

TST Issues Brief: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment¹

I. Stocktaking

Gender inequality is the most pervasive form of inequality around the world and a pressing human rights concern. Recent decades have seen gains in some areas, such as in girls' enrolment in education; however progress has been uneven, with gender inequalities persisting and even growing along several dimensions, such as the gender gap in unemployment since the 2008 crisis. Progress on gender equality is fundamental for realizing human rights for all, creating and sustaining peaceful societies, and building socially inclusive and sustainable development trajectories where the benefits of development are equitably shared. The on-going intergovernmental discussions on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an important opportunity to build on the lessons learnt from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in order to tackle gender inequality in all its dimensions and realize the full spectrum of women's and girls' rights as set out in international human rights norms and global agreements.²

A snapshot of global progress towards gender equality and remaining challenges

Inequalities between women and men, and boys and girls,³ play out across all areas of life in every country, cutting across both public institutions, such as governance systems and markets, and the private sphere, such as families and households. Gender inequalities are reflected in the daily realities of women's and girls' lives including: the disproportionate number of women among those living in poverty;⁴ women's greater likelihood of living with violence in their homes when compared to men;⁵ women's and girls' lack of control over their bodies and violations of sexual and reproductive rights;⁶ inequalities in access to quality education at all levels;⁷ and inequalities in the enjoyment of social and economic rights including access to decent work and equal pay,⁸ access to and control over assets,⁹ and universal social protection coverage over the lifecycle.¹⁰

In the area of gender equality in education, where the MDGs have had a focus, gender gaps persist despite progress over the last two decades towards achieving gender parity in primary and secondary education enrolment. Only two out of 130 countries with available data have reached the target of gender parity in all levels of education.¹¹ Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the highest rate of girls out of primary school, at 26%.¹² Gender gaps in education are particularly stark amongst poorer, rural, indigenous and minority populations. However, girls have a slight edge over boys in terms of secondary school enrolments in Latin America and the Caribbean and East Asia and the Pacific.¹³ Challenges remain in girls' completion of quality education and in achieving gender equality in learning outcomes.

The MDG target to reduce maternal mortality is the most off-track of all targets.¹⁴ It is estimated that around 800 women continue to die every day due to childbirth and other pregnancy related complications.¹⁵ Adolescent girls are particularly at risk of complications from pregnancy and childbirth, often stemming from forced and early marriages. Many women and girls lack access to basic sexual and reproductive health services, which means that the 222 million women annually who want to prevent or delay childbearing are denied this human right.¹⁶ In 2011, women delivered children alone or with inadequate care in 46 million of 135 million live births.¹⁷ Women in rural areas are even more disadvantaged in access to services. HIV/AIDS, which is fueled by gender inequalities and violence against women, is the leading cause of death worldwide for women aged 15-49, and also represents a significant obstacle to women's enjoyment of the right to health.¹⁸ Globally, women comprise 52% of all people living with HIV in low- and middle-income countries, rising to 57% in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁹

Stark gender differences are evident in economic opportunities and access to and control over land, natural resources and other productive assets, as well as in vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters.²⁰ Women comprise an average of 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries. Yet women farmers, compared to their male counterparts, control less land – a critical resource for agriculture and food security yet left out of the MDGs – and have limited access to inputs, seeds, credits, and extension services.²¹ Rural women’s dependence on and unequal access to natural resources and productive assets, compounded by limited mobility and decision-making power, mean that they are disproportionately affected by climate change.²² While women’s workforce participation rates have increased in the last two decades, gender gaps in pay and in the quality and security of jobs persist. In 2008/2009 women were paid on average 23% less than men.²³ In every region of the world, women are more likely than men to have jobs that are characterized by poor pay, insecurity and a lack of basic rights such as occupational health and safety, let alone access to health insurance, unemployment benefits, or a pension. In 2012, more than half of all employed women worldwide were in ‘vulnerable employment’; in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, vulnerable employment makes up more than 80% of women’s total employment.²⁴

