

22nd Feb 2015

Summary of Positions on negotiations for the post-2015 framework

Gender and Development Network

Throughout the discussions around the post-2015 framework some major advances have been made towards the achievement of gender equality, and there are a number of proposals that we believe are essential to protect as we move towards the final deliberations. However, the Gender and Development Network (GADN) remains concerned about various issues that are continuing to undermine the creation of a truly progressive framework strong enough to tackle the deep rooted and persistent gender inequalities that exist.ⁱ As we will show below, gender analysis is relevant for every aspect of the negotiations.

Preamble and Political Declaration

Strong language is necessary on gender equality and women's and girls' rights within the post-2015 political declaration which takes us forward in our framing and understanding of the issue and sets an appropriately high level of political will and resources to deliver a truly transformative agenda.

- The **framing** of gender equality is important because it shapes the way in which interventions are designed. The language of women and girls as a 'vulnerable group' suggests that they can be protected from the effects of gender inequality through individual interventions. Instead, it should be recognised that society is structured by unequal power relations that create barriers to equality. Gender equality should be promoted by tackling the structural barriers that stand in the way of women and girls.
- Gender equality and the fulfilment of women's rights should be recognised as an **ambition in its own right** as well as **essential** to the eradication of poverty, and sustainable development more broadly. It should have a stand-alone paragraph in the final political declaration.

Standalone goal

There should be a standalone goal promoting gender equality and women's rights. This proposal has been agreed by the CSW, and has received broad-based support from member states in every region, in recognition of both the extent and severity of the problem and of the particular actions that are needed, **specific to tackling gender inequality**.

- The standalone goal should specifically mention **women's human rights**, recognising that women are often denied their human rights specifically because they are women.
- Any attempt to **cluster** goals and targets in a different way, must protect the clear prioritisation that a standalone goal accords to gender equality, and women's and girls' rights and leave space for the full range of ways in which the issues interact with social, political, economic and environmental spheres. For example, the UN Secretary General's proposal for 'essential elements' subsumed gender equality and women's rights enough under headings of 'People' and 'Dignity' reducing its prominence and obscuring the link between gender inequality and the economy.
- Any framing of '**headline messages**' must include mention of gender equality and the realisation of women and girls' rights as a headline sustainable development priority for the next 15 years.

Targets

As is reflected in the Open Working Group (OWG) Outcome Document, targets on eliminating **violence against women and girls**, supporting women's full, equal and effective **participation**, and **sexual and reproductive health and rights** should be included under a gender goal, alongside a target on girls and women's education elsewhere within the broader framework. In addition:

- The target on addressing the unequal burden of **unpaid care** work, is particularly welcome and should be protected.ⁱⁱ

- Women's right to **control economic assets and income** is a central component of achieving gender equality and so should be a specific outcome target and not, as is currently the case, regarded as a 'means of implementation' (MOI).
- **Universality** is a key principle of the framework and is as true for gender equality as for any other goal. Targets should not be subject to caveats that permit reduced ambition such as on what is 'nationally appropriate' or in accordance with 'national laws'.
- Targets should be **time bound** to ensure urgent action is taken towards achieving them. Where targets should be met immediately, rather than by 2030, this should be made explicit.
- Measures should be taken to tackle inequalities by income and other disadvantage that intersect with gender inequality recognising that **no targets can be reached if some groups are left behind**.
- Technical-proofing should ensure that targets are, at a minimum, consistent with **agreed language** in existing international agreements on gender equality and women's rights including sexual and reproductive health and rights. Beyond this, the post-2015 SDGs should be seen as an opportunity to support policy and planning for the next 15 years by strengthening existing language and commitments.
- Targets must be **transformative** – based on the priorities of, particularly marginalised, women and girls rather than on the availability of existing data.

Indicators

For many of the targets, effective mainstreaming of gender will be achieved through the use of transformative indicators which look particularly at the barriers affecting women and girls.

- There must be a number of agreed **global indicators** under each target so that difficult topics are not avoided by Member States – this is a significant risk with any approach that relies too heavily on complementary national indicators.
- Given the long term nature of transformative change, particularly around discriminatory social norms, a mix of **progress measures** and concrete outcomes measures should be included.
- The choice of indicators for each target should be driven by an analysis of **how change will be achieved**, rather than solely on the existence of data.
- Substantial data is **already collected** and could be usefully, and more imaginatively, used.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Political will and technical capacity should also be directed to ensure that **new data is captured** for the targets and indicators that most reflect women's priorities, for example measuring change in social norms.

