

Concept Note

Side events: “Universal Access to Water and Sanitation” and “SDG 18 and Racial-Ethnic Equality”

The Brazilian presidency of the G20, under the motto “Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet”, has chosen as its priorities: social inclusion and the fight against hunger; energy transition and sustainable development in its three dimensions (social, economic, and environmental); and the reform of global governance institutions. All of these are in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is a global roadmap for overcoming the multiple challenges we face today.

In 2016, the G20 members endorsed the commitment to the 2030 Agenda, appointing the Development Working Group (DWG) as the coordinating and political resource body for sustainable development in the G20. Under the Brazilian presidency, the DWG has established as its priorities the fight against inequalities; access to water and sanitation services; and trilateral cooperation.

The side event, to be held on the day before the DWG meeting, will be an opportunity to deepen the discussions on Brazilian priorities, with the participation of representatives of government, academia, civil society, and international organizations. In this meeting, we propose to address the priorities of access to water and sanitation services and the fight against inequality, especially racial-ethnic equality, with a focus on “SDG 18”, voluntarily adopted by the Brazilian government.

Access to water and sanitation services is a basic human right, yet it is inaccessible to almost half of the world’s population. We are halfway through the 2030 agenda and SDG 6 is still lagging behind, even in G20 countries. During the Brazilian G20 Presidency, a push will be made to find solutions for achieving universal access to water and basic sanitation, especially in rural areas and in communities in need of local solutions. Financing, regulation, and measurement of SDG 6 will be discussed.

The issue of racial-ethnic equality is not specifically addressed in the 2030 Agenda, despite its importance for achieving social rights and sustainable development for all. “SDG 18”, which deals with racial-ethnic equality, is a voluntary commitment of the Brazilian presidency, announced at the 78th United Nations General Assembly. In Brazil and many parts of the world, sustainability and poverty reduction are reflections of the creation of policies for the inclusion of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples

and the elimination of racism. In this context, the DWG invites everyone to the debate on the Brazilian and international perspectives on this theme, which is central to sustainable development.

