response as well as climate and sustainable investing risks.
- In the overall framing and context of the report, it will pay attention to the fact that the Pandemic has revealed fault lines on current financing systems and risks that were already present prior to the onslaught e.g., the problem of over leveraging.
- The world has changed so much since the onset of the pandemic, yet many of the issues and recommendations have stayed the same. It has highlighted gender issues and issues of the most vulnerable and highlighted the intersection of social, economic, and environmental issues. However, financial support for Social Action recommended by Addis Ababa Action Agenda is sluggish.
- UNCTAD reports that there is a collapse of investment except in the technology sector. Shift toward green investment continues to grow and was the least impacted during the pandemic.
- The Report will cover rating agencies, their impact, and their future role.
- The report will cover climate financing. In assessing if there is a shift in the sustainability of the private sector, international cooperation is critical, and it is important to pay attention to greenwashing.
- The role of state and government is highlighted by the crisis. How do we strengthen it? How do heavily indebted countries deal with their new needs?
- Debt was at a record high before the crisis, and it was clear we would need to provide fiscal space for countries to address their fiscal challenges due to the pandemic.
- International cooperation is critical in financing and development, especially the role of development banks. COVID-19 pandemic has led to the fragility of markets across the world. Economic prospects going forward are uncertain, but what we do know is that the situation is grave in many developing countries. What we do today will impact the future.
- Social protection systems help countries in good times and provide an infrastructure during crises. Even before the onset of COVID-19, due to pre-existing financing gaps, 55% of world population had no access to social protection; \$1.2 Trillion is needed to establish universal social protection and \$78

billion is needed in least developed countries. Domestic resource mobilization, complementary international finance and greater solidarity and consultation between all actors including with civil society organizations is needed to extend social protection floors.

- The written input provided by the NGO Committee on Financing for Development (on its three priority areas, social protection, financial and digital inclusion, and climate finance) to the IATF Report outline was already circulated to those managing the thematic chapters.

**As we look to address the challenges and build back better, immediate action is needed in the following areas:**

- Deal with the medical emergency at hand by making vaccines available to all.
- Expand support for Small and Medium Enterprise (SME). While efforts are made to ensure medium term transformation through stimulus packages and inclusive finance, it also needs to be ensured that the finance reaches SMEs, especially in developing countries.
- Incorporate risk into the thinking as systemic risks are increasing and are interrelated to the economic, social, environmental matters. Identify the importance of the government's role in related programs.
- Private sector has a greater role to play. Establish global norms of responsibility for private sector entities beyond shareholders, leading to new thinking on regulatory policies and shifting responsibility to corporate boards.

**Recommendations:**

- Developed countries should invest another ~3.8% of GDP to establish social protection measures.
- Close protection gaps in an incremental way- leading up to full coverage in 2030.
- Extend contributory social protection in the informal sector, this can benefit primarily women.
- Continue close consultation with the NGO community.
- It is paramount to maintain public support for people and businesses until pandemic subsides especially for LDCs that need international financial support.
- In the FSDR, focus must be given to high debt levels; including debt management; debt transparency. It is important to do debt restructuring to address unsustainable debt burdens faced by many countries.

**Organizational updates:**

- IMF will remain heavily engaged in the FSDR process. An IMF update on the world economic impact will be published on January 26 (the publication can be accessed - [here](#))
- The World Bank moved quickly to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. A fast-track mechanism is available for funding for vaccine purchases. This includes vaccine readiness assessments. An important focus on corporate priorities is needed. The bank will invest more \$5 billion in SAHEL and nearby regions. Climate financing, debt and vaccines remain as primary focus.

