People’s Assemblies 2022

Part of the Global Week of Action Act4SDGs

TOOLKIT
Key Information

What: Physical People’s Assemblies on Poverty and Hunger, Peace, Climate and Justice - national and constituency assemblies

When: August - September 2022

As part of the Global Week of Action, 16 to 25 September 2022, GCAP mobilises to demand an end to the rising poverty and hunger situation arising out of the COVID pandemic, inequalities, climate change and lately the war and inflation, ensuring free and universal vaccination & social protection linking to Agenda 2030.

Outcome: 1-2 page “Demand Charter” with key demands to send to heads of state & decision makers and media.

Website: https://gcap.global/peoples-assembly/

Hashtags: #PeoplesAssembly #Act4SDGs and #FliptheScript
Objectives

• Physical People’s Assemblies organized by civil society with marginalized voices at the center to analyze the present food, poverty and financial crisis and develop demands and messages for decision makers e.g. vaccination, livelihood and social protection, debt and the implementation of the Agenda 2030.

• The governments and the public are informed about the demands and messages from the People’s assemblies

• A FliptheScript stunt during the Global Week of Action from 16 to 25 September 2022

• National People’s Assemblies feed into global discussions and the Global Peoples’ Assembly as part of the Global Week of Action.
Political Situation

The Covid-19 pandemic has tremendously impacted the wellbeing of people - worsening the food crisis, increasing the poverty levels and widening inequalities. A healthy, peaceful, just and climate resilient society is becoming a far cry with fast dwindling commitments of the government towards a just and equitable recovery. Undeterred rise in global temperature due to anthropogenic activities defy all claims of a net zero emission. The war against Ukraine is threatening to destabilise the global order.

The threat from the COVID virus looms large with highly unequal rate of vaccination between the rich and the low- and middle-income countries. The blatant opposition of the rich countries to the TRIPS waiver at WTO lays bare their preference for the corporate over the people.

The worsening debt situation in Latin America, Africa and Asian countries has forced their governments to take austerity measures cutting spending on social protection, health and education.

Older people, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, communities discriminated by on work and descent, migrants, women, transgender people, and children are suffering in multiple ways. There has been alarming rise of violence against women and girls.
Joint Demands: Act for Peace, Climate & Justice

GCAP and Action for Sustainable Development developed joint demands and a sample letter. Both will be published in July 2022. Here some elements:

- Progress on the 2030 agenda is under threat. In 2022, the world is not working for most people and our planet. **Human rights are being ignored** and millions of people are being left behind, while a few become ever richer and more powerful.

- The **war in Ukraine** together with other ongoing conflicts has led to a massive increase in the number of people facing acute food insecurity, with rising food prices making life even harder for billions of people.

- At the same time, **climate change presents a long-term threat** to our shared home on this earth, with temperatures continuing to rise and extreme weather events devastating communities at the frontlines.

- The **Covid-19 pandemic** pushed humanity’s resilience to the limit and continues to have vast impacts on the lives of people and the wider social, economic and environmental fabric of our world. Hundreds of millions of people lost their jobs and income and were pushed into poverty.
Bottom up process

The People’s Assemblies can be organised by any interested communities, constituency groups or wider civil society at local and sub-national level. Representatives should have the chance to present their perspectives at national, regional and global levels.

The participants should identify their own issues and concerns; analyse the structural causes; discuss and develop a set of demands; and then devise joint steps to address these demands. The meetings could be organised by various identity-based groups and/or thematic groups, or by specific CSO networks. These should be embedded in a bottom-up process to ensure that marginalized voices are part of all levels of decision making.

Key steps for the People’s Assemblies 2022:

1. Community and Constituency group meetings/calls- August 2022
2. National Physical People’s Assemblies held - August-September 2022
3. Regional People’s Assemblies and Constituency based Assemblies - as part of the Global People’s Assembly in September
4. An online Global People’s Assembly will be held to share views during the Global Week of Action (16-25 September 2022)
People’s Assemblies since 2019

GCAP organized the first global physical People’s Assembly in New York on 24-25 September 2019 in parallel with the UN SDG Summit and to create a space for civil society to jointly analyse the structural reasons for the injustices, act and plan for coordinated actions to create systemic change to realise the SDGs and the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement.