The severe and enduring job losses associated with the recent crises continue to have an impact on women’s rights and livelihoods. Data from the International Labour Organization show that the gender gap in unemployment rates widened between 2007 and 2012 with an estimated loss of 13 million jobs for women.²⁵ At the same time and in addition to paid work, the burden of unpaid work – which has not been monitored by the MDGs – is disproportionately borne by women and poses a significant obstacle to women’s ability to access education, training, and decent employment opportunities, or engage in politics.²⁶ For countries where data is available, women spend, on average, roughly twice as much or more time than men on domestic work, including family care, and rural women spend more time than urban women and men in domestic and household work, including time spent obtaining water and fuel, caring for children and the sick, and processing food. This work is intensified in contexts of economic crisis, environmental degradation, natural disasters, and inadequate infrastructure and services (especially water and sanitation).²⁷

The small numbers of women in public decision-making, from national parliaments to local councils, is another manifestation of gender inequality, diminishing their voice, agency and capacity to contribute and govern. Despite some gains for women in terms of representation in national parliaments over the last two decades, globally only around 1 in 5 parliamentarians are women.²⁸ The gaps are much greater on indicators of women’s public participation that are not monitored by the MDGs. As of January 2012, only 17% of government ministers were women.²⁹ Only 8 women served as Head of State and 13 served as Head of Government as of June 2013.³⁰ Of the 14 peace negotiations held under UN auspices in 2011, only 4 of the negotiating party delegations included a woman delegate.³¹ While the data on women’s participation as voters is limited, women often experience specific barriers to full and equal civic participation due to the burden of family responsibilities, the lack of identification documents, limited access to information and the fear of political violence during the polling process.³² Women voters are especially vulnerable in fragile and transitional states, being four times as likely as men to be targeted for intimidation in elections.³³ In addition to women’s political participation and representation, a strong women’s movement is a powerful indicator of women’s voice and influence in decision-making. Indeed, the role of women’s organizations in building constituencies to advance women’s rights is recognized as the most critical factor in the implementation of gender equality policies.³⁴

Violence against women and girls, a pervasive phenomenon impeding women's and girls' empowerment that is missing from the MDGs, has devastating consequences for individuals, communities and societies across all countries. According to a 2013 global review of available data, 35% of women worldwide have experienced either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.³⁵ Approximately 140 million girls and women worldwide have suffered female genital mutilation.³⁶ Women and girls represent 55% of the estimated 20.9 million victims of forced labour worldwide, and 98% of the estimated 4.5 million forced into sexual exploitation.³⁷ Rape has been a rampant and systematic tactic in conflict. Conservative estimates suggest that 20,000 to 50,000 women were raped during the 1992–1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina,³⁸ while approximately 250,000 to 500,000 women and girls were targeted in the 1994 Rwandan genocide.³⁹ Men and boys experience specific forms of violence, for example, as forced child soldiers in situations of armed conflict and as recruits to and victims of gang violence.

Harnessing the synergies between gender equality, women's rights and sustainable development

Gender equality has a catalytic effect on the achievement of inclusive and progressive human development, good governance, sustained peace, and harmonious dynamics between environments and human populations – all of which are at the core of discussions on sustainable development and human rights.⁴⁰ When women have greater voice and participation in public administration, public resources are more likely to be allocated towards investments in human development priorities including child health, nutrition and access to employment.⁴¹ Evidence suggests a relationship between women's empowerment and environmental sustainability, showing a negative correlation between the number of women's and environmental NGOs per capita and deforestation in 61 countries between 1990 and 2005, and a causal link between gender inequality and deforestation in over 100 countries between 1990 and 2010.⁴² Moreover, recent research shows that women's participation in local institutions governing natural resources is critical for sustainable forest and water management.⁴³ Ensuring women's access to and control over agricultural assets and productive resources is fundamental for achieving food security and sustainable livelihoods, increasing resilience to climate change, and strengthening women's voice in the family and household.⁴⁴ Furthermore, evidence indicates that economic growth has been more sustainable in terms of longer-term structural transformation in countries with smaller gender gaps in education and employment.⁴⁵ However, while gender equality can contribute to poverty reduction, economic growth and democratic governance, the reverse does not always hold. Rising incomes, democratic political participation and peace do not necessarily lead to the realization of women's and girls' rights.⁴⁶ Indeed some patterns of economic growth have been premised on maintaining gender inequality.⁴⁷ For this reason, the collective responsibility for achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment requires specific policy action grounded within both the human rights and sustainable development frameworks.⁴⁸

