

From Rhetoric to Results: Elevating Equity and Accountability at the G20 Health Ministers' Breakfast

Hosted by the Global Leaders Network (GLN)
Chaired by Rt. Hon. Helen Clark

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At the G20 Health Ministers' Meeting in South Africa, leaders gathered at a high-level breakfast convened by the Global Leaders Network (GLN) and chaired by former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, to confront a simple but urgent question: How do we turn commitments into measurable progress?



Rt. Hon. Helen Clark delivers her address during the meeting.



Delegates from G20 member states convene during the Health Ministers Meeting in South Africa.

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A Moment of Reckoning

Progress on global health equity is faltering. Ministers spoke candidly of fragile gains, shrinking fiscal space, and rights under threat. Yet amid sobering realities, a strong consensus emerged: equity and accountability are not optional extras—they are the backbone of sustainable development.

From Reflection to Action

The roundtable focused on three urgent priorities:

- **Resilient Health Systems:** keeping women, children and adolescents at the centre even amid conflict, climate disruption, or misinformation.
- **Financing for Equity:** investing smarter and locally to sustain access and innovation in tough economic times.
- **Accountability with Transparency:** embedding shared metrics, peer review, and data-driven monitoring within the G20 framework.

As Norway stressed, global health systems must shift from vertical programmes to integrated, people-centred primary health care. France highlighted how rights-based reforms – from free contraception and menstrual equity to feminist diplomacy – are essential building blocks of global resilience.

Africa at the Helm

Africa's leadership took centre stage, not as a participant but as a driver of the global health agenda. Ministers and champions underscored that Global South leadership must shape—not just feature in—the G20 health agenda, reflecting the Lusaka Call for Action and advancing the vision of solidarity, equality, and sustainability.

A Collective Compact for Accountability

The GLN's convening power was recognised as a vital catalyst for peer learning, cross-sectoral collaboration, and sustained action beyond the G20.

Ministers committed to ensure that outcomes from this dialogue inform the G20 Health Declaration and national policy frameworks—turning pledges into tangible progress for women, children, and adolescents.

Looking Ahead: The Road to the G20 Social Summit 2025

This ministerial breakfast set the tone for the year ahead: a renewed drive for equity, accountability, and resilience that will define discussions at the G20 Social Summit 2025.

As the world looks to South Africa's G20 Presidency for leadership, the message is unmistakable: Health equity is the measure of our shared humanity—and the foundation for a just, sustainable future.