2020 GCAP members organised 19 national and constituency groups People’s Assemblies and 2021 a total of 26 People’s Assemblies. Most of them were online because of COVID-19.

The 2019 Global People’s Assembly was coordinated by GCAP with 21 civil society partners and brought together 300 civil society delegates, from 80 countries and over 200 organisations, representing thousands of people especially those who are marginalized and whose voices would not otherwise be heard, much less given seats in the UN.

Based on the inputs and discussions the Peoples’ Assembly Declaration was developed. The representatives called on governments to adopt more responsive policies and implement radical economic measures to stave off the devastation of the earth.

2021 GCAP organized a virtual Global People’s Assembly from 21 to 23 September 2021 with 1000 registered participants and 30 civil society partners.
Themes of People’s Assemblies 2022
People’s Assembly on Food, Poverty and the Financial Crisis

**Rationale:** Covid 19 pandemic followed by the inadequate response of the governments has worsened the food crisis forcing millions of people into hunger and abject poverty.

It has exposed the structural inequalities entrenched in societies. The poor have suffered while the number of billionaires have increased. The protection measures undertaken by governments to address hunger and offer livelihood opportunities lost by marginalized people during the pandemic have been lackadaisical. Debt situation curtails options for the governments.

COVID vaccines are beyond reach of people for a large percentage of people in some low and middle income countries. Russia’s aggression on Ukraine has exacerbated the hunger crisis.

So, we the people, demand **FULL SOCIAL PROTECTION** and support to revive the livelihood of the marginalized, a **PEOPLE’S VACCINE, NET ZERO EMISSIONS**, and **END TO WAR AND CONFLICTS!**
National People’s Assemblies - 2022

How to organise a national People’s Assembly 2022?

National People’s Assemblies 2022 will be held physically as the COVID threat is less now.

Objectives of the national level People’s Assemblies:

- To bring together community and constituency representatives from across the country together in a broad dialogue
- Collate and articulate the issues and demands of people emerging from local assemblies and the national assembly
- Discuss the worsening food poverty and financial crisis – in relation to vaccination, social protection, debt and austerity measures, war and conflict, climate justice and link to the SDGs
- Bring Parliamentarians face to face with the people to hear and respond to their demands
- Engage with the global process of organising People’s Assemblies by sending their demand charters to be shared in the Global Assembly
Steps to organise a National People’s Assembly - 2022

- Prepare a ‘Well Researched Concept Note” on the current food, poverty and financial crisis
- Send the invitation with the note attached
- Plan for participation of at least 50 - 100 participants in a one day event
- Invite key representatives of as many marginalised communities
- In the meeting discuss the current issues affecting the marginalised communities based on the concept note - that will spark the discussion among the participants

5 elements of the National People’s Assembly:
- Invite marginalised communities
- Draw a demand charter
- Hand over to the PM/President before s/he to New York to attend the UN General Assembly
- Organise a Press Conference
- Stunt during the Global Week of Action - bring message of the Assembly
Steps for organising a National People’s Assemblies - 2022 continues…

- Invite the Members of Parliament to the event to listen and respond to what the marginalised communities speak
- A Demand charter (2-3 pages) is developed describing key concerns and demands
- The Demand Charter is shared with the office of the Prime Minister of President before s/he leave for New York to attend the UNGA - the delegation should be led by a persons from the marginalised communities
- The charter is also shared with key MPs and officials including some women
- A Press Conference is organised and the key demands shared - media is addressed by the marginalised communities and some NGO leaders Its announced there that the demand has been or will be shared with the PM/President
- Dosing social media posts
- Organise stunts: stunt during the Global Week of Action flagging the message from the demand charter of the Assembly
Local/Constituency People’s Assemblies - 2022

Optional: Assemblies at constituency and local level

In preparation for the national assembly, local communities and constituency groups can come together to deliberate and capture their analysis, messages and demands on food crisis and poverty, widening inequalities, vaccine inequalities, livelihood and social protection, climate and environment issues and peace and justice. These community meetings or termed as the “Equality Circles” feed into the People’s Assemblies at the national level.

Such local and sub-national meetings are optional. National coalitions are encouraged to organise subjects to their capacity to capture voices at the grassroots level.

