

A TRANSFORMATIVE STAND-ALONE
GOAL ON ACHIEVING GENDER
EQUALITY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT:
IMPERATIVES AND KEY COMPONENTS



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**IN THE CONTEXT OF THE POST-2015
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

JUNE 2013¹

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS	9
Box 1: Gender Equality in the Post-2015 Thematic Global Consultations	12
Box 2: Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons	13
3. TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE FOR GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT	15
3.1 A stand-alone goal with three target areas	16
Box 3: Human Rights Concepts	17
3.2 Mainstreaming gender into other goals through appropriate targets and indicators	18
3.3 Enabling conditions and additional considerations	19
4. THE THREE COMPONENTS OF THE TRANSFORMATIVE STAND-ALONE GOAL ON GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT	21
4.1 Freedom from violence	22
4.2 Capabilities and resources	25
4.3 Voice, leadership and participation	30
5. CONCLUSION	33
ENDNOTES	36
BIBLIOGRAPHY	39

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the leading organization with a global mandate to promote gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment,² the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) calls for a specific commitment to **achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment** in the post-2015 development framework and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as robust mainstreaming of gender considerations across all parts of the framework. To make a difference, the new framework must be transformative, by addressing the structural impediments to gender equality and the achievement of women's rights.

The need for such a framework is grounded in the commitment by UN Member States to gender equality and advancing women's rights. These commitments are enshrined in global treaties, most notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); in policy commitments such as the Programme of Action agreed by 179 countries at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the resulting Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and, more recently, the outcome of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20); in relevant outcomes of the General Assembly (GA), including the Millennium Declaration which led to the creation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); in the resolutions of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); and in the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), including, most recently, on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls at CSW 57.³

Central to this universal normative framework is the recognition that the achievement of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment is relevant in every part of the world; it is everyone's responsibility; and it pertains to every policy area. The global priority given to gender equality and women's empowerment in fact led to the inclusion of a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment in the MDGs and the mainstreaming

of gender considerations into other goals through some targets and indicators. The central importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in the MDGs has since been reaffirmed in several UN General Assembly resolutions⁴ and, more recently, through the Rio+20 outcome document which states that: "We recognize that gender equality and women's empowerment are important for sustainable development and our common future. We reaffirm our commitments to ensure women's equal rights, access and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, society and political decision-making."⁵

Any new framework must build on these commitments and must have at its core a strong focus on achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. It must build on, and expand, the priority given to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the MDGs, with a specific focus on realizing women's rights. At the same time, it must avoid the shortcomings of the MDG framework which, from a gender perspective, include the failure to address the structural causes of gender inequality (including addressing issues such as violence against women, unpaid care work, limited control over assets and property, and unequal participation in private and public decision-making), thus missing opportunities to fully address gender-based discrimination.

For gender relations to be transformed, the structures that underpin them have to change: women and girls should be able to lead lives that are free from

violence; they should see the expansion of the full range of human capabilities and have access to a wide range of resources on the same basis as men and boys; and they should have a real presence and voice in the full range of institutional fora (from private to public, from local to global) where decisions are made that shape their lives and the functioning of their families and societies. Without attention to these issues, the risk is that gender-based inequalities in power that block the realization of women's rights are rendered invisible: the structural causes of gender-based discrimination are left unchanged and transformation in gender relations, which is a necessary condition for gender equality, is not achieved.

Looking ahead to the post-2015 development framework and the SDGs, a comprehensive approach is needed. To be transformative, this approach should be universal; should address the structural foundations of gender-based inequality, including in the three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental; and should ensure accountability through robust monitoring frameworks and timely and reliable statistics. Through a transformative stand-alone goal, the post-2015 development framework and the SDGs should capture and have targets on the core catalytic factors for achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. In addition, gender-specific targets should be integrated into other goals in order to ensure meaningful achievement of those goals by addressing the specific areas of gender-based discrimination that limit prospects for eradicating poverty, creating sustainable consumption and production patterns, promoting transparent and accountable governance, ensuring access to high quality education and health care, and ensuring sustainable water and energy access while protecting the environment.

In order to address the structural causes of gender-based discrimination and to support true

transformation in gender relations, we propose an integrated approach that addresses three critical target areas of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment:

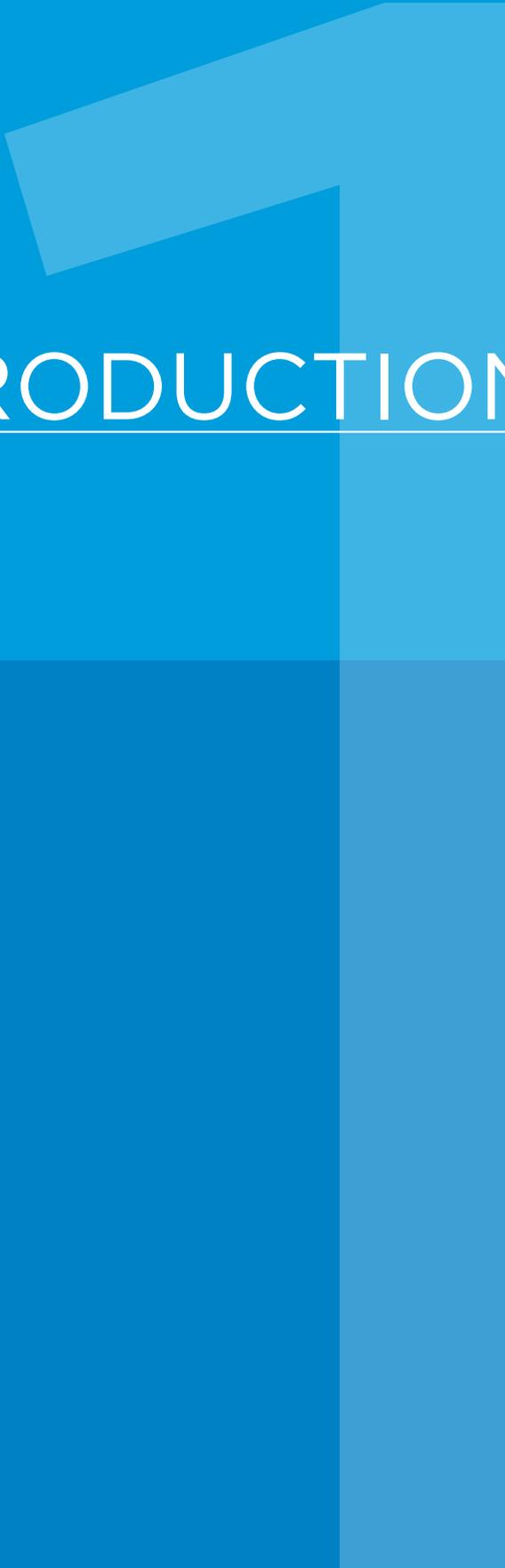
- Freedom from violence against women and girls. Concrete actions to eliminate the debilitating fear and/or experience of violence must be a centrepiece of any future framework.
- Gender equality in the distribution of capabilities – knowledge, good health, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of women and adolescent girls; and access to resources and opportunities, including land, decent work and equal pay to build women's economic and social security.
- Gender equality in decision-making power in public and private institutions, in national parliaments and local councils, the media and civil society, in the management and governance of firms, and in families and communities.

Under each target area, a set of indicators is proposed to monitor change. These are based on internationally agreed standards and have been chosen on the basis of their relevance, methodological soundness, measurability and understandability. In some cases, the indicators are based on existing data, but, in others, they will require new or improved data collection on neglected issues. The post-2015 development framework can be a driver of progress in the area of statistics.

As discussions continue about the shape of the post-2015 development framework, this paper offers clear direction, including on policies that are necessary to effect meaningful and lasting transformation in gender power relations, so that women's and girls' rights can be secured everywhere.



From top left, clockwise: More bread, more jobs. © UN Women/David Snyder; “I wish I could walk around without being hurt by inappropriate words.” © UN Women/Fatma Elzahraa Yassin; Hmong Woman in Viet Nam: A Hmong hill tribe woman at work in Sin Chai, Viet Nam. © UN Photo/Kibae Park; Women enjoy playing soccer at a city park in Kolkata, India. © Sudipto Das.



INTRODUCTION

1.

INTRODUCTION

As a set of time-bound targets, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have played a critical role in mobilizing integrated international action on global poverty issues. Inequality and discrimination based on gender is an impediment to the achievement of women's rights and was recognized in the Millennium Declaration as a significant factor undermining progress in many contexts. This recognition led to the inclusion of a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment (MDG3) and the integration of gender perspectives in other goals through some targets and indicators. As such, MDG3 and the mainstreaming of gender considerations into other goals were an important signal that gender equality and women's empowerment remain a clear global priority.

However, with a few years to go, evaluation of the MDG framework reveals a mixed picture that points to success in some areas (including in reducing extreme poverty, improving access to education and to safe drinking water), but less progress in others (e.g. in reducing hunger and maternal mortality, and improving access to sanitation).

These mixed results in achieving the MDGs have been attributed to lack of attention to the policies needed to achieve the desired outcomes or to the structural problems that must be tackled.⁶ The drive to achieve the MDGs has also meant that areas not explicitly covered within the MDG framework have received less attention, leading to uneven progress or even regression. For instance, the UN-led Post-2015 Inequalities Consultation has revealed that by not devoting sufficient attention to inequalities, the MDGs may have contributed to a relative neglect of marginalized groups and to widening social and economic inequalities.⁷

Furthermore, the MDGs' targets and indicators were not fully aligned to the broader principles outlined in the Millennium Declaration, leading in some instances to serious gaps or narrow – or statistically expedient – measures of human development.⁸ MDG3, to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, is one clear example of this. Progress

on MDG3 was tracked through a single target on gender parity in education, which is one important aspect of gender equality, but clearly insufficient to achieve the broader goal. Areas that were omitted included overcoming gender-specific discrimination such as violence against women, gender-based wage discrimination, women's disproportionate share of unpaid care work, the broad range of women and adolescent girls' sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, women's limited asset and property ownership, and unequal participation in private and public decision-making at all levels. Without attention to these issues, the risk is that gender-based differences in power and resources that block the realization of women's rights are rendered invisible: the structural causes of discrimination and harm on the grounds of gender are left unchanged.