Building on the lessons from the MDGs

As a set of time-bound targets, the MDGs – MDG 3 and 5 in particular – have drawn attention to gender equality issues. However, as evidenced above, progress has been uneven. The lack of progress on the MDGs for women and girls can be attributed to structural problems in the design of the MDGs, compounded by the absence of an MDG implementation plan and insufficient policies to achieve the desired outcomes. MDG target and indicator design was not fully aligned to the broader principles outlined in the Millennium Declaration, leading in some instances to unintended effects or narrow – or statistically expedient – measures of human development. For example, the focus on skilled birth

attendance as an indicator for maternal health, while contributing to concrete gains, should not preclude the need for a full range of measures needed to address maternal mortality.⁴⁹

Similarly, MDG 3, measured by a single target of gender parity in education, is clearly insufficient to achieve the broader goal of gender equality and women's empowerment. As years of experience have suggested, there are no 'magic bullets' for reaching gender equality and realizing women's rights. As discussed above, achieving transformation in the lives of women and girls will require a multi-dimensional strategy that tackles the structural underpinnings of gender inequality that are located within the family and community, as well as across markets and governance systems more broadly.

The intersection of gender inequalities with other inequalities based on class, race/ethnicity, disability, age, location, marital status, gender identity and sexual orientation, education level and health status, often lead to specific forms of discrimination and disadvantage. For example, girls in the poorest 20 per cent of households have the least chance of getting an education: they are over three times more likely to be out of school than girls in the highest income quintile.⁵⁰ Women in poor households face higher risks from maternal mortality and morbidity. Rural women fare worse than rural men and urban women and men for every MDG indicator for which data are available.⁵¹ By focusing on global and national averages, the MDGs targets have often masked sub-national differences in achievement which has, in turn, diverted policy attention and resources away from the most marginalized groups. Looking ahead to the SDGs, it is critical that the inequalities between different groups of women and girls are specifically addressed and monitored.

These gaps in the MDGs also reflect a wider issue of data availability and quality. The MDG target on gender equality was selected based on the availability of data, rather than an assessment of what dimensions of gender inequality and women's empowerment were most important to monitor. Indeed, the need to monitor the MDGs has driven data collection efforts over the past decade and although this has led to increased availability of data in areas that are covered by MDGs indicators, the many gender equality and women's empowerment issues not included in the MDGs, such as violence against women and unpaid work, have been neglected. Boosting investment in and commitments to improving gender statistics will be critical for monitoring the SDGs.

II. Overview of Proposals

Both the Rio + 20 outcome document and the UNTT report, *Realizing the Future We Want for All*, made clear reference to gender equality and women's empowerment as central to sustainable development,⁵² which was reiterated in the UNDG's post-2015 thematic and national consultations.⁵³ At the same time, several bodies, agencies and organizations have issued proposals on addressing gender equality and women's rights in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.⁵⁴ Two key points emerge from these proposals: the centrality of gender equality for the post-2015 agenda and SDGs and its relevance for all countries.

Many groups, including the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons, have proposed a stand-alone gender equality goal in the future framework to galvanize resources and political will, and to serve as an accountability mechanism to monitor progress and address the remaining gaps in implementation. Several proposals emphasize that any future goal must transform gender relations by tackling the structural underpinnings of gender inequalities. In addition to a stand-alone goal, strong support exists for a twin-track approach, as agreed in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), which would also mainstream gender perspectives across all other goals.

