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G20 Research Forum

Virtual Brainstorming Session

T20 Reforms for Upcoming G20 Developing Country Presidencies

November 24, 2021

Summary and Key Recommendations



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Overall Impression

- T20 was introduced in 2012 during the Mexican presidency of G20.
- T20 is one of the active Engagement Groups of G20 such as B20, L20, W20, S20 and others.
- T20 leads the Engagement Groups with focus on inclusiveness and outreach especially regarding think tanks beyond the G20 member countries.
- Over the last five to six years, the number of new think tanks that have become involved has increased, and there has been a broadening and greater inclusivity in terms of participation.
- With Indonesia's leadership, T20 would enter into a new phase of Southern leadership of G20. Indonesian presidency followed by India, Brazil, and South Africa would probably provide opportunities to the Southern actors in shaping the G20 agenda.
- In general, 80 per cent of T20 policy briefs have been prepared by institutions and experts from the OECD countries. Only 10 per cent of those have come as joint contributions from the developed countries and the Southern scholars together with 3 per cent contribution from the multilateral institutions.

Past Presidencies

GERMANY (2017)



Dr. Imme Scholz

Deputy Director, German Development Institute (DIE), Germany

- T20 needs to be a joint process of thinking and writing policy briefs. It needs to be ensured that it is not 80 per cent by OECD and 10 or 20 per cent by the Southern scholars but there is always joint authorship.
- Policy briefs should be on the topics which clearly relate to the G20 agenda, where scientific evidence exists; so not to undertake any new research as such but basically to base the policy briefs on existing research.

- Research should be on topics with scope for value addition and the responsibility of the G20 in such topics should be clear.
- Conceive the summit and inception conference as spaces for joint reflection so that there should be spaces for interaction with the Sherpas and other government members. This is a channel for transferring policy recommendations to the G20. But there is also a need for a space for joint reflection of the think tanks.
- During Germany presidency, close policy dialogues were held with those ministry representatives who were organizing the Working Groups. This is very important for also informing the Task Forces, where are the negotiations going so that authors have clearer understanding for preparing policy briefs and policy recommendations.
- Co-chairs of Task Forces from the previous presidencies need to be included along with the new ones and regular Task Force meetings should be held.
- G20 Sherpas should get what they are looking for on different themes. Hence, selected number of policy briefs should be shortlisted than maximum number of outputs.
- It is very important to have a Steering Committee or an Advisory Group of T20 to maintain continuity among the co-chairs of Task Forces.
- To overcome the silos between working groups and between task forces, especially between Development and Finance tracks, proper communication among the Task Forces should be established.
- Moreover, define the topics in a way that development is not only seen as ODA or South-South cooperation but in a holistic sense.
- A lot of thinking should go to defining the topics, the Task Forces and the co-chairs so a good mix of Indonesian think tanks are present in T20.

ARGENTINA (2018)



Ms. Gala Diaz Langou

Executive Director, CIPPEC, Argentina

- Diversity and representativeness are crucial to improving the results of T20.
- During Argentinean Presidency focus was on ensuring representation of all regions and also ensuring that each Task Force and the policy briefs had a socio-economic balance in terms of the origin of the country, the authors those were involved in writing policy briefs.
- To reach out to the official tracks, T20 Argentina focused on advocacy strategy and the communication strategy along with the research strategy.
- While deciding the task forces and identifying the policy briefs that were going to be produced, the key actors in the governmental tracks were involved from the very beginning informing them of the Task Forces and the thematic focus that we were going to be working on.
- This approach was relevant particularly to identify the best timing to discuss those recommendations not only with the Sherpas, but also with working groups, with the ministerial meetings, and the track one and track two processes.
- Reaching out to policymakers was mostly done by the Task Force Co-chairs.
- The Co-Chairs were encouraged to reach out to the Sherpas and the key actors from their home countries.
- Another relevant issue was to plan the meetings according to the G20 Working Groups, Sherpa, and Finance track meetings.
- Two different tracks were set out:- the official T20 events and several associated events organised by think tanks and other organizations within the T20 Community.
- Attention was on the communication strategy especially the best way social networks could be mobilized in the process and to disseminate on T20 work and policy briefs.

