
A historic milestone for South Africa's G20 Presidency: The ubuntu principles on food security, nutrition, and price volatility

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The Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ) welcomes the conclusion of the G20 Task Force on Food Security under the Presidency of South Africa. We commend South Africa's leadership for placing food security at the centre of the G20 agenda during its historic Presidency — the first on African soil, under the theme *Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability*.

The Task Force has rightly recognised that hunger and malnutrition persist despite sufficient global food production, with an estimated 673 million people being impacted by hunger globally in 2024, and a particularly alarming rise in Africa, where more than one in five people face hunger. The Task Force debated systemic issues, including food price volatility, speculative behaviour in global markets, financialisation of food systems, and climate shocks that drive food insecurity and malnutrition. These challenges have a disproportionate impact as inequalities persist in the global food system in access to land, markets, and finance, particularly for women, youth, and smallholder farmers, who remain the backbone of food production in Africa.

The Task Force's deliberation on food price volatility through buffer stocks and a range of other price stabilisation mechanisms, provides the basis for important work by the global community. This work requires strengthening public food stock holdings, implementing appropriate regulations, and establishing agroecological approaches at the heart of climate resilience. These are critical to build resilience against external shocks and ensure the affordability and accessibility of nutritious food.

On 14 September 2025, the IEJ co-hosted an official side event of the Task Force on the potential role of buffer stocks in the context of food security and climate resilience. The event fostered important dialogue between lead negotiators from G20 countries and South African

government officials from the Department of Agriculture (DoA), the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and the Competition Commission.

As an official Resource Partner, the IEJ has consistently highlighted the interconnections between food systems, economic justice, and human rights. We believe the right to food — recognised in both the South African Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — must be at the core of global governance on food security.

The outcomes of the Task Force provide a foundation to move beyond emergency responses towards structural reforms that prioritise equity, sustainability, and justice. As a Resource Partner, the IEJ has shaped the agenda of this Task Force and contributed to its supporting studies alongside UNCTAD, FAO, IFAD, and Professors Isabella Weber and Jayati Ghosh from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The studies informed the Task Force negotiations by analysing how global trade disruptions, market concentration, food price stabilisation mechanisms, and cross-border financial flows shape food security.

Implementation must be rooted in the lived realities of those most affected by hunger — smallholder farmers, low-income households, and marginalised communities — to structurally transform food systems. The IEJ stands ready to continue supporting this agenda through research, advocacy, and partnership.

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