As the world embarks on the process to elaborate a new post-2015 development framework, it is useful to reflect on how the world has changed since the MDGs were adopted. In particular, the succession of global crises, including the recent global financial crisis and the range of austerity measures that have followed in its wake, the food and fuel price spikes and climate change, have exposed the shortcomings of economic models that contribute to vulnerability and inequality (both within and between countries).

Failure to regulate the global financial system in an effective and equitable way has generated significant social and economic costs disproportionately borne by middle and lower income people everywhere, popular resentment, and continued vulnerability to the future volatilities of the financial markets, especially for developing countries with limited control over global financial flows.

Recent political developments, including demands for good governance, inclusive development and social justice, though different in scope, are heard across the globe. Popular mobilizations for democracy across North Africa and parts of the Middle East, the 'Occupy' protests in many urban centres in the North and people mobilizing in opposition to violence against women in South Asia are just some of the recent examples that show that people's demands for respect for human rights, dignity, equality and democracy cannot be ignored.

Similarly, the prevalence of conflict around the world challenges us to address this issue holistically in any new framework. Social injustice and inequality and the perception of exclusion and marginalization can be powerful triggers of violent conflict and war. At the same time, militarization diverts resources away from social and economic investments which can reduce inequalities and facilitate the realization of human rights. The lack of attention to violent conflict and state fragility in the MDGs has been recognized by many stakeholders, including, in 2011, at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which took place in Busan, South Korea where government representatives of fragile and conflict-affected countries, development partners and international organizations agreed on the *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*, which presents an opportunity to establish strengthened connection between state-building and development.⁹ As acknowledged in UN Security Council resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions,¹⁰ conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding must take into account the specific needs and capacities of women and girls who are differentially affected, by guaranteeing their meaningful participation and the involvement of women's rights advocates in public and policy deliberations.¹¹

Already, there are many discussions and debates on what should replace the MDGs and what shape the post-2015 development agenda should take. There are ongoing deliberations on many different policy models to reduce poverty and inequality, achieve development, foster peace and security, promote and protect human rights, and protect the environment. In each of these, the need to achieve gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment should take centre stage, supported by a universal normative framework to which governments around the world have committed.

Reflecting these concerns, the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which called for a new set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development and the interlinkages between them, reaffirmed Member States' commitment to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and provides a strong basis for gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment to be reflected in any new framework. To that effect, the Rio+20 outcome document states: "We recognize that gender equality and women's empowerment are important for sustainable development and our common future. We reaffirm our commitments to ensure women's equal rights, access and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, society and political decision-making."¹²

Furthermore, the United Nations Development Group is facilitating consultations in more than 80 countries as well as 11 global thematic consultations, which demonstrate a growing appetite for meaningful participation in shaping the post-2015 development agenda.¹³ Participants in these consultations are calling for a new development agenda that is universal and applies to all people everywhere; holistic and comprehensive in order to address the complex and interlinked challenges of the 21st century; and transformative, addressing structural inequalities and discrimination, including gender inequality, that hinder progress and sustainable development. Accountability and transparency are also key to enabling ordinary people and civil society to monitor

and hold decision-makers to account over the implementation of their commitments.¹⁴

In this extremely dynamic context – a transformative stand-alone gender equality goal must be a core element of the post-2015 development framework and the SDGs.

In the next section, the justification for a transformative stand-alone gender equality goal is provided. Section 3 provides a snapshot of the goal's three proposed priority components and explains how the

transformative stand-alone goal aims to address the structural causes of gender-based inequalities that impede the realization of women's rights and empowerment. This section also addresses the importance of mainstreaming gender concerns into all other goals and discusses the policy considerations relevant to their promotion. Section 4 provides details on the three target areas that should be covered under the stand-alone goal. A preliminary set of indicators is also suggested against each target area. Section 5 concludes the paper.

GENDER EQUALITY,
WOMEN'S RIGHTS
AND WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
IN THE POST-2015
DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK AND SDGs

2.

GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND SDGs

The need for a transformative goal on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment is grounded in the commitment by UN Member States to gender equality and advancing women's rights. These commitments are enshrined in global treaties, most notably CEDAW; in policy commitments such as the Programme of Action agreed at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the resulting Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and, more recently, the outcome of Rio+20; in relevant outcomes of the General Assembly (GA), including the Millennium Declaration which led to the creation of the MDGs; in the resolutions of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); and, in the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), including, most recently, on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls at CSW 57.

The outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference, which reaffirmed the commitment to CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and called for a new set of SDGs, provides a strong basis for including a comprehensive approach to gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment in the new development agenda. The document recognized that gender equality and women's empowerment are important for sustainable development in all its three dimensions – economic, environmental and social

– and for our common future. Underscoring women's vital role in achieving sustainable development, governments reaffirmed their commitments to ensure women's equal rights, access and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economy, society and political decision-making.¹⁵ Governments also recognized the leadership role of women and resolved to “ensure [women's] full and effective participation in sustainable development policies, programmes and decision-making at all levels.”¹⁶

The Rio+20 outcome document's framework for action and follow-up included a dedicated section on gender equality and women's empowerment as a priority area; identifying cross-cutting issues and including explicit references to women's empowerment and gender equality in 12 thematic areas which are: poverty eradication; food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture; energy; water and sanitation; sustainable cities and human settlements; health and population; promoting full and productive employment, decent work for all and social protection; oceans and seas; Small Island Developing States; disaster-risk reduction; desertification, land degradation and drought; and education. The Rio+20 outcome document also recognized that goals, targets and indicators, including gender-sensitive indicators, are valuable in measuring and accelerating progress on sustainable development.

The imperative for a transformative approach to gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment was strongly validated in the outcomes of the participatory national, regional and global consultations organized under the aegis of the UN Development Group and UN Regional Commissions (see Box 1).

Global consultations, including one on inequality conducted in 2012-13 and co-led by UN Women and UNICEF, revealed that gender-based inequality remains one of the most pervasive forms of inequality, found in all societies, and affecting a larger proportion of the world's population than any other form of inequality.¹⁷ The consultation found that gender-based discrimination creates inequalities between women and men that vary according to class, income, location, race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, disability and other factors.¹⁸ While some of these sources of inequalities (e.g. income, location) can be attributed to uneven development, gender-based discrimination is an injustice that pervades all societies and one that poverty reduction and growth alone cannot remedy. The global inequality consultation concluded by stating "a new post-2015 Development Agenda should therefore include not only a universal goal for gender equality and the empowerment and advancement of women and girls, but also ensure that gender and

other dominant inequalities are mainstreamed in all relevant areas through disaggregated targets and indicators".¹⁹

A significant body of research indicates that women's empowerment and gender equality have a catalytic effect on the achievement of human development, good governance, sustained peace, and harmonious dynamics between the environment and human populations – all of which are at the core of proposals for the SDGs and a post-2015 development framework.²⁰ Yet while gender equality can contribute to poverty reduction, economic growth, and effective governance, the reverse – rising incomes, democratic political participation, and peace – do not necessarily enhance women's rights and empowerment.²¹ For this reason, the collective responsibility for achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment requires specific policy attention and action.

Based on the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs recognized the importance of gender equality through a stand-alone goal, MDG3. It is critical that any new global framework retains this focus for the following reasons:

- First, a transformative stand-alone goal is needed to drive further change and to promote and monitor transformation in the structural determinants of gender-based inequality. Gender inequalities in access to resources, knowledge and health, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights – including for adolescent girls – and in opportunities to participate in public and private decision-making, remain a source of major injustice in the world. The achievement of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment is unfinished business.
- Second, there are compelling synergies between gender equality and other goals: numerous assessments have shown that progress on other goals has been contingent on achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls.²³ Conversely, gender inequalities have held back progress on the MDGs on reducing poverty and hunger, reducing child mortality, improving maternal and child health, combating HIV/AIDS, and promoting

BOX 1

Gender Equality in the Post-2015 Thematic Global Consultations²²

Throughout the 11 global thematic consultations, participants strongly urged that the achievement of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment was a necessary and critical component to achieving the overall thematic objectives. Gender equality and women's rights concerns were raised in multiple ways to highlight the different needs and experiences of women in all areas. For example:

The thematic consultation on **Conflict, Violence and Disasters** highlights that gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment is a key means of addressing the drivers of conflict and instability, and to building resilience against disasters and shocks. In times of conflict and fragility, there is a need to eradicate violence against women and girls; to ensure fair access to social services and resources; and to guarantee women's inclusion in peace negotiations and post-conflict decision-making processes.

The thematic consultation on **Education** indicates that girls' education needs must go beyond mere numerical parity to address equality in learning outcomes and equal opportunities, including mobilizing stronger interventions to help girls complete primary, secondary and tertiary education. Gender-sensitive education initiatives should focus on the quality of education girls receive and the improvement of safety and security in and around schools.

The thematic consultation on **Water** addresses the fact that women are critical in securing water, food, and fuel for their families and communities. Increasing loss of forests, land degradation and the decline in freshwater quality and quantity undermine women's livelihoods, including their access to productive resources and assets and

essential services. A gender-responsive environmental sustainability initiative would ensure women's sustainable access to safe water and sanitation; food security and agriculture; and energy.