- Equal focus was given to having a presence in opinion pieces, in traditional media, and engagement with key actors face-to-face.
- Based on our experience, we would recommend having no more than 10 Task Forces, and then have a crucial role in the selection of the task force Co-Chairs.
- Co-chairs need to not only foster the production of policy briefs and ensure the quality and the representativeness of those policy briefs, but also ensure some degree of continuity in those issues that would allow the T20 to continue as a strong institution within the G20 process, but also avoiding capture of specific people or institutions in fostering some of those issues.
- Peer-review process of the policy briefs was found very useful that in ensuring the quality of the research pieces.
- Regarding the functioning of Finance and Development Tracks, the focus may be on the development issues that the countries are facing and also to recognise that finance is a crucial part of the tools to resolve those issues.
- Special mention on the funding of T20. Argentina sought out private actors as sponsors. This allowed us to have the independence that was required and have them not be involved in the research process but be able to have some specific visibility.
- It was also found useful to seek particular knowledge partners particularly international organisations that might contribute financially and also bring depth in the research process.

JAPAN (2019)



Prof. Naoyuki Yoshino

*Professor Emeritus (Economics), Keio University, Japan
& Lead Chair, T20 Japan*

- It is very important to have both continuing topics and new topics. So first, think about what are the continuing topics like infrastructure, SME, financial inclusions, etc. And second, also introduce new topics, especially after COVID-19 such as fiscal deficits, rising income disparities, etc.

- In the case of Japan, 10 topics were selected and various think tanks were assigned all over the world to become the lead Chairs of each Task Force. Then for each topic Co-chairs were identified.
- The role of T20 is different compared to G20. T20 may have different conclusions, different policy proposals as long as it is based on evidence. But in G20, there has to be unanimous opinion.
- Most importantly, connecting T20 proposals with G20 is critical. Many things can be proposed in T20 but it is very important to have policy briefs on topics linked to G20 themes.
- The coverage of the global think tanks is very important so do not just focus on one or two selected think tanks.

ITALY (2021)



Dr. Antonio Villafranca

Research Director, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI), Italy & National Coordinator, T20 Italy

- Key point is to focus on providing policy recommendations to the G20, which is the main mission of T20.
- The key issue is working with the G20 Sherpa office and with the Finance track in order to give T20 contribution in advance because the policy briefs will be ready in late June, analyzed in late June or early July, which is too late to have an impact on the working groups.
- During Italian presidency our best effort was to take part in the Working Groups and in the Task Forces all throughout the year.
- Synchronization of T20 activities and G20 activities is absolutely crucial.
- Another important area that Italy emphasized was bringing out statements possibly joint statements with other Engagement Groups.
- Proper communication with mass media in advance is needed to have an impact on the broader audience.

- An important mission of T20 is to disseminate and engage. For that, all interlocutors were invited to all our events essentially to enrich the debate and outreach to 9 million people worldwide.
- On continuity, it is necessary to build upon what has been done in the past presidencies rather than writing the same policy briefs on the same topics.
- For inclusiveness, T20 Italy doubled the mailing list of T20 by adding a number of new think tanks.

Current Presidency

INDONESIA (2022)



Prof. Bambang Brodjonegoro

Professor, University of Indonesia & Lead Co-Chair, T20 Indonesia

- For T20 it is critical to convince others about the important topics of G20 that are relevant, not only for Indonesia as the hosts but also for developing countries in general.
- Introduction of new topics as well as continuing with the same topics go hand in hand. Topics that worth continuing are climate change, international finance and the most burning topic of the time i.e. recovery from COVID-19 pandemic.
- The over arching theme for T20 Indonesia is about recovery, recover together, recover stronger.
- T20 Indonesia has proposed new topics such as digital economy or digital transformation. Some issues like poverty that might not be relevant for some developed economies have also been proposed by us.
- Due to the pandemic, poverty rate has increased coupled with job losses and collapse of incomes. From that perspective, poverty becomes another issue along with income inequality, which is affecting the developed economies in the present context as well.
- Thrust is on SDGs but on financing issues especially on the blended finance. Indonesia is trying to contribute to

developing a good formula for promoting blended finance to accelerate SDG funding; the need for which is felt strongly due to the pandemic itself. Multilateralism will be part of this effort as well.

