

THE FAIR SHARE FOR CHILDREN CALL TO ACTION

We, the Laureates and Leaders for Children, call for urgent and accountable action by governments to prevent a devastating crisis for our children as a result of COVID-19. We cannot afford to lose a generation for the lack of political will to allocate a fair share for children in the global economic response to the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a cataclysm in the lives of millions of children. The health, education and economic crises caused by COVID-19 will damage years of progress in child labour, trafficking, and slavery across the world. This is entrenched by the inequality of the world's response to date, which has seen trillions announced for the richest parts of the world and very little for the hardest-to-reach children.

In May 2020, 88 Nobel Laureates and World Leaders signed the [Laureates and Leaders' Fair Share for Children statement](#) demanding that 20% of the global COVID response, at least \$1 trillion, be allocated to the 20% most marginalised children and their families.

The Laureates and Leaders for Children Fair Share Summit, hosted on 9 – 10 September 2020, built upon the demands raised in the joint statement and further emboldened and universalised our demand for urgent, compassionate, and accountable action to protect the world's most marginalised children from the catastrophic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This Fair Share for Children Call to Action which was the outcome of the joint statement and the Summit is rooted in the call for justice made by the more than 40 moral leaders who raised their voice at the Summit.

We, the Laureates and Leaders for Children, make a warning statement that the world needs to either act now or risk the first increase in child labour, trafficking, and child slavery in decades, as:

- 10.9 million children are at risk of dropping out of school.
- An additional 130 million people could face acute food insecurity; 1.2 million additional deaths of children under five due to undernutrition could occur in just six months.
- 71-100 million people could enter extreme poverty, which will result in the first increase in child labour in two decades since, in certain countries, a 0.7% increase in child labour is expected for every 1% increase in poverty.

[A Fair Share for Children: Preventing the Loss of a Generation to COVID-19](#), issued by Laureates and Leaders for Children, reveals that only 0.13% of the US\$8.02 trillion global response has been allocated to multilateral funds and appeals to support the world's most vulnerable children and their families. This is just US\$10.2 billion.

We, the undersigned, believe this response is unequal, unjust, and immoral. If no action is taken, the number of child labourers, child slaves, children out of school, and undernourished children will rise for the first time in decades, putting millions of young lives at risk. We cannot afford to lose a generation of children and young people for the lack of political will to allocate a fair share of the global COVID-19 response to children. Before the pandemic, almost 20% of the world's children were living on US\$2 or less a day. We believe that a fair share for the most marginalised children and their families should be 20% of the global COVID-19 response.

We, the Laureates and Leaders for Children call for urgent action by:

- reiterating our demand that the world must urgently provide its 20% most marginalised with a 20% fair share of COVID-19 relief. Donor governments must immediately contribute US\$1 trillion in COVID-19 support for children and their families in low- and lower-middle-income countries to arrest the imminent rise in child labour and trafficking; protect children from violence, including growing online child sexual abuse; provide high quality and inclusive universal education, and curb child hunger and mortality.

This commitment could save more than 70 million lives if the funding was allocated to:

- The UN's Global Humanitarian Response Appeal (US\$7.87 billion), the WHO COVID-19 appeal (US\$299.3 million), and the Education Cannot Wait emergency appeal (US\$310 million).
- The cancellation of all external debt payments due from the governments of low-income countries in 2020 and 2021 to enable the extension of public services and social protections for the most marginalised children and their families (US\$50.45 billion).
- The financing gap for the health UN Sustainable Development Goal in all low- and lower-middle-income countries, from 2021-2030 (US\$475 billion).
- Financing the UN SDGs on water and sanitation for at least 2021-2022 (US\$228 billion).
- Financing quality universal education from pre-primary to secondary education in all low- and lower-middle income countries for at least 2021-2022 (US\$78 billion).
- Committing to the start-up and initial costs for a Global Social Protection Fund which includes specific support measures for children in every low-income and lower-middle-income country from 2021-2030 (US\$100 billion).
- Cover the manufacture and supply for a global COVID-19 vaccination programme (US\$25 billion).

In order to ensure long term sustainability for marginalised children and their families, we, the undersigned, also:

- Demand immediate and accelerated action to end all forms of child labour by 2025, and eliminate modern slavery and trafficking, including strengthening social protection, implementing existing laws, and creating due diligence legislation to cover all tiers in the global supply chain in businesses. Businesses must ensure and invest in compliance measures to eliminate and prevent child labour, trafficking, and slavery from global supply chains.
- Urge all donor countries, private lenders, and multilateral institutions to cancel all existing debt of low-income countries to enable the extension of public services and social protections for the most marginalised children and their families.

- Support the immediate creation of a multidimensional Global Social Protection Fund for low- and lower-middle-income countries to reduce poverty, inequality, social exclusion and social insecurity that have been exacerbated especially for the vulnerable children and their families, due to the pandemic.
- Demand action to deliver the UN Resolution on “International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19” and urge UN member states to declare COVID vaccines as a global common good.

We, the Laureates and Leaders for Children, resolve to empower children and young people everywhere to exercise their rights as the inheritors and creators of a free and equal world. We will continue to champion the youth-led 100 Million campaign to support and empower youth activism.

Building upon the previous two summits in 2016 and 2018, we reaffirm that if children are not safeguarded everywhere, then our global response to this crisis and beyond will have failed everywhere.

As Nobel Laureates and World Leaders, this is our individual and collective will for a just, compassionate, and child-friendly world where every child can be free, safe, healthy, educated, and empowered.

We will deliver our demands to every head of state and government and the United Nations General Assembly. We call on civil society to defend the rights of children around the world.

We, the Laureates and Leaders for Children, conclude this Fair Share for Children Summit 2020 with the resolve to seize this moment in order to overcome inequality everywhere, share and build power for children and young people, and create a new compassionate story for our future.

*Outcome of the Laureates and Leaders Fair Share for Children Summit 2020
9 – 10 September 2020*