### Responses from Member States

- **H.E. Ambassador Munir Akram**,  
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations,  
President of the Economic and Social Council
- **H.E. Mr. E. Courtenay Rattray**, Ambassador,  
Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations
- **H.E. Mr. Robert Keith Rae**, Ambassador,  
Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations
- **H.E. Mr. Satyendra Prasad**, Ambassador,  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Fiji to the United Nations
- **H.E. Mr. Magnus Lennartsson**, Ambassador,  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

### Summary of responses and comments:

- Supports the positions raised in the concept note for this meeting.
- There is a need to discuss and capture work that has been done in the Monterrey process and the work done with the High Level Event on FfD by Jamaica, Canada, and the Secretary General.
- Joblessness, possibility of famine, point to the need for larger and more ambitious action to address the fall-out from the pandemic. The difficulties in mobilizing financing should not be underestimated. Debt Suspension Sustainability Initiative needs to be extended and broadened. Need larger and more ambitious action to address the challenges ahead. Can the options identified - concessional finance from multilateral development banks - be scaled up?
- It is obvious that there is need for an urgent consolidation of the issues ahead of us, but we should not underestimate the difficulties in mobilizing climate finance.
- There is a major need for investment, especially for developing countries that are not receiving development infrastructure. An infrastructure investment facility under the auspices of the United Nations is proposed.
- A major problem lies in the investment in sustainable infrastructure. Without it there is no way to attain the SDGs, especially in developing countries that are not receiving that investment. Even those that are receiving the investment are the more sophisticated countries – the Least Developed Countries have no access to the markets. Need to change the paradigm of investment structures that are more aligned with political structures with the aim of increasing equality.
- **Debt crisis**
  - For the first time in 20 years, we will be pushing back towards underdeveloped countries. Some programs are contradictory and penalize developing countries and force currency devaluation. We need to change the unequal system that pushes the poorest to pervasive poverty in the future. The cycle of fragility will begin to feed itself, political stability, access to markets become threatened. We are probably at the start of that cycle.
  - The absolute figures needed for debt suspension are \$2-3 trillion for developing countries. However, the actual amount of debt suspension so far is in the low billions. Unless it is extended longer, to more, and to include the private sector, we cannot get to the numbers required for the relief needed.

- 73 countries are facing urgent difficulties now. There remains a gap between the actual benefit from debt suspension and needs to be both extended in time and broadened to more countries (especially vulnerable with global impact are stable countries in developing world who are not included among the original 70 countries). Already 5 countries are in default with 20 possibly following.
  - This is not a debt crisis like we have experienced in the past, this is a different kind of crisis. Many states of the global south that look reasonably stable, investible, etc. are likely to fall into highly fragile settings. It is important to address a question - Can multilateralism increase in the context of COVID? Can Special Drawing Rights come into play in this context and how?
- World Food Program is reporting increased food insecurity due to famine. There are reports of food insecurity in 20 countries and possibility of famine. At the same time, there are IMF programs that impose austerity, others that penalize developed countries and devalue the currency. Do we actually have the political will to build back better and to change the systemic issues?
- We will not reach success if we shy away from major political change. When we do come to the FFD forum, we will recognize that for the first time in 20 years we are pushed back towards underdevelopment, it is clear that we need to change the unequal system that pushes the poorest to pervasive poverty in the future.
- **Access to vaccines-** We are nowhere near the emergency phase of this pandemic. There is a false dichotomy that places people's lives against their livelihoods. An effective public health action is the simplest way to stabilize a faltering economy. Global pandemic requires a global response- our current response is not robust. Collective global action is required to distribute vaccines equitably. the ACT Accelerator program needs to be ramped up. The program requires \$28 billion to reach all countries and currently is funded only for \$5.5 billion.
- COVID-19 has made us turn in on ourselves- we are all in our own little rooms shouting at a screen. It does not allow for the same kind of dialogue and real conversations. While the focus of the news is national, it makes it difficult to move past the log jam and move towards global solutions.
- A pandemic, in its definition, is a multilateral event. We have done a good job at identifying the problems- debt; vaccine; lack of development - but all need more global response. Each country's rebuilding announcements are focusing on its own needs without an international aspect. There is a need to convince citizens that we need to help others, and, in that way, we will help our own countries. The UN Secretary General said, "solidarity is self-interest."
- It is not possible to have a serious discussion about challenges without considering Chinese activities – it is a reality. China has a major role in the world, a significant creditor, and we have less awareness of China's relationship around the world needed to achieve a comprehensive settlement. It is no longer a question for the Paris Club. Everyone must be at the table for a restructuring of debt.
- Second Committee will hold a High-Level Forum to open the upcoming FfD in hopes of bringing into closer relationship the political and financial sectors.
- Nordea bank in Sweden is now issuing green bonds for medium and small companies wherein borrowers need to commit to green growth and report on how they achieve it.
- Sweden honors its commitment to contribute 1% of its Gross Domestic Product to Official Development Assistance.
- Supporting and partnering with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) is a key to COVID response. CSOs should have a more inclusive involvement in responding to COVID-19. Sweden has found that cooperating with CSOs has been very effective.