- T20 Indonesia underscores the fact that economic recovery is not just to recover back to the condition prior to the pandemic but a hope that recovery will also bring new ideas for growth, new ideas of development, for example, better health management.
- For inclusion, our efforts are on to reach as many participants as possible, not only think tanks in Indonesia, but also think tanks from other parts of the world including the non-G20 countries.
- T20 Indonesia is confident of pooling good representation from each continent and from each group of countries by income - low income, lower middle, upper middle, as well as emerging economies and of course, the advanced economies.



Prof. Djisman Simandjuntak

Senior Economist & Chair of the Board of Directors, CSIS, Jakarta & Lead Co-Chair, T20 Indonesia

- Drawing a coherent focus is required. Besides Troika, the focus should also be on friends and like-minded countries.
- With participation of people from other countries T20 Indonesia can organise similar things in the months to come to a focus.
- Indonesia is going to really come up with a totally focused agenda for G20 Indonesia, centered on post-COVID-19 recovery, digitalization and energy transition.
- T20 Indonesia believes that we can interact with the G20 process well in communicating many of our ideas.
- G20 should be a leader-led process. Sherpa is important, but this is a time for the leaders to address the emerging global challenges.
- T20 Indonesia operates in parallel with many other institutions. It is our effort to find areas in which think tanks around the globe can contribute meaningfully to the process.

We will reach out to many International organizations and to many other think tanks.

- Reaching out to Africa is a good idea especially from the diversity point of view. It is would be futile if same people meet again and again leaving little chance to generate creative ideas. In contrast, a new mix of participation could possibly provide scope for innovative ideas.



Dr. Yose Rizal Damuri

Head, Department of Economics, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta & Executive Co-Chair, T20 Indonesia

- How to connect with G20 is a topmost priority for T20 Indonesia. A number of initiatives and efforts are being taken to improve communications with G20. We hope to establish good connect of the discussion in T20 with the Working Groups in G20.
- In this endeavour, specific Indonesian scholars and researchers are actively engaged in helping the Indonesian Government to formulate the priority agendas for Working Groups in G20.
- Many of T20 Task Force Co-chairs are also involved in the formulations of priority agenda for G20 Working Groups.
- T20 Indonesia is also considering to have some kind of back to back meeting, back to back discussions between Working Groups and Task Forces in T20. We are going to send more messages, more recommendations to the G20 process even before the policy briefs are completed later in the year.
- Another crucial area of Indonesia is inclusion and enhancing participation, especially from the developing and less developed countries.
- T20 Indonesia will effectively use the T20 contact database shared by T20 Italy covering email addresses of thousands of researchers from all over the world in order to increase participation from other countries.



Dr. Riatu Mariatul Qibthiyyah

Director, LPEM, University of Indonesia & Executive Co-Chair, T20 Indonesia

- Engagement among the think tanks is important in itself to create more collaborative research.
- More engagement for strengthening the research and focus agenda for the global recovery is needed.

Upcoming Presidencies

INDIA (2023)



Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi

Director General, RIS, India & Co-Chair, Task Force-8, T20 Indonesia

- Time has come to bring in the unique Southern narrative and blend it with the prescriptive frameworks that have emerged over the years in the T20 platform.
- As cost of imports has gone up significantly for the small countries and their fiscal space is squeezed, it is timely to bring in diversity and infrastructure expansion leading to the 'Ease of Doing Business' and expansion and integration in the global economy.
- The jingoistic tendencies are fortunately on their decline, and we need to work towards it so that global cooperation is strengthened through triangular cooperation and through North-South partnership.
- Another issue is strained fiscal position, which is, in a way, accentuated by non-reforms in Special Drawing Rights (SDRs). Of the additional SDR allocation of \$675 billion, about \$375 billion are going to the OECD countries, and only \$21 billion are for the low-income countries.
- G20 has this huge responsibility to bridge this gap and, address the inequity that has multiplied, and make efforts to ensure access and equity when it comes to liquidity and access to global financial market.



