



2022 Financing for Development Forum

Session on Aligning the global debt architecture with the SDGs: What will it take?

Statement by Emilia Reyes on behalf of the Civil Society FfD Group (including the Women's Working Group on FfD)

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As the many crises unfold, we should ask ourselves: Who pays the debt? The poorest groups of populations. This is why we should promote an open review of the approach to debt sustainability, with UN guidance and civil society participation, in order to move towards a debt sustainability concept that has at its core environmental and climate vulnerabilities, together with human rights and other social, gender and development considerations.

Who pays the debt? Children. This is why debt cannot be considered sustainable if its payment prevents a country from affording climate resilience plans or gender equality policies.

Who pays the debt? Women. This is why a feminist macro response to the COVID-19 crisis needs to provide a more ambitious debt cancellation for all countries in need from all creditors, but it also needs to see a significant advance towards a more comprehensive approach to debt crisis resolution. In this regard, the creation of a systematic, comprehensive and enforceable process for sovereign debt restructurings, through the UN, is more urgent than ever.

Who pays the debt? The Global South for the Global North to profit. This is why there is a need for a new approach to debt sustainability – one that moves beyond a narrow focus on repayment capacity to consider human rights, public service needs, gender equality, climate vulnerabilities and other Agenda 2030 needs at its core. All in all, debt should never be considered sustainable if its repayment is putting women's rights, social justice or environmental sustainability at risk.