- We need more space for CSOs to engage in serious dialogue with governments at the policy level to feed our knowledge into government policy loops. NGOs are close to the local level and see what works in communities, and we need to create an enabling environment not treating NGOs work as projects, but to build capacity over the long-term.

We need to recognize the magnitude of the historic challenges we are facing this year. We need to change the unequal system that pushes the poorest to pervasive poverty in the future. There could be resentment resulting out of the response to this pandemic. Rethink, reimagine, rebuild. We need to think hard about new and more honest ways about measuring human development. We must pursue building back better and greener. The response should prioritize the most vulnerable. Building back better will require large-scale green financing. Individuals and their rights must be at the forefront of recovery. Leaving no one behind requires this human rights lens.

### **Interactive discussion - comments/questions (shared orally or in chat):**

1. There is a need to ask long term questions, and a need to put pressure on the financing institutions where the decisions are actually being made. What can we do to move forward that financial architecture that must happen?
2. When will we think about goal 10 and promoting leadership? Given our crisis, if we begin by listening to local leaders, we would be more effective in shifting how the distribution of finances are made more effectively.
3. Is there a difference between the term social compact as used in the AAAA Paragraph 12 and social contract used in many conversations at the UN? Either way, the word social indicates that everyone should be engaged. This needs to start from the local and bridge up.
4. Our [research](#) at CIVICUS shows that in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Civil Society across the world responded in myriad ways to effectively support adversely impacted people. Civil Society Organisations work to ensure both inclusive decision making and effective service delivery in line with the needs of communities, yet across the world, civic space conditions remain challenging as evidenced by the [CIVICUS Monitor](#). How can we factor in civic space and civil society participation in financing for development decisions?
5. Globally, we are entering a phase of vaccine apartheid. Many countries are currently rolling out the vaccines against COVID-19. The COVAX initiative of WHO and GAVI is focused on equitable global access to COVID-19 vaccine. Pledges to COVAX reached \$2.4 billion, it needs another \$5 billion for 2021. Many countries have made contributions to the COVAX Initiative. The temporary TRIPS waiver request by India, South Africa, Pakistan, Kenya, and Swaziland to the WTO to produce vaccines and other therapeutics and make them easily available to low- and middle-income countries have met with objections. According to reports available, 9 out of 10 people living in nearly 70 countries will not get COVID-19 due to funding shortages. Developed countries have ensured vaccine access to their people and most of the available vaccines have been purchased by these countries. In fact, they have sufficient doses to vaccinate all their people three times. Lack of access and availability are creating another layer

of inequalities. Without universal access, there will be no equitable recovery. The wellbeing of all depends on the wellbeing of one. Multilateralism and international cooperation are taking a back seat. In the face of this reality, how will the Financing for Development Forum of the UN address this crisis.

6. While researching on “Climate migration “in Bangladesh, I have noticed another marginalized community is growing in cities that is “Climate Migrants “. They, including children, live on the street and get involved in labor like rickshaw pulling. Children are out of school and women are often victims of sexual harassments. Climate financing initiatives should also focus on financing for enhancing local knowledge for adaptation strategy rather than financing more on technology transfer. As all 17 goals and the related indicators clearly crosscut with environmental development, Climate financing should be given importance in each and every sector especially while developing “Local Governance and Social Accountability.”
7. What specific climate finance programs does the IMF and World Bank have focusing specifically on nature-based solutions?
8. It would be great to hear more about the plans to reform the debt management and debt restructuring architecture. This has been a priority for CSOs for a long time and became even more important since the COVID-19 crisis started. CSO principles on the topics are for example here:  
<https://www.eurodad.org/debtworkout>
9. It is critical that we can take real action as soon as possible. Unfortunately, if the global community had implemented agreements, we made over the last the 25 years or moved forward actions after previous financial crises, the health and economic crises spurred by the coronavirus likely would have been greatly reduced. We again are talking about political will.