Dr. Priyadarshi Dash

Associate Professor, RIS, India

- Time has probably come to include the missing middle, the new thinkers who are actually lost in the orthodoxy that is prevailing in the T20 process for long.
- Young scholars from new institutions particularly from the developing world are not finding enough space to express their views in the Task Force.
- Hopefully the G20 Research Forum that is jointly announced today by RIS, ERIA and LPEM, University of Indonesia would provide the necessary platform to these budding T20 thinkers.



Mr. Augustine Peter

Visiting Fellow, RIS, New Delhi

- As far as T20 is concerned, as in the case of G20 the issues for the future have to be the continuity of the old as well as the new issues that may have become relevant
- Moreover, it is not just the issue, but how the issues are analyzed, and how solutions are found, which will take into account the whole universe of countries in the world because every issue can be addressed and solutions can be found in different ways. Solutions should focus on the development interests of countries.
- Past may not always be guide for the future. Innovative ideas would show the way in many cases.
- For being effective in the G20 process the T20 will have to have a 'sixth sense' to identify in advance issues where consensus may be evading and come out with 'out of the box' and innovative recommendations for the Leaders.



SOUTH AFRICA (2025)

Ms. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos

Chief Executive, South African Institute of International Affairs, South Africa & Co-Chair, Task Force on Development Cooperation, T20 Japan and Saudi Arabia

- Effective mechanisms for intense two-way exchange between T20 and G20 can be thought of.
- T20 Chairs have actually engaged with the Sherpas and the Working Groups but it is also necessary to bring in the Task Force members (authors of policy brief submissions) at some stage into those conversations with policymakers, with the G20 chair.
- At present, there is a gap between attending the T20 meetings and that presence being converted into meaningful impact which is visible in the policy brief writing.
- Participation in T20 must be more focused and meaningful, in the sense that it must be able to create impact and potential for more impact.
- The upcoming developing presidencies must use the priorities that developing countries are facing and to engage as well as decentralize the engagement in the T20 process in a more meaningful way so as to take them forward in our policy engagement.
- Another crucial point needs more reflection by the T20 community is the policy brief legacy. Very often, we produce so much but not all of it is taken forward; some of it is too early whereas some of it is about contributing to the thinking.
- Over the next couple of presidencies the idea should be to re-emphasize some of those issues that have appeared in policy briefs in the earlier years, for which the time is ripe now for further discussion and elaboration.
- Another point is to have outreach engagements with think tanks in particular local participation because that creates additional avenues for dialogue and engagement as a lot of this is not simply about producing a policy brief, but getting some of those ideas into the policy debates.
- T20 should have a sixth sense. That sense means to identify issues, where the presidency concerned is in a dilemma. T20 research has to be evidence based as every solution cannot come from the past experience, innovative ideas has to come.
- It is extremely important that timely recommendations reach the official tracks of the host presidency. As per the current format, T20 recommendations come out too late for the leaders to analyze and consider, for negotiations.

- The concept of Troika is an important development which can contribute to continuity in the T20 process.

Multilateral Institutions/Individual Experts

Economic Research Institute for East Asia and ASEAN (ERIA), Jakarta



Ms. Anita Prakash

Senior Policy Advisor (Int. Economic Relations), ERIA, Jakarta

- Over the years, ERIA has tried to bring in new contributors into the T20 process, but the entire length of the ethos and rationality behind the T20 process is somehow unorganized.
- Unfortunately T20 message goes out at the end of the year for inviting the abstracts for the policy briefs which is why a lot of good ideas, good concept papers do not make through the whole filtration process.
- Many of the authors of the policy briefs are not known outside especially among the intelligentsia working in the field. They seem to understand how T20 works, but surprisingly no new writers come up.
- Certain amount of explanations about the selection process of the policy brief abstract should be considered in the T20 process.
- A little more thoughtfulness in making and attracting new writers into T20 is very important.
- Onus rests on creating more opportunities along with the ministerial tracks, doing it in more bits and pieces along the Sherpa track, giving more flexibility and opportunities for thematic Task Forces to present interim findings, among others.
- Creating some kind of a mini calendar within the calendar will be very helpful for selected tracks on which Indonesia is very keen.