The following priority issues are highlighted across the proposals:

Violence against women and girls: Ending violence against women is paramount, with concrete indicators to capture the prevalence of violence against women and girls, women's and girls' access to justice, and the root causes of gender-based violence such as discriminatory social norms and attitudes.⁵⁵

Voice, decision-making and participation at all levels: Women's voice and participation in both the public and private spheres are key, with indicators needed on political participation at all levels, including participation in decision-making in the household, as well as more active government involvement in ensuring the effective participation of civil society in gender budgetary planning.⁵⁶

Access to decent work, social protection, control of assets and income, and the redistribution/reduction of unpaid work: Women's economic empowerment is underscored as a crucial issue, including the attainment of education and skills, the ability to generate income, and have a voice in how household income is spent, as well as the elimination of gender-based discrimination in employment, and legal and social discrimination in the acquisition of assets, such as through inheritance. Reducing women's disproportionate burden of unpaid work, and increasing women's access to quality employment and universal social protection are key priorities.

Access to quality education at all levels and life-long learning: Many proposals emphasize closing gender gaps in secondary and tertiary education, while ensuring participation of socially and spatially marginalized groups, and shifting the focus beyond enrolment to the quality of education at all levels, including through the development and use of ICTs, to ensure gender equality in learning outcomes, and safe, supportive learning environments.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights: To achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, maternal health must continue to be a core focus, along with the other essential sexual and reproductive health services agreed upon in the ICPD Programme Of Action. Several proposals highlight that women's and girls' control over their own bodies is an internationally recognized human right, and is fundamental for girls and women to enjoy all their human rights. Some women's groups, as well as the UNDG global consultation on health, also urge that governments meet their commitments to provide comprehensive sexuality education for all adolescents and young people.

Other prominent issues in these proposals include the transformation of the standard approaches to macroeconomic policies (including monetary, fiscal and exchange rate policies) so that they can support, rather than undermine, the realization of women's social and economic rights. The MDGs made no reference to macroeconomic policies, and offered little policy guidance. The 2008 crisis, however, is taken as a powerful reminder of how macroeconomic policy action, or inaction, in one part of the world can have harmful effects on the realization of women's and men's rights elsewhere.

III. Way Forward

Achieving gender equality is not just an issue for women and girls: it requires the involvement of women and men, girls and boys, and is the responsibility of all stakeholders. Transformative changes in laws, social norms, social institutions, and public policies are required. Gender roles and relations must be transformed, which entails altering dominant notions of masculinity.

A stand-alone goal on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment

Drawing on the proposals above, the SDGs should encompass both a stand-alone goal on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment and ensure the integration of gender specific targets and indicators across all goals. *Not* addressing gender inequalities – unequal access to education, participation, health, including reproductive and sexual health, land and productive assets, and employment, particularly given women's and girls' heavy unpaid work burden – is costly for societies and undermines all three dimensions of sustainability. The following three priority areas are proposed for the stand-alone goal:

Freedom from violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls is a pernicious form of gender-based discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability 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.⁵⁷ Certain groups of women, such as migrant and refugee women, older women, indigenous women and women with disabilities, face multiple forms of discrimination and are often more vulnerable to violence. Moreover, violence against women and girls is an obstacle to accessing education, training, healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, resources and the labour market. Violence against women and girls often increases 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 economic uncertainty and social insecurity. 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.

*Equality in human capabilities, access to opportunities and resources*⁵⁸

Structural inequalities and disadvantages in access to resources and opportunities limit women's and girl's capabilities. Critical resources which expand women's capabilities include having access to quality health services, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, quality education at all levels, quality care services for children and those who are ill and frail, as well as nutritious food and social protection measures. Other critical resources include land, assets, credit, natural resources and time, and opportunities for decent work and equal pay to build women's economic and social security.

