



Feminist Response and Recommendations

PROPOSED GOALS AND TARGETS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

On June 2, 2014, the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) released a [zero draft](#) of the first list of Proposed SDGs to be attained by 2030. As negotiations over the final SDGs move forward, the international community must take strong action to ensure a human rights approach to development that builds on women's realities and strengthens women's human rights.

To uphold human rights obligations and realize the "transformational shifts" envisaged in current development discussions, business as usual is no longer an option. The red line for policymaking must be the realization of gender equality and human rights, rather than growth and profit as ends in themselves. This means moving power away from corporate interests and toward marginalized peoples, women and communities. It means championing political action to overturn current discriminatory, oppressive and violent social, political, and economic systems and develop, invest in, and implement those that create an enabling environment for women's rights, equality, and sustainable peace. We reiterate the need for Member States to develop goals, targets and indicators that lead to structural changes in relations of power, consumption patterns, and the distribution of resources.

The zero draft document notes "poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We are therefore committed to freeing humanity from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency." However, many of the proposals fall short of creating a truly transformative and enabling environment for women and girls around the globe who live in poverty and experience structural inequalities that prevent them from realizing their rights. It must tackle intersecting and structural drivers of inequalities, and multiple forms of discrimination based on gender, age, class, caste, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and abilities.

We appreciate and affirm the OWG's prioritization of freedom, peace and security, respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and the rule of law. We also applaud the inclusion of land among productive resources. Land has a foundational linkage to multiple dimensions of poverty and is a structural factor in determining one's access to income, wealth, food, housing, credit, basic services, power, and household and community level decision-making. Although some of the targets especially mention marginalized people, including persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, people who are discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity are excluded.

We are concerned that the list of proposed SDGs and targets only recognizes human rights as a means to greater growth and not as intrinsically valuable. There should be an open recognition that States must implement the new sustainable development agenda within the context of the human rights framework by using and building onto international human rights and humanitarian law. Furthermore, all of the goals and targets should reflect international human rights standards and include reference to the rule of law through the principles of non-retrogression, progressive realization, and common but differentiated responsibilities.

In addition, there is limited consideration of the current macroeconomic model, which perpetuates poverty, inequality and conflict, including the growing feminization and intergenerational transfer of poverty. The proposed goals and targets also lack strong language on reforming current neo-liberal policies of economic growth, privatization, de-regulation and reduced government spending and its effects in fueling human rights violations, particularly of women and girls. This draft is silent on the linkages between existing human rights accountability mechanisms at the regional and global levels and makes no reference to the extraterritorial obligations of the private sector. The proposed goals and targets also fail to go beyond the environmental dimension of the applicability of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) within the post-2015 development agenda.

A clear framework that is specific, measurable, time-bound and attainable is a powerful way to motivate action and mobilize resources. Although the proposal has goals with national targets that increase country ownership, we would like to see the development of a mechanism that ensures that the national targets are sufficiently ambitious to ensure that countries are taking meaningful action. They should also include provisions for gender-sensitive national budgets and the collection of age and sex disaggregated data.

Proposed goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Any poverty goal must uphold the human rights obligation to ensure an existence of human dignity and address the feminization of poverty. Use of the discredited World Bank poverty measurement of 1.25 USD per day is not a measurement of living with dignity. It measures how many people are likely to soon die of malnutrition, exposure, etc. On the other hand, the right secure to land and other productive resources are a critical factor in ending poverty around the world. It is important that targets and indicators reflect a range of rights that can include the right to use, control, own, rent, lease, mortgage, exclude, inherit and otherwise make decisions about land. To be effective, these rights need to be recognized and protected, legally and in practice in a non-discriminatory manner. Measuring the distribution of land and resources and aiming for more equitable distribution amongst people, rather than corporations, would be meaningful.