In the short-term, it will not be this group that is making the critical decisions on debt, tax, trade, transparency policies to confront the corona crises. Many of these decisions will be made by the G20 and the IMF. However, this group can influence those decisions if bold statements are made now. In the long-term, it is incumbent on this group to move forward implementation and action on this agenda. What will we do, what will this group do both in influencing the short-term and acting on the long-term to respond to this crisis?

How will we move forward and implement a global bankruptcy process and trade regimes that protect the vulnerable? How will we act on transparency policies and policies that protect planet? If we fail to influence key decisions now and if we fail to move forward bold action - we will not emerge from this crisis with resilience. We will not have the tools in place to prevent the next crisis.

10. If there were a new international financial organization to fund the SDGs and facilitate and provide social protection floors and the climate crisis and biodiversity loss, what would be its three most important functions? What should it not do? How could problems in financing this be resolved so that the developed states have common interests with the developing and middle-income countries? That right now seems to be preventing SDR right when most needed? How would the people's interests be incorporated?

11. A comment was shared on the recent building of a second port in Sri Lanka by China and the consequential dire impact it will have for Sri Lanka by taking on unsustainable debt and losing control of its port and its land.
12. A question was raised on how the EU taxonomy could be useful in the global norm-setting.
13. What role could the stakeholder representations by ECOSOC and Major Group structure work effectively to represent the variety of interests and align them for the common good? How could governments and private sector partners be more effective in activating and scale effective solutions through this organization?

### **Closing remarks and debriefing**

- Liberato Bautista, President of the Conference of NGOs (CoNGO), gave the closing remarks.
- Those who were available were invited to join a half-hour debriefing and strategy session following the meeting. Participants discussed follow-up strategies and action steps to take.

- **The concept note of the event, the opening remarks (AThomas), and closing remarks (L Bautista) can be accessed at this [Google folder link](#)**
- **Moderator of event:** Anita Thomas
- **Chat moderator:** Marvie Misolas
- **Note takers:** Joe Klock, Martha Gallahue, and Elsa Barron
- **Planning Group:** Anita Thomas, Marvie Misolas, Teresa Kotturan, Winifred Doherty, Barry Herman, Thomas Pallithanam, and Graciano Gaillard
- **Note: The meeting followed Chatham House Rules**



Confirmed participants					
Member States					
1	H.E.Ambassador Munir Akram	Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, President of the Economic and Social Council	7	Muhammad Imran Khan	Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
2	H.E.Mr. Robert Keith Rae	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN	8	Erich Cripton	Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN
3	H.E. Mr. E. Courtenay Rattray	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the UN	9	Christine Bailey	Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the UN
4	H.E. Mr. Satyendra Prasad	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Fiji to the UN	10	Kaarina Airas	Permanent Mission of Finland to the UN
5	H.E. Mr. Rodrigo A. Carazo	Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN	11	Leticia Zamora Zumbado	Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the UN
6	H.E. Mr. Magnus Lennartsson	Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN	12	Sara E. Eriksson	Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN
			13	Leila C. Lora-Santos	Permanent Mission of Philippines to the UN
			14	Meryem Hamdouni	Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the UN
UN Agencies					
15	Navid Hanif	Director, UNFSDO	21	Huanyu Liu	Chief of Unit, Policy Integration, UNFSDO
16	Shari Spiegel	Chief, Policy Analysis and Development Branch, UNFSDO	22	Philipp Erfurth	UNFSDO
17	Beate Andrees	Special Representative and Director of the ILO Office for the UN	23	Amber Barth	ILO
18	Audrey Liounis	Senior External Affairs Officer, The World Bank Group	24	Jessica Pak	ILO
19	Robert Powell	Special Representative to the United Nations, IMF	25	Valerie Guillamo	IMF
20	Alberto Padova	Chief, Strategic Engagement and Policy Integration Branch, UNFSDO	26	Matthew Cummins	UNICEF
Civil Society Organizations					
27	Adan Islam	GCAP Asia	56	Jacqueline Shapiro	ECPAT USA
28	Allan Kalish	Global Distribution Advocates, Inc.	57	Janet Palafox	Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary
29	Anita Thomas	* Chair, NGO Committee on Financing for Development * Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund (DBA Women First International Fund)	58	Joe Klock	New Humanity
30	Ann Vaughan	Mercy Corps	59	John Muthengi	Passionist International
31	Arelys Bellorini	World Vision	60	Joseph Cornelius Donnel	Caritas International
32	Atef Soliman	GATEF organization	61	Klaus Schilder	Misereor