The point that women experience weak governance differently from men is highlighted in the **Governance** consultation, most notably in cases where women do not have the same opportunities for participation as men, where gender biases limit women's access to public resources, where the governance of the economy and systems of social protection assume and reproduce women's marginal positions in markets and firms, or where corruption results in fewer resources for the public services on which they rely.

The **Growth and Employment** consultation indicates that women suffer discrimination in accessing labor markets; are over-represented in vulnerable employment; and are paid lower wages than men for work of equal value. Sustainable economic growth will require gender-sensitive initiatives to remove barriers for women's entry into the labour market, such as the adequate provision of social services and infrastructure; fairer distribution of household work; and ensuring the fulfillment of their rights.

The **Health** consultation highlights that there is still a need to ensure access to affordable universal health care services that prevent the exclusion of women and girls. Sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, including knowledge of sexually transmitted infections like HIV, are crucial to individual, family and community health and well-being, and requires universal access to quality, comprehensive, integrated health services, counselling and information for women and girls.

advances in this area. Given the global commitments outlined above, it is important to retain and strengthen this accountability framework.

This rationale is strongly endorsed by the much anticipated report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent

Persons, which was presented to the UN Secretary-General in the last stages of finalizing this paper (see Box 2).

Looking ahead to the post-2015 development framework and SDGs, a comprehensive approach is

BOX 2

Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons

The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 Development Agenda was appointed by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in July 2012 with a mandate to advise him on the development agenda beyond 2015. As such, the panel was tasked to produce a report for the Secretary-General which includes: recommendations about a post-2015 development agenda that will help respond to the global challenges of the 21st century and builds on the MDGs, with a view to ending poverty; key principles for reshaping the global partnership for development and strengthened accountability mechanisms; and, recommendations on how to build and sustain broad political consensus on an ambitious, yet achievable, post-2015 development agenda around the three dimensions of economic growth, social equality and environmental sustainability, while taking into account the particular challenges of conflict and post-conflict countries.

The panel's much anticipated report, entitled *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development* was presented to the Secretary-General on 30 May 2013. The report proposes a vision of development centred around five transformational shifts: ending extreme poverty; putting sustainable development and its three dimensions in the core of the post-2015 development framework; transforming economies for jobs and inclusive growth; building peace and open and accountable institutions; and forging a new global partnership. To operationalize

this vision, the panel provides 12 “illustrative goals” to inform the process on possible options for moving forward (See Annex I of the panel's report for the list and content of all the illustrative goals).

In both its narrative and list of illustrative goals, the report makes a case for a stand-alone goal on gender equality and for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all other goals. As part of Goal 2 – Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality – the panel proposes four targets:

- Prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against girls and women;
- End child marriage;
- Ensure equal rights of women to own and inherit property, sign a contract, register a business and open a bank account;
- Eliminate discrimination against women in political, economic, and public life.

Consistent with the need to mainstream gender into other goals, the panel also proposes relevant targets in other goals. For example, targets such as “increase the number of young and adult women and men with the skills, including technical and vocational, needed for work” is included under Goal 3 to Provide Quality Education and Lifelong Learning; and targets related to reducing the maternal mortality ratio and ensuring universal sexual and reproductive health and rights are included under Goal 4 to Ensure Healthy Lives.

Source: UN 2013c.

needed. To be transformative, the post-2015 development framework and SDGs should be universal and should address the structural foundations of gender-based inequality in the three pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental. Through a transformative stand-alone goal, the post-2015 development framework and the SDGs should capture and have targets on the core catalytic factors for achieving gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment. In addition, gender-specific targets should be mainstreamed across other goals in order to drive progress across the entire framework and to address gender-based discrimination that

limits prospects for eliminating poverty, promoting peace and security, creating sustainable consumption and production patterns, promoting transparent and accountable government, ensuring access to high quality education and health care, and ensuring sustainable water and energy access. Furthermore, robust monitoring through the inclusion of gender-specific targets and indicators throughout the framework is an important tool for accountability on gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment. This is an essential feature of MDGs that needs to be retained and improved upon.

TRANSFORMATIVE
CHANGE FOR GENDER
EQUALITY, WOMEN'S
RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT



3.

TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE FOR GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

3.1

A STAND-ALONE GOAL WITH THREE TARGET AREAS

UN Women proposes three priority target areas that should be included in the post-2015 development framework to address gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. The inclusion of all of these issues, through a transformative stand-alone goal, will address the *structural causes* of gender-based inequality that impede women's empowerment and agency and the full realization of their rights. The target areas and proposed indicators aim to monitor meaningful transformations towards equality in the relations between women and men, while being attentive to the variations in women's subordination caused by factors such as class, race, ethnicity, geographical location, disability, sexuality, and other vectors of discrimination and exclusion.

Our choice of priority target areas is informed and inspired by four sources. First, the normative human rights framework which includes the principles of universality, non-retrogression, non-discrimination and substantive equality (see Box 3 for more information). Second, research-based evidence on economic, social and political factors and policy approaches that are most likely to generate pathways for women and girls to articulate strong claims for equality and realize their diverse and interconnected rights – economic, social and cultural, as well as civil and political. Third, the lessons learned from the history of women's collective action, which has achieved major advances

in women's rights at global, regional and national levels through rigorous research, strategic advocacy, technical assistance to governments, and mobilization of citizens to call duty-bearers to account. Fourth, the many consultations at national, regional and global levels with women's organizations and experts that have contributed to the post-2015 development framework and the SDGs.²⁴ This paper also acknowledges and draws from other position papers developed recently and over the past decade on the performance of the MDG framework from a gender perspective²⁵ as well as comments from various experts and practitioners on earlier drafts.

BOX 3

Human Rights Concepts

Universality and inalienability: Human rights are universal and inalienable. All people everywhere in the world are entitled to them. The person in whom they inhere cannot voluntarily give them up. Nor can others take these human rights away from him or her.

Indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness: Human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political or social – are indivisible and all have equal status as rights. The realization of one right often depends, wholly or in part, upon the realization of others.

Equality and non-discrimination: The principles of equality and non-discrimination contend that everyone is entitled to all rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind. Non-discrimination entails the absence of a discriminatory legal framework and that policies are not discriminatory in effect.

Substantive equality: Substantive equality goes far beyond formal equality to contend that, due to the existence of entrenched discrimination in society, achieving equality might require different or unequal treatment in favour of a disadvantaged group in order to achieve equality of outcome. Substantive equality is concerned with the effects of laws, policies and practices to ensure that they do not maintain or reinforce existing disadvantages.

Participation and inclusion: Every person is entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to, and the enjoyment of, development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realized.

Accountability and rule of law: States and other duty-bearers are answerable for the observance of human rights. In this regard, they have to comply with the legal norms and standards enshrined in human rights instruments. Where they fail to do so, aggrieved rights-holders are entitled to institute proceedings for appropriate redress.

In addition to these concepts, there are several other important principles related specifically to economic, social and cultural rights:

Progressive realization: It is recognized that lack of resources may impede States from realizing economic, social and cultural rights. However, the progressive realization of human rights imposes a constant and continuing duty on States to take deliberate and targeted steps, as effectively and expeditiously as possible, to meet their obligations towards the full realization of rights. Even in the context of progressive realization of human rights, non-discrimination between different groups of people is an immediate obligation. States are also obliged to constantly monitor progress towards the realization of these rights.

Non-retrogression: Retrogressive measures taken by States, which undermine the realization of human rights, are not permitted. A State is required to show, in the case of deliberately retrogressive measures, that all alternatives have been considered and that the measures are fully justifiable by reference to a totality of rights.

Sources: Balakrishnan and Elson 2008; Donnelly 2007; Fredman 2009, OHCHR 2006, United Nations Development Group, 2003.

UN Women's three target areas address core elements of gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment, namely:

- **Freedom from violence against women and girls.**²⁶ Concrete actions to eliminate the debilitating fear and/or experience of violence must be a

centrepiece of any future framework. This violence, which causes great physical and psychological harm to women and girls, is a violation of their human rights, constrains their ability to fulfill their true potential and carries great economic costs for them and for society.

- **Gender equality in capabilities and resources.** The often skewed distribution of capabilities, such as knowledge and health – encompassing sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights for women and adolescent girls, as well as resources and opportunities, such as productive assets (including land), decent work and equal pay – needs to be addressed with renewed urgency to build women’s economic and social security.
- **Gender equality in decision-making power in public and private institutions.** The low numbers of women in public decision-making, from national parliaments to local councils, must be remedied to ensure that women feature prominently in democratic institutions and their voices are heard in public and private deliberations. The lack of voice in decision-making is also found in the key institutions influencing public opinion and promoting accountability, such as the media and civil society, as well as in private-sector institutions, such as in

the management and governance of firms. It has its roots in unequal power relations in the family and community.

There are significant national and regional variations in gender relations, and countries will vary in their approaches to – and set their own targets for – advancing gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment.²⁷ While every country will have its own way of organizing policies and resources to meet its commitments to the achievement of gender equality, women’s rights, and women’s empowerment, these three priority target areas represent ‘minimum standard’ elements that should be addressed, consistent with international commitments. The interlinked and complex nature of women’s subordination means that only a comprehensive approach, encompassing actions in all three of these areas is likely to achieve gender equality. It is only through this kind of holistic approach that meaningful, lasting transformation in gender power relations can be achieved.