Proposed goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and adequate nutrition for all, and promote sustainable agriculture

The global food economy has been both gender-blind and male-biased in terms of undervaluing women's roles in land use, production, processing, distribution, market access, trade, investment, price volatility, and food availability. Women are involved in all aspects of production, processing and distribution, but are often not recognized in their contributions. On average, 43% of agricultural laborers in developing countries are women who are also the majority of food providers. Furthermore, women and girls comprise an estimated 60% of the undernourished¹ having adverse effects on universal access to education, including comprehensive sexuality education, health services, including for sexual and reproductive health and rights, and access to water and sanitation. In this regard, we need to go beyond the notion of food security and call for the achievement of food sovereignty, which questions the current economic model and puts people who produce, distribute and consume food, including women and smallholder farmers, pastoralists and fishers, at the center of decision-making on food systems and policies rather than corporations and market institutions. Trade and investment policies should be

¹ UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), *Strengthening Efforts to Eradicate Poverty and Hunger including through the Global Partnership for Development*, 2007.

aligned with existing human rights law supporting the right to food and linked to women's human rights to allow governments the policy space to design and implement appropriate measures at the national level supporting the right to food. Priority should also be given to gender-responsive taxation and subsidies that support the infrastructure needed for women to engage in sustainable production, transport produce, access warehousing and other storage facilities, and receive a fair price for their goods. Furthermore, a global coordination strategy should be developed on reserves to enable better stabilization of global food prices and encourage investments on in food reserves at the local and national levels, including distribution mechanisms, infrastructure and storage, that respond to women's roles as producers and consumers. Secure land rights should also be called for in the context of improving food security and moderating the impact of food price volatility on women and their families.

Proposed goal 3: Attain healthy life for all at all ages

The zero draft includes a target on ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health for all, but has left out the explicit mention of "right" which raises a concern. It should also be noted "for all" should include women, adolescents and young people, those with diverse sexual orientation and gender identities and other marginalized groups. Sexuality is an integral aspect of being human, and as such, sexual rights are fundamental human rights. Thus, there is an urgent need for the promotion of an enabling environment wherein everyone may enjoy sexual rights as part of a development framework. We are also concerned that addressing maternal morbidity is not included in the targets, considering that for every woman who dies, another 20 face serious or long-lasting consequences. Governments must eliminate laws and policies that impose barriers to access to sexual and reproductive health services and information. Ensuring gender equality and full realization of women's human rights also require repealing laws that punish women and girls for undergoing illegal abortions, revising laws and policies to make safe abortion legal and accessible.

Proposed Goal 4: Provide equitable and inclusive quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all.

Education has to be provided through the lens of human rights, including principles of gender equality, non-discrimination, tolerance and non-violence. Governments should provide safe spaces for girls to learn. Universal access to evidence-based, comprehensive sexuality education that is high quality, non-judgmental and provided in various formal and informal settings.

Proposed goal 5: Attain gender equality, empower women and girls everywhere

The zero draft is correct to highlight the target of eliminating all forms of violence against girls and women. However the links between gender-based violence and impunity, militarization, military spending, and the prevalence of small arms must be addressed if meaningful gains are to be made, particularly in the context of prevention. Reducing and eliminating gender-based violence against women's human rights defenders is also critical.

The target on reducing and redistributing unpaid care work should be maintained under a goal on gender equality. This is to ensure that the extent of unpaid care work is fully recognized, and that the amount of care work done by women is reduced by sharing it more fairly within household and communities, and by greater provision of care services by governments. Ensuring gender equality and full realization of women's human rights also requires the decriminalization of sex work.

We are also cognizant of the lack of critical inter-linkages in the majority of the goals, specifically in terms of women and girls' rights and gender equality and question why the "Attain gender equality, empower women and girls everywhere" is the only goal in the zero draft which lacks a timeframe.

Proposed goal 6: Secure water and sanitation for all for a sustainable world

A country's overall development strategy and use of macroeconomic policies directly and indirectly affect demand for, investments in, and the realization of the rights to water and sanitation services. Mindful of the ways in which water and sanitation services are used within the overall economy, linked to the well-being of communities and households, and connected to gendered roles and responsibilities, it is necessary to facilitate assessments of the extent to which contributions of agribusiness and industry are proportionate to their water use; and establish benchmarks and indicators, using concepts such as water poverty, to enable States to better identify those communities and regions within which they need targeted interventions to fulfill their obligations.