33	Audrey Kitagawa	United Religions Initiative	62	Leslie Wright	Zonta
					* President, Conference of NGOs (CoNGO) * General Board of Church and Society- United Methodist Church
34	Barry Herman	Social Justice in Global Development	63	Liberato Bautista	
35	Bodo Elmers	Global Policy Forum	64	Mandeep Tiwana	CIVICUS
36	Charlotte Jones	Intern, Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary	65	Margaret O'Dwyer	Company of Daughters of Charity
					* Chair, NGO Committee on Sustainable Development (NY) * Huairou Commission, Global Family & Youth for a Better World/Montessori MUN
37	Daniel LeBlanc	Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate & Vivat International	66	Margo LaZaro	
					* Co-Chair, NGO Committee on Social Development * Soroptimist International
38	Daphne Pierre	Startnoo	67	Maria Fornella	
39	Durstyne Farnan	Dominican Leadership Conference	68	Marides Santos	Vivat International
40	Elsa Barron	Intern, NGO Committee on FfD	69	Martha Gallahue	United Religions Initiative
41	Eric LeCompte	Jubilee USA	70	Marvie Misolas	Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, Inc.
					* Co-Chair, NGO Committee on Social Development * International Movement ATD Fourth World
42	Eva Hanfstaengl	Social Justice in Global Development	71	Monica Jahangir	
					* Vice Chair, NGO Committee on Aging (NY) * Soroptimist International
43	Frances Zainoeddin		72	Nazlee Maghsoudi	Chair, NGO Committee on Drugs
44	Francois Lorient	Convention of Independent Financial Advisors	73	Pamela Morgan	Zonta International
45	Fred Sullivan	Man Up Campaign	74	Paulus Rahmat	Vivat International
46	Gail Davis-Carter	Man Up Campaign	75	Quinn Wonderling	General Board of Church and Society- United Methodist Church
					* Co-Chair, NGO Committee on Human Rights * International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers
47	Gemma Adaba	Social Justice in Global Development	76	Roberta Nassar	
48	Gillian Nazareth	Red Dot Foundation	77	Rohan Dominic	Proclade International/Claretian Congregation
49	Graciano Gaillard	Global Foundation for Democracy and Development	78	Sheila Stamps	Business and Professional Women International
50	Hanifa Mezoui	International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions	79	Siren Fadler	Soroptimist International
51	Helen Saldanha	Vivat International	80	Stefano Prato	Civil Society FfD Group
52	Houry Geudelekian	* Chair, NGO Committee on the Status of Women, (NY ) * Unchained at Last	81	Susan O'Malley	Business and Professional Women International
53	Ilona Graenitz	* Chair, NGO Committee on Sustainable Development, Vienna * Socialist International Women	82	Teresa Kotturan	Sisiers of Charity Federation
54	Indira T	Intern, NGO Committee on Social Development	83	Valentine Berberian	Armenian Relief Society
55	Ingeborg geyer	* Vice Chair, NGO Committee on Sustainable Development, Vienna * Zonta International	84	Winifred Doherty	Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd