

Hamburg, 23 June 2021

Open letter by representatives of international Community Foundations to the G20

**Dear Hon. Prime Minister,
Dear Mr. Draghi,**

We, the signatories of this open letter, seek to highlight the huge significance of this year's G20 Presidency for the cities and communities and their ongoing experiences with responding to emergencies like a global pandemic and, likewise, their ability to act on the global climate crisis.

The last 16-18 months have left the world not only within a global '*vulnerability experience*' but equally showed the importance of local leadership and local institutions such as Community Foundations to deal with it. Given the unprecedented challenge of a pandemic, immediate access to specific local needs and infrastructure was and still is a determining factor for the success of any national response measure. The contribution of thousands of locally embedded Community Foundations in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic therefore helped a great deal to limit its impacts.

With this letter we would like to call upon you in your capacity as this year's President of the G20, because we believe that the challenges of a pandemic are only a fraction of the constraints cities and communities face unless climate action is on top of the agenda of multilateral decision making. Most of the cities and communities do already experience drastic impacts of climate change such as floods, heatwaves or water and energy shortages and urgently need to embark on trajectories leading to increased resilience. However, this will only be possible if national governments and multilateral forums such as the G20 do their part and literally do everything in their power to mitigate climate change and provide support to adapt to the already unavoidable impacts.

There is indeed a new global momentum for increased climate ambitions across all sectors including the finance and the private sector. Also, numerous new climate plans by countries such as China, USA, EU, Japan, Korea or the UK are encouraging signs. These words now require concrete implementation plans including interim targets and we call upon you to seize the opportunity and to conclude this year's G20 summit with a bold climate commitment - closely aligned with experiences of communities and cities. In fact, any political framework agreed on multilateral forums such as the G20 is only as good as it is *implementable* and *implemented* by cities and communities.

The outcome of this year's G20 summit therefore should include:

- Alignment of all measures with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their implementation by cities and communities. Eventually, every recovery strategy and every global effort to stimulate the economy must be implemented at territorial and local levels where citizens can be part of the change and must be intertwined with community welfare policies.

The SDGs remain, now more than ever, a key reference for multilateral as well as local and regional decision making.

- Consistency and functionality of essential public services within the cities and communities as well as equal access to common goods and basic needs such as housing, water, and energy etc.
- Support of local and regional governments and their associations on all levels to adapt to unavoidable climate impacts including access to finance, technical and medical support as well as climate resilient spatial planning. This also involves support to make cities and communities water resilient and to include Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to protect cities from floods and heat strokes.
- Clear mandate for cities and communities to harvest the potential of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies across all sectors in order to mitigate their contribution to the global climate crisis.

Cities are indeed at the forefront of climate action and at the same time, responsible for around two-thirds of global final energy use as well as for significant indirect consumption of energy through other goods and materials. They are one of the main causes of human induced climate change – and exposed to the highest risks due to climate impacts. Coastal cities may face the most severe threat since their foundation as potentially faster than expected sea level rise may convert today's land into uninhabitable regions within this century. In this spirit we particularly appreciate the efforts of the engagement groups such as the Urban20 (U20) who are eager to bring urban issues to the global fore and the Vulnerable20 (V20) who give voice to those being systematically vulnerable to climate change. F20 is the voice for philanthropic foundations, working on climate change and the SDGs at the G20 and other UN processes.

Community Foundations can be vital 'change agents' in translating multilaterally agreed policy frameworks into effective measures at the local level as they offer specific insights on the operating environment including local networks, infrastructure and organisational skills.

The G20 represent a unique opportunity to revisit our common global responsibility and strengthen the bond of global solidarity to address the interconnected challenges of health, climate and rebuilding our economies. Effective responses to these challenges must be based on efficient and viable policy networks of both regional and global scope and thus to be made a community task.

It is time for the G20 to draw on global lessons and acknowledge the potential of 'local action for global good'. We as representatives of foundations including Community Foundations can help transform the paradigm of 'think globally and act locally' into real-time experiences on the ground.

The joint letter has been signed by:



Dr. James Magowan
Coordinating Director
European Community Foundation
Initiative (ECFI)



Gaetano Giunta
Secretary General
Fondazione di Comunità di Messina



Dr. Catherine Brown OAM
Chief Executive Officer
Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation



Stefan Schurig
Secretary General
Foundations Platform F20



For a transformation that leaves no one behind.



Jon Everett
Director of Business Growth and
External Affairs
UK Community Foundations



Andrew Chunilall
Chief Executive Officer
Community Foundations of Canada



Andrea Dicks
President
Community Foundations of Canada