Proposed goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, sustainable, and reliable modern energy services for all

An enabling environment requires clear recognition of common but differentiated responsibilities in addressing climate change impacts, mitigating causes, and creating the conditions for long-term sustainable development.

Proposed goal 8: Promote strong, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all

In addition to income inequality, addressing inequalities in wealth is critical for promoting strong, inclusive and sustainable economies. In this regard, the proposed goals and targets should enable the creation of a sound macroeconomic environment with strong fiscal and monetary policies—using human rights as an ethical framework. Promoting employment is not sufficient, the focus must be on realizing the right to work, rights at work and the right to an adequate standard of living. Employment cannot meet the needs of everyone throughout their lives: employment policy must be complemented by provision of social security and social protection in ways that are in compliance with the right to social security. Macroeconomic policy should be formulated in order to enable inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all. We recommend clear regulations to ensure that economic interests are not allowed to override the greater aim of promoting women's rights and sustainable development. Extraterritorial obligations as elaborated in the Maastricht Principles, should be used as the foundation for facilitating good governance in the context of inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent work for all.

Proposed goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Economic globalization has resulted in uneven development within and between countries manifesting in unequal concentration of wealth, increasing poverty and inequality, and disparities in gender dimensions. Inequalities between countries have served as a major driver of inequalities globally and historically and need to be included as a stand-alone goal among the SDGs within the principle of universality. This principle of universality should bind both developed and developing countries to undertake commitments across the goals based on their national circumstances. This is critical in changing the current discourse towards key structural issues and assigning due responsibilities to both developed and developing states.

Proposed Goal 11. Build inclusive, safe and sustainable cities and human settlements

Access to safe public space and services is essential in building sustainable cities and human settlements and should include safe schools where girls need not fear being sexually abused, safe homes, and safe spaces where girls can grow to their full potential.

Proposed goal 16: Achieve peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law, effective and capable institutions

We call for peace as well as gender to be addressed as stand-alone goals and also mainstreamed throughout all other goals with an emphasis on the principles of good governance and rule of law. Reducing military spending, manufacture of arms and taking active steps towards nuclear disarmament and diverting spending to social services and protection of the commons are critical to addressing the interlinkages between other goals. The link between gender inequality and militarization should be recognized and addressed, and a holistic approach to the women, peace and security agenda that addresses participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery, including women's participation in peace processes be integrated into the proposed goals and targets.

Goal 17: Strengthen and enhance the means of implementation and global partnership for sustainable development

A global regulatory framework set by governments to protect people from the avarice of business is essential if sustainable development is the ultimate goal, especially given that the only priority of the private sector is its profit motive. Extraterritorial obligations, as outlined in the Maastricht Principles, should serve as the foundation for good governance in the context of the new global partnership. We recommend clear regulations to ensure that economic interests are not allowed to override the greater aim of respecting human rights and promoting sustainable development. We call for a change in the current policies of international institutions that serve to entrench inequalities through neoliberal reforms that leave countries struggling to meet their sustainable development objectives as well as the establishment of a review mechanism of international financial institutions, private sector entities and transnational corporations by human rights mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review, CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, and other human rights instruments.

More specifically, under the means of implementation of the gender equality goal, we call for ensuring effective financing for gender equality, which move away from fragmented, short-term funding to longer term partnerships that are predictable and flexible, and provide multiyear support. Furthermore, as global ICT networks, especially the Internet, have become a major space for economic, social, cultural and political development and distribution, promoting democratic mechanisms for governance of these networks as an equal playing field, and for equitably promoting the interests of less developed regions and countries, as well as marginalized communities is of utmost importance. The availability of open data of a public nature that works for women's citizenship and claims and the establishments of safeguards against surveillance strategies which pose security risks to human rights defenders, especially women are needed.