3.2

MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO OTHER GOALS THROUGH APPROPRIATE TARGETS AND INDICATORS

In addition to the three target areas of the transformative stand-alone goal, it is important that the new framework takes a comprehensive approach to gender equality by mainstreaming gender considerations into all other goals, through appropriate targets and gender relevant indicators. These considerations derive from the existing evidence highlighted in the previous section but also on the various inter-governmental commitments, including the Beijing Platform for Action; relevant resolutions of the General Assembly; agreed conclusions of CSW; and, most recently, the Rio+20 outcome document (see Section 2).²⁸

Depending on the content of the new framework, some of the indicators suggested below to monitor the transformative stand-alone goal could be used to mainstream gender considerations into other goals. For example, a target to reduce the maternal mortality ratio can be included in a stand-alone goal or can be mainstreamed into a health goal. However, for the reasons outlined above, it is important for the transformative stand-alone goal on gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment to include the three target areas identified as this will ensure accountability for progress and will also cover those critical issues that are not included elsewhere in the framework.²⁹

3.3

ENABLING CONDITIONS AND ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Advances in gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment require a change in power relations between women and men and girls and boys in public and private institutions, and enabling policies that weaken the 'structures of constraint'³⁰ – the powerful economic, social and cultural forces that attribute stereotyped gender roles to women and men, restrict women and girls' life options, and contribute to perpetuating gender-based discrimination. This can mean ensuring that women have options to choose alternatives to dependence on men, and that men too have options to move beyond limited gender roles, by engaging in caregiving, by stopping gender-based violence, and by sharing decision-making power. A wide range of social and economic policies can contribute to these changes, as can enabling macroeconomic and governance environments that facilitate the full realization of human rights.

The global financial crisis that erupted in 2007/8, and was followed soon after by the damaging wave of austerity measures enacted in many countries, demonstrate once again that the state of the macroeconomy and the policies that underpin it can have a direct and immediate impact on the realization of women's rights – by affecting the quantity and quality of paid work that women can access, as well as public investments in services, transfers and infrastructure that can reduce women's unpaid work burdens.³¹ Therefore, to realize the economic and social rights of women and girls, whether through investments in infrastructure, education, care policies or social protection programmes, enabling macroeconomic policies are needed. To support sectoral policies that are underway in many countries (e.g. social protection programmes, expansion of public services) macroeconomic policies need to be informed by human rights standards³² that promote equitable patterns of growth and the necessary regulation of global financial markets to reduce exposure to volatilities and risks. Equally important are public policies and regulations for decent work that prevent discrimination against women, promote equal pay, reduce the

burden of unpaid care work and enable men to take on more of those responsibilities. Without such regulations, labour markets tend to undervalue women's labour, reinforce gender-based inequalities in earnings, and generate poor working conditions such as lack of occupational health and safety and exclusion from social protection measures.

In order to generate *transformation* in gender relations and the progressive realization of women's rights, gender parity may not always be a meaningful measure. Parity can entail 'equalizing down' to a common level, as in the case when gender-based wage gaps are narrowed not because women's wages are increasing, but because men's wages are declining. Similarly, formal equality can result in neglect of issues that are specific to women and girls, such as their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, or can perpetuate disadvantage, for instance, by failing to acknowledge that individuals with different levels of education are unlikely to be able to compete equally in the labour market. Therefore, the commitment to substantive equality, through the elimination of violence against women and girls, building equality in their capabilities and resources, and increasing their decision-making power may require special conditions and efforts that recognize different needs and starting points.

Effective implementation requires gender-responsive accountability systems that enable women to hold public authorities answerable for their commitments. Gender-responsive accountability reforms are crucial to ensuring that women and civil society organizations can hold governments to account and that women can shape public policy, prevent abuses of their rights, or demand redress where abuses occur. Key to making accountability systems work for women is the strength of women's collective action, either within women's rights groups or within broader associations such as trade unions. For this, an environment of civic and political freedom is necessary. In an increasingly integrated world, where the actions of powerful non-state institutions, such as global financial institutions

and multinational corporations, have a major bearing on the lives of women and men in far-flung corners of the world, accountability frameworks also need to include these powerful non-state actors.

In addition to policies, the new framework also needs to be accompanied by adequate means of implementation. In particular, resource mobilization, both through raising domestic resources and increased and more stable development assistance to fund public investments in infrastructure and services, including care services to reduce women's time burdens, is paramount. Without a clear impetus to allocate adequate resources, the achievement of these outcomes will remain a hollow promise. Therefore, resource allocation, including practices such as gender-responsive budgeting, freedom of information arrangements that are made accessible to women to review public decisions and spending patterns, and judicial reviews equipped to handle public interest cases, will also be valuable for effective accountability to women and girls.

In the next section, the content of the three proposed target areas for a transformative goal on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment are detailed, along with policies that have proven effective in meeting the desired outcomes in diverse contexts. The discussion of policies is not prescriptive. No country in the world has achieved gender equality and there is no one proven pathway. There is considerable synergy among the policies that promote women's rights and gender equality across the three areas of the transformative stand-alone goal. For instance, social protection programmes (pensions, gender egalitarian public works programmes), access to decent work and quality services can *all* provide women with the fall-back securities they need to exit violent relationships; not marrying at a very young age can also be a powerful means to support girls' autonomy and may prevent such violence from occurring in the first place. Promotion of gender equality in ownership of immovable assets not only supports women's access to credit, but can also reduce vulnerability to short-term environmental and market shocks.

In each case, these target areas refer to issues that have featured consistently in human rights treaties and intergovernmental agreements over the past four decades, such as CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Rio+20 outcome document. While UN Women has formulated 'target areas', it has not set specific quantified targets, such as the exact percentage by which countries could seek to increase the number of women in public decision-making, nor the desirable percentage increase in land titles held by women, nor the degree by which pay differentials between women and men should be diminished. While this is yet to be determined in the intergovernmental negotiations, these targets may be best set at a national level – with some attention to globally-agreed minimum levels and other normative intergovernmental agreements.

We also suggest against each of these target areas a list of possible indicators, drawn from a set that has been agreed internationally and therefore enjoys a strong normative and technical basis.³³ In line with the criteria recommended by the UN Task Team on Lessons Learned from MDGs Monitoring, these indicators constitute a highly select set that were chosen on the basis of their relevance, methodological soundness, measurability and understandability.³⁴

It is important to note that the targets proposed are, in some cases, based on existing data, but in others will require new or improved data collection on neglected issues. For example, although global data on unpaid care work are not systematically available, countries as diverse as Algeria, Ethiopia and the United States have conducted time-use surveys successfully within the last year, highlighting the fact that data collection on these topics is indeed possible.³⁵ In order to establish a strong monitoring framework that is relevant and useful for public policy and accountability, the development of targets and the selection of indicators should not hinge exclusively on current data availability. Rather, a strong framework needs to identify what is important to measure and encourage data collection in those areas.

THE THREE
COMPONENTS OF THE
TRANSFORMATIVE
STAND-ALONE
GOAL ON GENDER
EQUALITY, WOMEN'S
RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT



4.

THE THREE COMPONENTS OF THE TRANSFORMATIVE STAND-ALONE GOAL ON GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

4.1.

FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE

Violence against women and girls is a manifestation of gender discrimination that seriously inhibits their abilities to enjoy rights and freedoms on the basis of equality with men and boys. It is perhaps the most pervasive human rights abuse in the world today, happening in all countries. Ending this violence must be a central element of the transformative stand-alone goal. Globally, one in three women report having experienced physical and sexual violence at some point in their lives, usually perpetrated by an intimate partner. Certain groups of women who face multiple forms of discrimination, such as migrant and refugee women, and women with disabilities, are particularly exposed to the risk of violence.³⁶

Violence against women and girls tends to increase at times of crisis and instability, notably during and after periods of upheaval and displacement associated with armed conflict and natural disasters, but also when people are dealing with uncertainty. There can be increased domestic violence when men are unemployed even if (sometimes especially if) women are bringing in income.³⁷ Insecurity that results from high levels of organized crime in societies may also be associated with increased levels of violence against women or higher rates of femicide. In some situations of armed conflict, violence against women is

widespread and systematic—for instance, where forms of sexual violence such as rape, forced prostitution, or sex trafficking are used by armed groups as a tactic of warfare to terrorize or displace civilians or to benefit parties to the conflict.³⁸ Crucial target areas to stop violence against women and girls are listed below.

Target: *Prevent and respond to violence against women and girls*

At its core, violence against women and girls is the result of unequal gender power relations, making it one

of the most telling signs of gender-based inequalities in society.³⁹ It is both a cause and consequence of women's subordination to men and can take the form of physical or sexual violence as well as harmful traditional practices such as female infanticide, prenatal sex selection, child marriage, dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation/cutting, so-called 'honour' crimes, and maltreatment of widows.⁴⁰ The magnitude of this violence, occurring in all countries and among all social groups (whether defined by class, race, ethnicity or religion) has ramifications for the individual, the society and the economy.⁴¹ It is now well-known that violence against women and girls results in poor mental, sexual and physical health outcomes (including increased risk of HIV); reduces educational achievement, productivity and social functioning; affects children (including boys who may witness this violence, making them up to three times more likely to become perpetrators of abuse themselves); and imposes high costs to public budgets both in responding to survivors and in dealing with perpetrators.⁴² This recognition has led to a General Assembly resolution calling on Member States to establish "... time-bound measurable targets, to promote the protection of women against any form of violence, and accelerate the implementation of existing national action plans that are regularly monitored and updated by Governments, taking into account inputs by civil society, in particular women's organizations, networks and other stakeholders".⁴³ The same GA resolution called on the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) to develop a list of indicators to monitor its prevalence. As a result, a list of nine core indicators has now been developed and adopted by the UNSC.⁴⁴

In order to eradicate violence against women, it is necessary to measure its prevalence in all its forms, but particularly measuring the prevalence of intimate partner violence, as this is the most common form of violence experienced by women worldwide. We propose indicators, taken from the nine core indicators, measuring the prevalence of physical and sexual violence against women. Given that much of this violence is at the hands of intimate partners, it is crucial to have these data disaggregated by type of perpetrator. Disaggregation by class, age, rural/urban location,

ethnicity etc. will also help to monitor trends and tailor responses.⁴⁵ In line with the Secretary-General's *In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence Against Women*, we also propose indicators to measure the prevalence of female genital mutilation/cutting and other harmful traditional practices and the prevalence of child marriage.⁴⁶

Proposed indicators

Prevent and respond to violence against women and girls

- Total and age-specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by a current or former intimate partner in the last 12 months, by frequency
- Total and age-specific rate of ever-partnered women subjected to sexual and/or physical violence by a current or former intimate partner during lifetime, by frequency
- Rates of female genital mutilation and other traditional harmful practices
- Percentage of women aged 20-24 who were married or in a union before age 18

Target: *Change perceptions, attitudes and behaviours that condone and justify violence against women and girls*

There is strong evidence that gender discriminatory attitudes and attitudes that condone violence, especially among men, strongly correlate with the perpetration of abuse. Multi-country research looking at women's health and domestic violence by the World Health Organization (WHO study) has found that the acceptance of domestic violence was higher among women who have experienced such violence, suggesting that victims of domestic violence learn to 'accept' it as 'normal' or justify their abuse experiences, and are thus less likely to leave abusive relationships.⁴⁷ In order to monitor the change in social norms tolerant of violence against women, we suggest two indicators that were included in the WHO study,

measuring the acceptance of domestic violence and beliefs about whether and when a woman may refuse to have sex with her husband.⁴⁸ Data on prevalence require context-specific interpretation and data from other indicators such as perception surveys tracking women's own feelings of security, as well as measures of women's and men's attitudes on whether violence is acceptable.

Proposed indicators

Change perceptions, attitudes and behaviours that condone and justify violence against women and girls

- Percentage of people who think it is never justifiable for a man to beat his wife, by sex
- Percentage of people who think a woman can refuse to have sex with her husband under any circumstance, by sex

Target: *Ensure security, support services and justice for women and girls*

Women's capacity to leave violent relationships is strongly impacted by family and civil laws with regard to divorce and separation, women's guardianship of children and their access to resources and financial assistance. Social attitudes also shape men's responses in such contexts, either by encouraging men's acceptance of separation initiated by women, or by inciting retaliation through intensified violence.

Effective responses to violence against women depend on a well-functioning system that can provide women with immediate care and safety through quality mental, physical and reproductive health services, protection and shelter, and social and justice services. The availability of an effective support system sends a message by the state that violence is a serious crime and will not be tolerated.

In most countries, incidents of violence are significantly under-reported; and, even when they are reported, an insufficient number of cases are investigated and prosecuted. To improve this, gender biases in public services need to be addressed through reforms such as the recruitment and retention of women in the police force; the establishment of dedicated justice mechanisms, such as specialized domestic violence courts; the provision of training, protocols and guidelines for officials dealing with survivors; and the provision of high quality, accessible and joined-up services for survivors.

We propose here an indicator that tracks the ratio between the number of incidents of violence against women and those reported to the police and judicial system. In addition, we propose an indicator tracking women's representation in the police, which is found to be positively correlated with the reporting of sexual violence.⁴⁹

Proposed indicators

Ensure security, support services and justice for women and girls

- Proportion of women over 15 years-old subjected to physical or sexual violence in the past 12 months who reported it to the justice system
- Proportion of the population who feel safe walking alone at night in the area where they live, by sex
- Proportion of national budgets allocated to the prevention of, and the response to, violence against women
- Proportion of law enforcement professionals who are women (including judges and the police)

4.2.

CAPABILITIES AND RESOURCES

The capability approach, as developed by Amartya Sen, puts emphasis on people's substantive freedoms and sees development as a process of enlarging those freedoms. These substantive freedoms include capacities 'to be and to do' and to live a life that one has reason to value, such as the freedom to be nourished, to be educated, to be healthy, to choose whom and when to marry, to freely decide on the number and spacing of children, and so on.⁵⁰

Many of these capabilities have an intrinsic value, but can also be instrumental to the expansion of other capabilities (e.g. being educated is valuable in its own right but can be a means to securing a decent job; having a decent job is important for securing an adequate income but can also contribute to one's sense of dignity). Having access to, and control over, resources, such as a secure and adequate income or productive assets, are important means to those ends.⁵¹ Expanding people's capabilities in a gender-equitable way would ensure that constraints that are gender-specific (e.g. women's and adolescent girls' sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights) or gender intensified (e.g. access to decent work or land) are addressed with the same urgency as those that affect both women and men (e.g. education, health).

People's aspirations to live fulfilling lives are also directly relevant to, and deeply affected by, environmental sustainability. As a result, these concerns are at the core of the capability approach. The most disadvantaged people carry a double burden of deprivation, since they are more vulnerable to the wider effects of environmental degradation, but must also cope with threats to their immediate environment posed by indoor air pollution, dirty water and unimproved sanitation.⁵² For women, with their greater reliance on subsistence agriculture and on common property resources (e.g. forests, village commons) for meeting their households' subsistence needs, environmental concerns are becoming increasingly urgent. But women can also be an important part of the solution to environmental degradation through their active

participation in the governance and management of natural resources.⁵³ That women and girls are at the centre of sustainability concerns has long been recognized in intergovernmental agreements such as the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development⁵⁴ (as reflected in Agenda 21), in ICPD, in the Beijing Platform for Action, and more recently, as reiterated in Rio+20.

Target: *Eradicate women's poverty*

Poverty curtails women's and men's right to live a life of dignity and puts severe constraints on their ability to make meaningful choices. For women, poverty is largely determined by their ability and opportunities to earn a decent income, but also by their capacity to retain control over that income. Even though women may live in households that are not poor – because their partners or other household members may earn sufficient income to pull the household above the poverty line – they are, nevertheless, financially dependent, which increases their vulnerability to poverty as well as reduces their voice and bargaining power within the household. The inequitable distribution of resources (including food and health care) within households by gender could translate into nutritional deficiencies and inequalities by gender, adversely affecting girls and women. Furthermore, women's weaker access to social protection programmes such as pensions compared to men's, and their lower lifetime contributions to 'contributory' pension schemes, due to their lesser labour market status and earnings, can significantly contribute to poverty in old age. This is particularly worrying given the fact that, in many regions, women tend to live longer than men. In addition to income related measures, access to decent and adequate housing is an important aspect of women's poverty that should be tracked in the new framework.

The proposed indicators on individual income, ownership of dwelling, nutrition levels, and access to old age pension will help to ensure that effective action can be taken to reduce women's poverty.

Proposed indicators

Eradicate women's poverty

- Percentage of people earning their own income, by sex
- Ownership of dwelling, by sex
- Percentage of population undernourished, by sex
- Old age pension recipient ratio 65+, by sex

Target: *Promote decent work for women*

Even as women's presence in the workforce has increased, labour markets continue to be sites of disadvantage for women compared to men. This is exemplified by women's lower rates of participation in the labour force, their higher rates of unemployment in most regions and their greater propensity to be in, what the International Labour Organization (ILO) calls, 'vulnerable'⁵⁵ types of employment. Gender-based wage gaps also persist, even though in recent years gender gaps appear to have narrowed in some countries due to the 'levelling down' of male wages.⁵⁶ Women continue to be over-represented in low paid jobs.⁵⁷

These labour market disparities cannot be simply explained in terms of women's lower educational or skills levels, which are beginning to converge with men's in most regions. Social norms continue to portray certain jobs or tasks as more 'appropriate' for women, devaluing their labour as 'unskilled' or 'low skilled' and portraying their incomes as additional 'pocket money' rather than essential income for their households. Furthermore, macroeconomic policies that dampen employment generation and reinforce labour market informality often have a disproportionately negative impact on women's employment and their right to decent work.⁵⁸ Tracking change in this area requires monitoring of the proportion of women and men in vulnerable employment, the gender wage gap and the proportion of women and men in low paid jobs.

Proposed indicators

Promote decent work for women

- Proportion employed in vulnerable employment, by sex
- Gender gap in wages
- Percentage of low pay workers, by sex

Target: *Build women's access to, and control over, productive assets*

Assets provide individuals and households with the means to generate income, to cope with shocks and volatilities, and can also be used as collateral to enable access to credit (including credit from the formal banking system, and not just microfinance). It is vital to ensure women have equal control of economic assets relative to men, especially since, in many parts of the world, land tenure arrangements recognize the male household head as the owner, subsuming women as their 'dependents'. Control over, and ownership of, assets can provide women with greater protection and stronger fallback positions, enhancing their bargaining power within the household and their capacity for economic independence.⁵⁹ Sex-disaggregated measures of land ownership and access to credit would reveal the extent of gender disparities in the control over, and ownership of, assets and could support targets aiming to equalize sole or joint ownership and control. While this information is currently only available for a small number of countries, efforts are underway to develop and agree at the international level on methodologies for collecting and harmonizing these data.⁶⁰

Proposed indicators

Build women's access to, and control over, productive assets

- Proportion of adult population owning land, by sex
- Proportion of population with access to institutional credit (other than microfinance), by sex

Target: Reduce women's time burdens

Unpaid work has profound implications for our understanding of poverty and well-being. As a result of their socially ascribed roles, women do the bulk of domestic and unpaid care work. This includes household maintenance activities such as cooking and cleaning, as well as person-to-person care activities such as child and elder care.⁶¹ Though essential for people's well-being, the reproduction of the labour force, and social cohesion more broadly, this work is rarely *recognized* and made visible in economic models used for policymaking. Nor is unpaid domestic and care work sufficiently supported through appropriate policy measures.⁶²

Such policies must encompass elements that help *reduce* the drudgery of unpaid domestic and care work (e.g. through the availability of time-saving domestic technology and investments in gender-sensitive infrastructure), as well as its *redistribution* between women and men (within families) *and* between families and the state (through public provisioning of accessible and quality services, including care services).⁶³ The post-2015 development framework should make this aspect of gender inequality visible for public debate and policy deliberation, by monitoring gender differences in unpaid care work responsibilities and setting targets for reducing and redistributing this work.

Proposed indicators

Reduce women's time burdens

- Average weekly number of hours spent on unpaid domestic work, by sex
- Proportion of children under primary school age enrolled in organized childcare

Target: Promote education and skills for women and girls

Although gender parity in education is an area where progress has been made in recent decades, globally, nearly all countries have gender gaps. While, in some cases, the gender gap favours girls, in most developing countries girls continue to have fewer opportunities to

attend school than boys, particularly in secondary and tertiary education. Furthermore, in situations where girls enjoy higher enrolment rates than boys, this can reflect the fact that boys have other alternatives including early and easier entry into the labour market.⁶⁴ The gender gaps in education have negative repercussions throughout women's lives, translating into fewer opportunities in labour markets, less voice in decision-making at all levels, less control over reproductive health and choices, and so on.

In addition to increasing access, it is imperative that the new framework tackles skills gaps, which are apparent through, among other things, gender gaps in the use of new technologies. It will be important to monitor the quality of education, including the use of gender-sensitive curricula and the conditions of access to education, for example, ensuring that school environments are safe for girls and have adequate sanitation facilities.

Our proposed indicators would enable target-setting to eliminate gender biases in girls' transition to secondary education and in their preparation for employment in better remunerated non-traditional sectors, as well as in their use of communication technologies.

Proposed indicators

Promote education and skills for women and girls

- Transition rate to secondary education, by sex
- Secondary completion rate, by sex
- Share of female science, engineering, manufacturing and construction graduates at tertiary level
- Percentage of population using the Internet, by sex

Target: Improve women's and girls' health

While women and men throughout the world share many health challenges, there are also gender-specific health problems that must be tackled. These arise from both biological differences and gender discriminatory norms and socially ascribed roles that

contribute to differential health outcomes. A stark illustration of discriminatory norms and practices is the gender bias in feeding, care, and health-seeking behaviour that adversely affect the health, well-being and even survival chances of girls compared to boys. Another example of a gendered health problem is the higher rate of lower respiratory tract infections, often caused by indoor air pollution from household use of biomass fuels, which is the leading cause of death in women and girls in low income countries.⁶⁵

HIV and AIDS is another case in point: women are both physiologically more vulnerable to HIV infection, and more likely to contract the disease due to social factors, such as intimate partner violence. Although new HIV infections are declining worldwide, in 2010 young women aged 15-24 accounted for more than 60 percent of new infections in that age group.⁶⁶

Where health services are commercialized, women's weaker command of resources compared to men can constrain their access to health care, and can remove the financial incentive for providers to develop services for women. Policies that can help to improve women's health include the recruitment of female health providers, the lack of which can be a barrier to women accessing the care they need.⁶⁷

Proposed indicators

Improve women's and girls' health

- Prevalence of lower respiratory tract infections, by sex
- Percentage of population aged 15-49 living with HIV/AIDS, by sex
- Under-5 mortality rate, by sex

Target: *Reduce maternal mortality and ensure women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights*

Women and adolescent girls face particular challenges and risks in relation to their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. Lack of adequate sexual

and reproductive health accounts for one-third of the global burden of disease among women of reproductive age. Every day, maternal mortality claims the lives of 800 women.⁶⁸ Complications related to childbirth and pregnancy are also the leading causes of death among girls aged 15-19 years.⁶⁹ More than 200 million women in developing countries want – but lack access to – effective contraception. CEDAW was the first human rights treaty that affirmed the right to reproductive choice, the right to choose a partner and to freely enter into marriage. ICPD reaffirmed these principles and built on them to define reproductive rights and putting them at the heart of sustainable development, stating that: “These rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, [...] the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health [...] and the right to] make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence.”⁷⁰ The post-2015 development framework must recognize that women's and adolescent girls' lack of control over their bodies and sexualities constitutes an egregious violation of their rights and accounts for some of the biggest constraints to achieving their rights and capabilities in other areas.

Reducing the unacceptable toll of maternal mortality and morbidity on women's lives – an area of insufficient progress in the MDGs – must remain a priority. Indicators in this area should monitor maternal mortality ratios, the availability of skilled birth attendants and emergency obstetric care, as well as women's capacities to control their fertility, which is influenced by their age of marriage, as well as their access to contraception.

The neglect of maternal health and obstetric services in many countries is one indication that health policymaking often does not take women's needs into account.⁷¹ In addition to broader measures to empower women and achieve gender equality, as outlined in this section, policies to reduce maternal mortality and ensure women's and adolescent girls' reproductive health and reproductive rights must include the

provision of health services including adequate obstetric care services, the recruitment of qualified health personnel particularly in remote underserved areas, and the removal of user fees and other charges that keep services out of the reach of women and adolescent girls.

Proposed indicators

Reduce maternal mortality and ensure women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights

- Maternal mortality ratio
- Available emergency obstetric care facilities per 100,000 population
- Unmet need for family planning
- Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
- Age of mother at birth of first child ever born

Target: Ensure women's sustainable access to energy

In 2010, 1.2 billion people globally lacked access to electricity and an estimated 2.6 billion people did not have access to clean cooking facilities, with large disparities between urban and rural areas.⁷² Reliance on biomass not only increases women's time burdens, it is also linked to many health concerns, including lower respiratory tract infections related to indoor air pollution which is a leading cause of death in women and girls.⁷³ Based on current trends of traditional biomass use, it is estimated that household indoor air pollution will lead to 1.5 million deaths per year by 2030, which is greater than deaths from malaria, HIV/AIDS or tuberculosis.⁷⁴ Indicators to track women's access to sustainable energy would include electrification rates and the extent to which households use solid cooking fuels, disaggregated by urban/rural location, as well as the average time spent collecting firewood and other traditional biomass, disaggregated by sex.

Proposed indicators

Ensure women's sustainable access to energy

- Percentage of households using solid cooking fuels, by urban/rural location
- Percentage of households with access to electricity, by urban/rural location
- Average weekly time spent on firewood collection, by sex

Target: Ensure women's sustainable access to water and sanitation

In 2010, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 64/292 which "recognizes the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights".⁷⁵ The MDG target on access to water was achieved in 2010. However, 780 million people remain without access to an improved water source and over one-third of the world's population does not have access to sanitation.⁷⁶ As the Rio+20 outcome document highlights, access to water and sanitation is necessary for women's empowerment.⁷⁷ Improved access to water would mean that women and girls could spend less time fetching water and result in improvements in other areas, such as reduced incidence of water-borne illnesses (particularly for children). Improved sanitation would produce similar benefits and provide dignity to the billions of women and men, girls and boys who are forced to defecate outside.

In addition, access to and control over water resources, including technology for irrigation, is necessary in order to increase the yields from the farms managed by women; which, in turn, is critical for poverty and hunger eradication. Indicators we propose to monitor this area include the current MDGs indicators for water and sanitation as well as indicators related to the time spent by women collecting water.⁷⁸

Proposed indicators

Ensure women's sustainable access to water and sanitation

- Average weekly time spent in water collection (including waiting time at public supply points), by sex
- Proportion of population using an improved drinking-water source
- Proportion of population using an improved sanitation facility

4.3.

VOICE, LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

Women's capacity to influence decision-making, whether in public or private institutions, is intimately linked with their capabilities.⁷⁹ Having a voice and participating in the processes and decisions that determine their lives is an essential aspect of women's and girls' freedoms. Voice and influence in decision-making has both intrinsic value as a sign of an individual's and groups' enjoyment of democratic freedoms and rights, and can serve the instrumental function of ensuring that group-specific interests are advanced. In the case of women, this could include influencing public priorities and spending patterns to ensure adequate provision of services as well as economic and social security, and to guarantee their physical integrity and reproductive rights.

As well as being important for influencing public policy and political processes in arenas such as parliaments, voice and participation in household decisions are also critically important and have direct impacts on the well-being of women and girls. Similarly, decisions made in private enterprises, such as business strategies, including investment or staffing decisions can have significant impacts on women's employment and career advancement opportunities.

Meaningful participation is about more than just a numeric presence in decision-making fora. It is

about *strategic representation of issues* that matter to different groups of women. For society as a whole, perceptions of women's relative influence over public and private decisions will provide useful information about changes in decision-making power.

Target: *Promote equal decision making in households*

Women's perceived authority and capacities to affect decision-making in public and private institutions are shaped by their rights and roles in the private sphere of the family.⁸⁰ Increasing women's intra-household bargaining power is known to contribute to women's well-being, as well as that of their families, in areas such as child nutrition, health and education.⁸¹ Barriers to women's participation in household decisions are shaped by their capabilities and the resources that they command: women's access to income and wages can have a significant impact on their bargaining power within the family.⁸² Laws that govern marriage and divorce (including the practice of child marriage) and social norms that devalue women's contributions to society also contribute to their lack of bargaining power. Indicators of women's contribution to household decisions are proposed to support monitoring in this area.