- For T20 to be more effective, creating some sort of a mini-track along the Sherpa track or ministerials could make the relationship more symbiotic than arriving at the end of the year.
- Indonesia's top priority is recovery and rebuilding from the COVID-19 pandemic which is likely to be continued for at least next three to four years, if not more.
- Most importantly, developmental issues and the voice of developing countries is very important in G20 for the current as well as for the future developing country presidencies.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Paris



Mr. Federico Bonaglia

Deputy Director, OECD Development Centre, Paris & OECD Representative, G20 Development Working Group

- Focus ideally should be on three things: (1) Thinking of what should be on the agenda, (2) Need for helping the G20 have some kind of continuity of action and (3) Ensuring that there is stronger inputs from developing countries on G20 discussion.
- In light of the three forthcoming presidencies, OECD thinks that sustainable development is an issue that should remain very strongly and firmly on the agenda and should have some dignity.
- In order to issue some kind of continuity of action, open discussions can be organised that go beyond the Development Working Group (DWG) representatives to inform the preparation of the deliverables.
- As Indonesia followed by India, Brazil, and South Africa assume G20 presidency it gives us an excellent opportunity to ensure that the voices from the Global South are brought into the picture.

Grand Alliance, Paris



Dr. Nicolas Buchoud,
*Chief Executive & Co-Chair of T20 Infrastructure
Task Force, T20 Jaoan, Saudi Arabia & Italy*

- It is important to assess within the T20 that how much the value of expertise has been disrupted by the COVID-19 crisis.
- G20 pact on development or the creation of a UN Development Security Council perhaps could be a breakthrough for the T20.
- Interface between the T20 and the G20 and between the G7 and the T7 is equally important especially on global issues.
- In particular, some aspects of recovery, investment in infrastructure and other issues linked with labor, fiscal deficits, income deficits, etc. could be worked out at this interface.
- Some aspects of T20 and T7 may be common and effectively addressed so as to avoid the global geo-political disruption among the G20 on one hand and the G7 on the other hand.



Agenda

<p>16.00-18.00 hrs</p>	<p><i>Opening Remarks & Broad Contours of T20:</i> Prof. Sachin Chaturvedi, Director General, RIS, India</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i> Dr. Priyadarshi Dash, Associate Professor, RIS, New Delhi</p> <p><i>Lessons from the Past:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Naoyuki Yoshino, Professor Emeritus (Economics), Keio University, Japan • Ms. Gala Díaz Langou, Executive Director, CIPPEC, Argentina • Dr. Imme Scholz, Deputy Director, German Development Institute (DIE), Germany • Dr. Antonio Villafranca, Research Director, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI), Italy • Mr. Federico Bonaglia, Deputy Director, OECD Development Centre, Paris <p><i>Current Challenges:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Djisman Simandjuntak, T20 Co-Chair, Indonesia • Prof. Bambang Brodjonegoro, T20 Co-Chair, Indonesia • Dr. Riatu Mariatul Qibthiyyah, Director, LPEM, University of Indonesia • Dr. Yose Rizal Damuri, Head, Department of Economics, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta <p><i>Contemporary and Future Priorities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, Chief Executive, South African Institute of International Affairs, South Africa • Ms. Anita Prakash, Senior Policy Advisor (Int. Economic Relations), ERIA, Jakarta • Dr. Nicolas Buchoud, Grand Alliance, Paris • Mr. Augustine Peter, Visiting Fellow, RIS, New Delhi
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G20 has emerged as an important global forum over the years, and G20 Leaders' Summits are watched worldwide with interest and suspicion. Successive presidencies of G20 have encapsulated a vast array of issues beyond the financial sector; each having potential impact on trade & investment, global governance and social sector. Each presidency has contributed to the summit process by adding new issues along with the routine ones resulting in a wider and diverse G20 Agenda. In view of the diversity of issues and complex challenges the world is grappling with, the expectations from G20 has multiplied. It is imperative to comprehend and assess the rise of G20, and its role and function in shaping the future global order. In order to motivate and stimulate fresh ideas on G20 and its implications for global economy, RIS brings out the quarterly journal, G20 Digest, as a platform to compare, contrast and create new knowledge that matter for the people in the G20 countries and in the world, including the developing and less developed countries.