A gender-sensitive approach to expanding capabilities involves looking beyond constraints that affect both women and men (such as inadequate access to health services) to address constraints that are gender-specific such as obstacles to women's and adolescent girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights. Increased recognition of women's considerable and valuable unpaid work contributions, and institutions and policies to distribute this burden more equally, are also needed to ensure women's equal access to opportunities and resources. Many of these capabilities play a key role in enabling women's resilience to economic volatilities and environmental risks.

Equality in agency, voice and participation across the full range of decision-making arenas

Women have the right to equally participate in decision-making, whether in public institutions, in their communities or families. Having a voice and participating in the political processes and decisions that determine their lives are essential aspects of women's and girls' dignity and agency. Supporting women and girls' participation in decision-making will influence public policies and spending patterns to ensure adequate provision of services, to guarantee their physical integrity and reproductive rights, and improve access to education and health care. Voice and participation in household decisions are also critically important and have direct impacts on the wellbeing of women and girls.

Comprehensive integration of gender concerns across all goals

In addition to these three areas, gender-specific targets and indicators should be integrated across other goals to ensure meaningful achievement of those goals by addressing the structural causes of gender-based discrimination which is necessary to eradicate poverty, support sustainable resources management, promote transparent and accountable governance, and enable access to high quality education and health care, as well as to sustainable water and energy. The collection, analysis, and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics are necessary in order to design, implement, and report on these targets and indicators.

Making commitments a lived reality for women and girls: policy implementation and accountability

Any future goal or set of targets should be coupled with strategies, and approaches that will promote, protect and fulfil the full spectrum of women's and girls' rights, many of which are found in international human rights frameworks and in policy commitments.⁵⁹ These include but are not limited to:

- Legal and policy frameworks that are aligned with international human rights norms and standards, eliminate sex- and gender-based discrimination and provide for women's access to justice and their legal empowerment;
- Macroeconomic policies that reduce volatilities in global markets, reduce income inequalities, and generate decent work for all, facilitate resource mobilization for public investments in infrastructure and services, and thereby facilitate the realization of women's economic and social rights;
- Labour market regulation and employment policies that promote decent work for all, prevent discrimination against women, promote equal pay, prohibit sexual harassment and allow the reconciliation of paid work with family/care responsibilities for both women and men;
- Human development policies that ensure universally accessible and affordable health care, including provision for women's specific sexual and reproductive health and rights, accessible quality education and care services, and provision of infrastructure, including ICTs;
- Environmental and climate policies that enable women's active and equitable involvement in governance, decision-making, access and benefit-sharing related to sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Comprehensive social protection measures that give women and girls (particularly vulnerable or marginalized individuals such as older women, poor, indigenous and minority women and girls, etc.) protection against risks and vulnerabilities across the life cycle;
- Security and justice sector reforms that prevent, respond to and end impunity for violence against women and girls, protect and support victims/survivors, prosecute and punish perpetrators, and provide gender-sensitive remedies;
- Temporary special measures to enable critical numbers of women to hold leadership positions in the public and private sectors, and to support their participation in local, regional, national, and international decision-making fora; and

- Gender mainstreaming as a strategy for ensuring that gender perspectives are integrated in the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes, so that women and men benefit equally from the outcomes, and that inequalities are not perpetuated.

Effective implementation of measures to achieve this goal requires gender-responsive accountability systems that enable women to hold government and other authorities answerable for their commitments and actions, and to 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, both within women's rights groups and within broader associations such as trade unions.

Transparent resource allocation, including practices such as gender-responsive budgeting, freedom of information arrangements to facilitate women's review of public decisions and spending patterns, and judicial reviews equipped to handle public interest cases, will be invaluable for effective accountability to women and girls. Renewed efforts to strengthen data collection, analysis, and use towards gender equality and women's empowerment for monitoring purposes - the HLP Report's 'data revolution' - will be indispensable.