Proposed indicators

Promote equal decision-making in households

- Percentage of women who have a say in household decisions regarding large purchases
- Percentage of women who have a say in household decisions regarding their own health
- Percentage of women who have a say in household decisions regarding visiting relatives
- Percentage of people who think important decisions in the household should be made by both men and women, by sex

Target: *Promote participation in public institutions*

The MDG framework captured one dimension of women's participation in public institutions through an indicator in MDG3 on the proportion of national parliamentary seats held by women.⁸³ Although women's representation in parliaments has increased since 1990, women still only constitute one in five parliamentarians worldwide.⁸⁴ To capture a more complete picture, women's political participation in local government, which can be an important training ground for higher office, and in ministerial positions, which command the most influence over policy decisions, should also be included.

Studies show that as the proportion of women in local councils around the world reaches or exceeds 30 percent,⁸⁵ a tangible change can be observed in the setting of local priorities and the assigning of resources in ways that benefit women.⁸⁶ Even when women reach high political office they tend to be excluded from the most senior decision-making roles. Data on ministerial portfolios show that women tend to dominate in the social sectors and rarely hold finance, trade and defence portfolios.⁸⁷

Another important arena for women's participation is *ad hoc* decision-making fora, linked to political

transitions out of conflict or political crisis. The global tracking of the proportion of female peace negotiators is being conducted as part of the United Nations' monitoring of the implementation of Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security.

Women's participation in decision-making, as voters and candidates, is usually dependent on their possession of national identity cards. These provide basic citizenship rights, as well as access to public services and benefits, which are critical particularly in the context of crisis and displacement.

Proposed indicators

Promote participation in public institutions

- Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments
- Proportion of seats held by women in local governments
- Percentage of the population with basic national identity documentation, by sex
- Birth registration coverage, by sex
- Proportion of women in decision-making roles in relevant regional organizations involved in preventing conflict

Target: *Promote women's leadership in the private sector*

Recent advances in women's education – in a majority of countries worldwide women now outperform boys in tertiary education – have not translated into greater representation in the management of private companies.

In 2013, research on the boards of the Financial Times Stock Exchange (FTSE) 100 top companies found that women held 17.3 percent of all directorships and a mere 5.8 percent of executive directorships.⁸⁸ Similarly, progress on women's representation on corporate boards in the United States has been glacial, with the proportion of board seats held by women in the Standard and Poor's (S&P) 1500 top companies

increasing from 11 percent in 2006 to 14 percent in 2012.⁸⁹ In recognition of this problem, an increasing number of countries, including developed and developing countries, are now using quotas to boost women's representation on corporate boards.⁹⁰ Even at less senior levels, women's share of managerial positions in firms is persistently low, ranging from 10 percent to 43 percent in 51 countries where data are available,⁹¹ a factor that is likely to contribute to under-representation as directors and on boards.

One private-sector institution with a particularly important role in public life, as a shaper of public opinion and an accountability mechanism, is the media. In recognition of this powerful role, increasing the proportion of women in the media was included in the Beijing Platform for Action, which argued that changing media-propagated negative images of women and their capacities could also help to address the perceived lack of credibility of women in public affairs.⁹²

We propose measures to track the percentage of women in boards, the percentage of women in managerial positions and women's representation in the media.

Proposed indicators

Promote women's leadership in the private sector

- Proportion of women in company boards
- Percentage of women in managerial positions in firms
- Proportion of media professionals who are women

Target: Strengthen women's collective action

One of the most powerful indicators of women's voice and influence is the size and strength of the women's movement. The critical role played by women's organizations in building constituencies to legitimize and advance women's rights has not only been connected to effective policymaking, the implementation of gender equality policies⁹³ and social change (including attitudinal change), it has also been linked to good governance and stability – although the causal direction is not established. For instance, recent data analysis from the Development Centre of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) showed that there is greater political instability in countries where women's civil liberties are highly restricted.⁹⁴

An ideal measure to monitor this area would be the strength of civil society organizations working on gender equality and women's rights. However, due to methodological challenges, adequate indicators to measure strength are not yet developed. Instead, we propose to measure as proxies the proportion of managers of civil society institutions who are women and the proportion of women who are members of civil society organizations.

Proposed indicators

Strengthen women's collective action

- Proportion of managers of civil society institutions who are women
- Proportion of women who are members of civil society organizations

A large, stylized number '5' is rendered in a light blue color, serving as a background graphic. The number is composed of several overlapping rectangular and curved shapes, creating a modern, geometric look. It is positioned centrally on the page, with the word 'CONCLUSION' overlaid on its upper portion.

CONCLUSION

5.

CONCLUSION

A transformative stand-alone gender equality goal must be grounded in an understanding that the structural causes of gender-based inequality lie in systems of discrimination that are often justified in the name of culture, history, or group identity, and policy rationalities which assume that the best way to achieve gender equality is to reduce the role of the state and liberate ‘the market’. To address these systems of discrimination, and the institutionalization of women’s subordination that they create, the goal must seek to end violence against women and girls and provide services to victims; end histories of underinvestment in expanding women’s and girls’ capabilities and resources; and reverse the systematic marginalization of women from public and private decision-making.

As noted earlier in this paper, the 2000 Millennium Declaration insisted that development is grounded in freedom and equality. Amartya Sen – the philosopher, economist and Nobel Prize winner – has pointed out that: “the issue of gender disparities is ultimately one of disparate freedoms.”⁹⁵ UN Women’s framework includes a focus on the key processes that would advance women’s capacities to enjoy a life free of violence, to make choices of what to do and how to be, to make decisions for themselves, their families, communities, future generations, their countries and the planet. It does not stop at gender parity in access to goods and resources, but seeks to promote transformation in gender relations that would advance the freedom of all.

These ideas are not new. They derive from numerous normative and intergovernmental commitments on gender equality and women’s rights as well as decades of research and women’s rights activism. Yet, addressing them in a holistic and comprehensive manner, along the lines that this paper suggests, would constitute a ground-shift in development policy and practice. Given that the new framework will most likely determine the contours of development for years to come, the world simply cannot afford to miss this once in a generation opportunity to transform the lives of women and girls and men and boys everywhere.



From top: Young woman from a fishing community in West Bengal in eastern India. © UN Women/Anindit Roy-Chowdhury; North Darfur Woman votes in Sudanese national elections. © UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran.

ENDNOTES

- 1 This paper provides the evidence for, and expands the argument presented in, a shorter paper published by UN Women in May 2013 outlining its vision for a transformative post-2015 development framework and SDGs. This short paper can be found at <http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/UN-Women-Note-on-Gender-Equality-Goal-in-post-2015-framework2.pdf>
 - 2 UN General Assembly 2010a. The resolution on system-wide coherence, paragraph 51 (b) states that: "Based on the principle of universality, the Entity shall provide, through its normative support functions and operational activities, guidance and technical support to all Member States, across all levels of development and in all regions, at their request, on gender equality, the empowerment and rights of women and gender mainstreaming".
 - 3 UN 2013d.
 - 4 UN General Assembly 2005, paragraphs 30-31; UN General Assembly 2010b, paragraphs 3, 12, 54, 72-73, and 75.
 - 5 UN General Assembly 2012, paragraph 31.
- Chapter 1**
- 6 UN 2012a.
 - 7 See <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/299198>. Accessed May 2013.
 - 8 Ibid.
 - 9 *The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States* builds on the principles articulated in documents such as the Millennium Declaration and proposes key peacebuilding and statebuilding goals (PSGs), focuses on new ways of engaging, and identifies commitments to build mutual trust and achieve better results in fragile states. It is an agenda for more effective aid to fragile states, based on five PSGs (legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations, and revenues and services), stronger alignment and mutual accountability, and more transparency and investments in country systems based on a shared approach to risk management. The seven countries piloting the New Deal are: Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, and Timor Leste.
- Chapter 2**
- 10 UN Security Council 2000, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010.
 - 11 Cordaid 2013.
 - 12 UN General Assembly 2012, paragraph 31.
 - 13 In addition to these consultations, a UN System Task Team has been established by the UN Secretary-General to support system-wide preparations for the post-2015 development agenda. Co-chaired by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and United Nations Development Programme, it brings together over 60 UN entities and agencies and international organizations. It supports the multi-stakeholder consultations being led by Member States on a post-2015 development agenda, by providing analytical inputs, expertise and outreach. As mandated by the Rio+20 outcome document, the UN Task Team established the Technical Support Team and a number of working groups on monitoring and target-setting, global partnerships and financing for sustainable development to provide technical support to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.
 - 14 United Nations Development Group 2013.
- Chapter 3**
- 15 UN General Assembly 2012, para 31.
 - 16 Ibid. Article 45.
 - 17 See <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/299198>
 - 18 In particular, the gender inequality e-discussion identified six priorities to be addressed in the Post-2015 Development Agenda: (1) Combat all forms of gender-based violence; (2) Ensure women's sexual and reproductive rights and access to quality health care; (3) Enact and enforce laws that promote gender equality and eliminate laws, policies and practices that are harmful to women and girls; (4) Prioritize access to quality education and skills development for all women and girls, especially those from socially excluded groups; (5) Ensure women's full participation in society, including in the economic, legal, social and political life of their communities; (6) Enact economic and social policies that contribute to achieving gender equality and align with human rights principles.
 - 19 See Chairperson's Summary Statement, Leadership Meeting on Addressing Inequalities in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 19 February 2013, Copenhagen, Denmark. <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/inequalities>
 - 20 For example, research shows that mother's education and women's control over income are associated with a host of benefits for children (see review in Duflo 2012); the importance of women's participation in peace negotiations is the subject of UN Security Council resolution 1325; the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment for sustainable development (UNDP 2011); women's representation in forest governance bodies is associated with positive outcomes in Madhya Pradesh, India (Agrawal et al. 2006).
 - 21 Seguino 2000; Duflo 2012; Kabeer and Natali 2013; Goetz 2009.
 - 22 <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/>
 - 23 UN General Assembly Resolution 65/1 of 2010, paragraph 12 states: "achieving gender equality and empowerment of women is both a key development goal and an important means for achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals." For examples of research findings, see Stier and Lewin 2002 on the positive impact of women's employment on poverty in Israel; Manandhar et al. 2004 on the positive impacts on neonatal mortality of having female facilitators convene monthly women's group meetings; Gakidou et al. 2010 on women's education, gender wage gaps and MDG4. See also reviews in Duflo 2012, Overseas Development Institute 2008; UNIFEM (UN Women) and UNDP 2010.