Mainstreaming

The final framework must include effective mainstreaming of gender equality so that targets and indicators across goals recognise the specific, gender related barriers that women and girls face.

- The inclusion of measures to promote gender equality and women's rights in the OWG Outcome Document in areas such as education and adult literacy, land rights, energy access, health, water and sanitation, employment and labour rights is welcome and should be protected in the final framework. Securing a strong goal on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies is also important as conflict and insecurity hold back progress on gender equality.
- In other areas more mainstreaming is needed. If there is to be further discussion on targets, then economic goals should include specific targets that incentivise public policies known to address gender inequality including gender budgeting, decent work, progressive taxation, public spending on essential services and social protection.
- In addition gender-sensitive indicators could be included to better assess progress for example: goal 1 could include something on intra household decision making; goal 2 - indicators on equal rights for women to inherit and own land, and on protection of access of communally used land; goal 4 - adult women's literacy and the barriers to girls attendance and completion such as sanitary facilities; goal 6 - the provision of appropriate facilities for menstrual hygiene management; goal 7 includes the useful indicator around modern cooking solutions; goal 8 should at least include the gender pay gap and something around social norms and occupational segregation; goal 10 should look beyond household income, recognising the power dynamics within households.

Global Partnership and Means of Implementation (MOI)

As review of the Beijing Platform for Action show, there is a significant 'implementation gap' in relation to gender equality and women's rights. Whilst there have been global commitments and increasing adoption of national legislation, challenges of financial resourcing, legal impunity and damaging social norms remain. The final post 2015 framework must be adequately funded and states must be supported to make the structural changes necessary with a strong package of financial and non-financial MOI.

Financial MOI:

Achieving transformative change and ending discrimination is not cost-neutral; realistic levels of funding to achieve gender equality must be dedicated to goal 5.

- Measures required to achieve gender equality and the realisation of women's and girls' rights should be properly costed and prioritised in discussions on Financing for Development (FFD) and financial MOI.
- The implications of different forms of financing (international and domestic, public and private) on gender equality and women's and girls' rights should be assessed.
- Member states are encouraged to ensure that budget and fiscal priorities are gender assessed and gender responsive and that priority is given to ring-fenced funding for programmes to promote gender equality and realise women's and girls' human rights.

Non-financial MOI:

Member states must support capacity building and technology sharing as a prerequisite to achieving the goals and targets. With respect to gender equality, there are a number of major areas where investment and support in non-financial MOI is needed.

- MOI's must go beyond legislation to incorporate approaches that tackle the discriminatory social norms and practices that continue to subordinate women and girls in public and private life, and exclude them from the realisation of their rights.
- Direct support to women and girls, particularly those who are marginalised, should include for example the development and support of positive action programmes to support women in participating in decision-making in political, economic and public life.
- Capacity building and training in institutions will be necessary for example in the police and judicial systems to ensure justice for victims of gender based violence
- Any 'new global partnership for development' must go beyond the limitations of the MDG process, which emphasised state-to-state relations and recognise the role of other players in achieving development goals. In particular women's rights organisations have provided particularly effective in delivering transformative change and should be supported politically and financially.
- Data collection, disaggregation and analysis will need additional investment and the development of new approaches such as the use of self-reported measurers. Data collection processes themselves also need to be gender sensitive by for example: reviewing coding and terminologies; delivering gender training for data collectors; recruiting female enumerators; and carrying out data collection in a manner that is sensitive to the different needs of men and women in terms of, for example, privacy, time of day, and work and caring responsibilities. The design of data-collection methods should also involve key stakeholders such as women's rights organisations.
- As indicated above, we argue that equal rights to economic resources should be recognised as a target, not just an MOI. However included, it should recognise the need for gender equality in control over resources and in economic design making in public and private spheres.

Follow-Up and Review:

We support calls for a strong accountability mechanism to ensure that goals and targets translate into action for women and girls around the world. This will have a number of dimensions but in all aspects of follow up and review, it will be important for women and girls to be involved whether at the national level (e.g. through development of national plans, parliamentary scrutiny and local budget monitoring) or at the global level (e.g. through representation at the High-Level Political Forum or peer review).

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ⁱ This paper will be updated over the course of the negotiations. Our latest version will be on our website along with our full position: GADN (2014) *Women's rights and gender equality in the post-2015 framework* - <http://www.gadnetwork.org>

ⁱⁱ GADN (2014) *Unpaid Care: a priority for the post-2015 development goals and beyond* available from <http://www.gadnetwork.org>

ⁱⁱⁱ See for example the Social Institutions and Gender Index at: <http://genderindex.org/>