People and communities come together to:

- Analyse the impact of COVID-19 on food, poverty and financial crisis
- Availability and access to vaccines, and social protection and livelihood
- Give inequalities a face
- Formulate demands to end inequalities in the community
- Prepare the inputs for the National People’s Assembly
- Decide on action plans

We encourage you to invite different constituency groups to prepare their inputs into the National People’s Assembly:

- Youth
- Women
- Older people
- Persons with disabilities
- Other marginalized communities: esp. indigenous and DWD
National People’s Assemblies - 2022

Format: Physical gatherings to discuss issues and develop key demands and messages

National coalitions or any civil society groups are encouraged to organize physical meetings and to collaborate with other networks to bring together voices from marginalized communities to discuss the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on people who are being left behind.

Who participates and speaks?
The focus of the people’s assemblies is to ensure no one is left behind.

You should invite and encourage representatives of/from groups including:

- Women
- Youth & children
- Indigenous Peoples & ethnic minorities
- Persons with disabilities
- Older people
- Dalits and other groups discriminated by work and descent (DWD)
- Slum dwellers
- Sex workers
- Religious minorities
- LGBTIQ
- Farming communities
- Daily wage earners and unorganised sector workers
- Fisher communities
- Migrants and refugees
- other grassroots voices.
National People’s Assemblies - 2022-Agenda and Outcome

Format of Physical People’s Assemblies:

Example agenda

1. Welcome by National Coalition/network (10 Min)
2. Sharing the context (30 Min)
3. Inputs on the situation from communities in light of COVID-19, food, poverty, financial crisis and the loss of lives, vaccination, social protection and livelihood, SDGs and on Leave No One Behind and Inequalities (60 minutes)
   - Representatives from indigenous communities, communities discriminated by work and descent, women’s organisation, youth groups, older persons and people with disabilities
4. Open Discussion (30 Minutes)
5. Lunch Break (60 minutes)
6. Response from Members of Parliament (MPs) (40 Minutes)
7. Discussion and agreement of key demands and statement (60 minutes)
   - Working in small groups followed by plenary

What are the expected outcomes?

1. Agreed demand charter/statement: One or two pages with key demands, to be shared together with Act for Peace, Climate and Justice Letter: https://bit.ly/3MIuK48
   - send to your Head of State/Government
   - send to the media
   - share inputs in the Global People’s Assembly
2. Social media posts: Each National People’s Assembly should share at least one post on both Facebook and Twitter, using the hashtags #PeoplesAssembly and #FlipTheScript #Act4SDGs, tagging GCAP and Action for Sustainable Development:
   Facebook: @GlobalCalltoActionAgainstPoverty
   Twitter: @whiteband
3. Mobilisation for Global Week of Action:
   National plans for the week of action should be finalised during the assembly and participants mobilised to participate.

1. Planning for the follow up actions and the Global Week of Action (20 minutes)
2. Press Conference - same day or next day (60 minutes)
Press Conference

Press conference & sending outcomes to media

- The media can be a powerful tool for promoting accountability in relation to government actors.
- Press releases, interviews, and informal media contacts are excellent ways of getting your message across.
- After the People’s Assembly, you can organize a press conference to share your key demands/outcomes.

How to organize a Press Conference?

- **Contact the media:** Send a Media Invitation to media contacts in your country asking them to join the Press Conference. Follow up over the phone to seek confirmation.

- Identify the **panel who will address the media.** Priority should be given to speakers from marginalised communities.

- Define the **key demands/messages** from the Assembly. Summarize it in 3-5 clear points to the press.

- Develop a **press kit,** a folder of information to give reporters background info about your issue or program.

- Be **clear and concise** in your speech. Share lived experience from communities, assume the audience is intelligent and curious.

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Op-Eds and TV debates

- Meet Editors and columnists - discuss issues, share material, and request to write columns, Op-Eds
- Identify people in your campaign to write Op-Eds
- Engage separately with Audio-Visual media and share suggestions for coverage and debates
- Take TV reporters to community areas and facilitate an interface with the local residents
Advocacy with PM/President and MPs

Prime Minister/President:

- Send a letter with the demands from the People’s Assembly before she/he goes to the UNGA in New York.
- Additional: Seen and appointment with the office and plan to meet him/her in person and hand over the demand charter before he leaves to New York to attend UNGA. Explain him/her the process and urge to raise in the UNGA.