- men takes sexualized forms – for instance, the rape of men and boys in detention as a form of torture, or in war as a tactic of community destruction. See: Secretary-General’s message to Regional Conference on the Human Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People in Asia and the Pacific - 22-23 March, 2013: <http://www.un.org/sg/statements/?nid=6680>. These are important aspects of physical security that should be tracked in the post-2015 development framework.
- 27 A large body of research indicates there is no simple or single blueprint, policy or method that works consistently to build greater gender equality. ‘Drivers’ of change, such as decent employment, political power, women’s collective action, education, health, social protection, access to media and information, and other factors, as well as contextual factors such as conditions in the wider economy (types of market regulation) and polity (type of regime) work in specific combinations in different circumstances. See: Pathways of Women’s Empowerment 2011; World Bank 2012; Htun and Weldon 2012.
- 28 See Beijing Platform for Action; Rio+20; GA Resolution A/RES/67/148.
- 29 Ultimately, the choice of goals and targets is incumbent on Member States. Depending on the structure of the post-2015 development framework and the content of the final goals, one can identify specific gender-relevant targets and indicators that can be mainstreamed and those that should be in a stand-alone goal. As this process unfolds, UN Women is determined to support it.
- 30 Folbre 1994.
- 31 Elson and Balakrishnan 2012. Ortiz and Cummins 2013.
- 32 The Maastricht Guidelines on Violations of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights differentiate between three types of obligations for the State: the obligation to respect which requires non-interference with the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights; the obligation to protect which requires the prevention of violations of rights by third parties; and the obligation to fulfil which requires States to take appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, budgetary, judicial and other measures for the full realization of these rights. To fulfil these duties, human rights principles require States to use ‘Maximum Available Resources’ or the full range of resources available to realize economic and social rights. (CWGL 2012).
- 33 UN 2011a, 2011b, 2012b and 2013a. The proposed indicators for the three target areas are based on internationally agreed standards, including the minimum set of gender indicators and the core list of violence against women indicators. The minimum set was developed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) at the request of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC). This list of 52 indicators was formally endorsed by the UN in February 2013. Methodological work is underway to refine this list. Similarly, the core list of nine violence against women indicators was developed by the Friends of the Chair to the UNSC at the request of the UN General Assembly and was agreed by the UNSC at the same session. It is important to note that some of these indicators are undergoing further methodological development and may therefore change. Any such changes should be reflected in the final choice of indicators.
- 34 UN 2013b.
- 35 See United Nations Statistics Division 2013 for a list of countries that have conducted time use surveys since 1990.
- Chapter 4**
- 36 UN General Assembly 2006, WHO et al, 2013.
- 37 Calderón, Gáfaró and Ibáñez 2011; Justino, Cardona, Mitchell and Müller 2012.
- 38 Woods 2006.
- 39 Ending violence against women has gained normative support within the UN system over the past two decades, including as part of the CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation No 19 (1992); in the 1993 General Assembly Declaration on Ending Violence Against Women; the Beijing Platform for Action Critical Area of Concern D; the 2006 General Assembly Resolution 61/143 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women; various initiatives and reports throughout the UN, including UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, the UNiTE to End Violence Against Women campaign and the Secretary-General’s In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence Against Women; and the recent CSW 2013 agreed conclusions on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls.
- 40 UN General Assembly 2006.
- 41 See “Programming Essentials: Cost and Consequences” in UN Women Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence against Women and Girls: <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/modules/view/14-programming-essentials-monitoring-evaluation.html#11>
- 42 UNIFEM (UN Women) 2010.
- 43 UN 2007.
- 44 UN 2013b; 2011b and 2009. These indicators are undergoing further methodological development by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and the final choice should be informed by this work.
- 45 While targets must be set for reducing prevalence rates in the long term, in the short term many contexts may see an increase in prevalence and reporting rates. For instance, prevalence rates may increase because better-administered surveys will be able to capture prevalence rates more accurately and reporting rates may increase if women’s confidence in security, justice, and health services increases. Such an increase would be a sign of progress. In contrast, both prevalence and reporting rates may also increase in contexts of conflict or crisis, and signal the opposite.
- 46 UN General Assembly 2006.
- 47 Heise 2011.
- 48 García-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise and Watts 2005.
- 49 UN Women 2011. See pp. 59-60 for data on police and women and greater reporting rates of violence against women.
- 50 Sen, 1999.
- 51 The human rights and capabilities approaches are linked by the overarching idea that women and men should have the capability to live a dignified human life, as supported by the obligation of states to protect, promote and fulfil their human rights. Enjoying these capabilities, for instance, is contingent on the achievement of what is described as ‘substantive equality’ in CEDAW General Recommendation number 28. CEDAW and other human rights treaties guarantee ‘substantive equality’ in an extensive range of areas, including: having a decent, secure and fulfilling job; access to quality public goods and services, including adequate food and nutrition, clean and safe water and sanitation, clean air, safe and renewable energy, safe and woman-friendly public spaces, infrastructure and transport systems; having access to quality education, healthcare, and care services (for oneself and one’s dependents); being able to choose whether, to whom and when to marry; having control over one’s own fertility (being able to decide freely about the number and spacing of children); having adequate leisure time (which requires access to labour-saving technologies) and a redistribution of unpaid work within the household.
- 52 UNDP 2011.
- 53 UN 1995, Section K.
- 54 UN General Assembly 1992.
- 55 Vulnerable employment is defined as the sum of own-account workers and family workers. See ILO 2011.
- 56 ILO 2010.
- 57 See ILO Travail Legal Database. <https://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.home>. Accessed January 2013.
- 58 Braunstein and Heintz 2006.
- 59 Doss et al 2011.
- 60 As part of the Evidence and Data for Gender Equality programme, UN Women and the UNSD, in

- collaboration with the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, are working to develop methodological guidelines to measure asset ownership and entrepreneurship.
- 61 According to the International Trial Classification of Time Use Activities unpaid working time for the household or in household-related activities refers to time spent on productive activities that are outside the boundaries of the system of national accounts (not destined for the market). It includes for instance household maintenance activities (such as cooking, ironing etc.) as well as caring for household members, including children, the elderly, the sick and household members with disabilities. In developing the minimum set of indicators, The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics recommends that, where possible, housework and person-to-person care activities should be separated in order to better track the drudgery of women's unpaid work.
- 62 United Nations Research Institute for Social Development 2010. Razavi and Staab 2012.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 UNESCO 2012.
- 65 WHO 2009.
- 66 UNICEF 2011.
- 67 Ibid.
- 68 WHO 2012b.
- 69 WHO 2012a.
- 70 UN 1994, ICPD Principle 8.
- 71 UN Women 2010.
- 72 International Energy Agency (IEA) 2012.
- 73 WHO 2009.
- 74 IEA, UNDP, United Nations Industrial Development Organization 2010.
- 75 UN 2010c.
- 76 UNICEF and WHO 2012.
- 77 UN General Assembly 2012, paragraph 120.
- 78 The water and sanitation indicators that are used to monitor the current MDGs are being further refined for inclusion in the post-2015 development framework. See WHO and UNICEF 2012.
- 79 Kabeer 1999.
- 80 See CEDAW Article 16.1 on the obligation of States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matter relating to marriage and family relations. See also CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation No 21 (1994), paragraph 17.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Pollak 2005.
- 83 In addition to the existing MDG on women's political participation, there is normative agreement within the UN system that this issue is critical for gender equality, as demonstrated through the Beijing Platform for Action Critical Area of Concern G. See also CEDAW Article 7 and CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation No 23 (1997), paragraphs 17, 18, 43.
- 84 Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) 2013.
- 85 Dahlerup was the first to suggest that women need to be present amongst decision-makers beyond a token minority in order to have a tangible group influence. See Dahlerup 1988. The Beijing Platform for Action calls on Governments to "commit themselves to establishing the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary, including, inter alia, setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men, if necessary through positive action, in all governmental and public administration positions" (Para 190a). In the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution E/RES/1990/15, recommendation VI states: "Governments,
- political parties, trade unions and professional and other representative groups should each aim at targets to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions to at least 30 per cent by 1995, with a view to achieving equal representation between women and men by the year 2000, and should institute recruitment and training programmes to prepare women for those positions." See: http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/resdec1946_2000.asp.
- 86 See Duflo 2012.
- 87 UN Women 2010.
- 88 Sealy and Vinnicom 2013.
- 89 See Ernst & Young 2012.
- 90 Sealy and Vinnicom 2013.
- 91 Rates calculated using data from ILOSTAT – a database of labour statistics from the ILO. Retrieved May 2013.
- 92 See the Beijing Platform for Action on both the Critical Areas of Concern F, on women and the economy, and G, women in power and decision-making.
- 93 Cueva 2005 and Htun and Weldon 2011.
- 94 Cerise and Francavilla 2012.

Chapter 5

- 95 Sen 1992, p 25.

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