Meet the Members of Parliament:

- Schedule a meeting: Contact the office of the representative (mayor, senator, member of Parliament) and seek a meeting by sending a letter via email or telephone.
- During the meeting: A meeting may last 20-30 minutes. Do your homework before the meeting. Thank the representative for the meeting. Decide the number of delegations and who will speak what.

How?

- Letters to the Head of State or Government
- Meeting the head of state representatives or key officials at the end of the People's Assembly or afterwards
- Influencing political party manifestos based on outcomes
Advocacy with PM/President, MPs and Governments continues…

- Send or hand over the two pages demand charter
- Make a brief presentation on the issue of COVID-19 and its impact on marginalised people. Share key messages on the food, poverty and financial crisis and the need for vaccine equity, social protection and decent livelihoods and debt etc. State key expectations from the representative. Listen to his/her response and follow up if they need more information or support.
- **What benefit the representative may get:** Whenever possible, you can highlight to the representative that taking this issue forward may be beneficial to him/her and their party.
- Thank the MP the meeting and raising the issues, offer her/him to give more material if needed, and say, “We will keep in touch”!
Global Week of Action - FlipTheScript Stunt

The People’s Assemblies are part of the mobilization during the Global Week of Action (September 16 - 25, 2022), which GCAP organises in cooperation with the UN SDG Action Campaign, A4SD and others.

The People’s Assemblies …

- ... prepare actions during the Global Week of Action including the press and advocacy work (see earlier slides) and
- ...and on (or before) the 25 September – the 7th Anniversary of the SDG, the FlipTheScript Stunt to get visibility.

There will be significant mobilization during the Global Week of Action.

- More information is also available from the SDG Action Campaign website here: https://act4sdgs.org/

Tag GCAP on…
Facebook: @GlobalCalltoActionAgainstPoverty
Twitter: @whiteband
The Concept of the FlipTheScript Stunt

The current script is not working for most people and the planet. This creative stunt will demonstrate that the power is in our hands to rewrite the story and FlipTheScript on what’s possible when we take action together using the SDGs as our roadmap for a just, peaceful and green recovery that leaves no one behind.

By visually and intentionally flipping defining words such as ‘Hunger to Social Protection’, ‘Covid to Vaccination for all’, ‘War into ‘Peace’ we will highlight the importance of this moment to turn in a new direction and illustrate that it is up to us to tell a new story and change the narrative.

The stunt be done around the world and give a strong message to the public.
The FliptTheScript Stunt

Run of Show

1. **Select a location to host the stunt** A place where a group of people can convene / iconic, a place where you can create a higher vantage point to capture the stunt with photography/ videography and place where you can incorporate speeches/ announcements

2. **Ensure your message cards ready and stunt participants** are in place holding the cards showing the defeatist black and white message.

3. **Reading the Charter of Demands**
Before the flipping moment, you can invite one high level convener to lead the reading moment or bring together a collection of activists, politicians, high profile figures from your community to join together on stage/ at the front and read different parts of the demands.

4. **FlipTheScript** - Cue stunt participants to deliberately turn message cards to show the positive message on SDG colours. Arrange for this moment to be photographed and filmed, ideally covered by media also.

**Media Moment**

The stunt and accompanying pledge can be as informal or as formal as you like - but to ensure this is captured and together we make some noise, be sure to communicate to local news sources that this is happening. You can include performances, speeches, discussions - make this a signature moment for your community and demonstrate your collective commitment to re-writing what the future could look like.
Global People’s Assembly at the UNGA

The UN General Assembly High Level Week in September 2022 provides an ideal moment to advocate for transformative policies as part of the Global Week of Action 2022.

As a follow up to the National People’s Assemblies, we will jointly organize a Global People’s Assembly to bring the political demands raised at the grassroots and national dialogues to decision makers at the UN. Regional Assemblies, constituency based assemblies and thematic sessions will reverberate the issues and concerns of the poor and vulnerable and deliver the messages to the UNGA.
Register your Actions

To make your actions known as part of the Global Week of Action please register them on the website of the Global Week of Action

https://act4sdgs.org

This can be all kind of actions like People’s Assemblies, stunts and others… and please include that you are part of GCAP. Thanks!
Global Call to Action Against Poverty
People Rising to End Inequalities

https://gcap.global