Endnotes

¹ This issues brief was prepared by UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA, with contributions from DSPD/DESA, FAO, IFAD, ITU, OHCHR, PBSO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, WFP and WMO.

² These commitments are enshrined in global international treaties, standards and norms, most notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Several regional treaties have also recognized the responsibilities of states in realizing the full spectrum of women's and girls' rights. Member States have also made policy commitments such as the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action; the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20); the Millennium Declaration; 2005 World Summit Outcome; in the resolutions of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council; and in the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

³ Although this issue brief is focused on inequalities between women and men, boys and girls, discrimination based on non-binary gender identities is also rooted in deeply entrenched gender norms and stereotypes.

⁴ United Nations (2012). The Millennium Development Goals Report: Gender Chart 2012, New York.

⁵ World Health Organization (2013). Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, Geneva.

⁶ Singh, S. and Darroch, J., (2012). Adding It Up: Costs and Benefits of Contraceptive Services—Estimates for 2012, Guttmacher Institute and United Nations Population Fund, New York.

⁷ United Nations (2012). The Millennium Development Goals Report: Gender Chart 2012, New York.

⁸ ILO (2012). Global employment trends for women, Geneva.

⁹ Deere, C., Oduro, A., Swaminathan, H., and Doss, C., (2013). Property Rights and the Gender Distribution of Wealth in Ecuador, Ghana and India. *Journal of Economic Inequality*, 11:249-265.

¹⁰ ILO (2010). World Social Security Report 2010-2011: Providing coverage in times of crisis and beyond.

¹¹ United Nations (2013). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013, New York.

¹² United Nations (2012). The Millennium Development Goals Report: Gender Chart 2012, New York.

¹³ UNESCO (2012). World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education.

¹⁴ Although there has been a decline in the estimated maternal mortality rate by 47% between 1990 and 2010.

¹⁵ United Nations (2013). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013, New York.

¹⁶ Singh, S. and Darroch, J., (2012). Adding It Up: Costs and Benefits of Contraceptive Services—Estimates for 2012, Guttmacher Institute and United Nations Population Fund, New York.

¹⁷ United Nations (2013). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013, New York.

¹⁸ World Health Organization (2013). "Women's Health: Fact Sheet No. 334," Geneva.

¹⁹ UNAIDS (2013). Global report: UNAIDS report on the global AIDS epidemic 2013, Geneva.

²⁰ UNDP (2011). Human Development Report 2011. Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All. The higher female mortality in 141 countries over 22 years from natural disasters and their aftermaths is due to the socially-constructed vulnerability of women. The fewer discriminatory gender norms and roles and the higher women's social and economic status, the smaller the gender-differentiated impacts on life expectancy in natural disasters. Similarly, countries that focus on education for girls and women had fewer losses due to extreme weather events than those countries that do not with equivalent income and weather conditions.

²¹ FAO (2011). The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Women in Agriculture, Closing the Gender Gap for Development.

²² Adger, W.N., S. Agrawala, M.M.Q. Mirza, C. Conde, K. O'Brien, J. Pulhin, R. Pulwarty, B. Smit and K. Takahashi, 2007: Assessment of adaptation practices, options, constraints and capacity. *Climate Change 2007: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, M.L. Parry, O.F. Canziani, J.P. Palutikof, P.J. van der Linden and C.E. Hanson, Eds., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, 717-743.

²³ United Nations (2012). The Millennium Development Goals Report: Gender Chart 2012, New York.

²⁴ The ILO defines vulnerable employment as the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers. ILO (2012). Global employment trends for women, Geneva.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ United Nations General Assembly (2013). Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, A/68/293, 9 August 2013.

²⁷ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2010). The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics, New York; <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/ruralwomen/facts-figures.html>.

²⁸ United Nations (2013). The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013, New York.

²⁹ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2012). Women in Politics.

³⁰ Calculated by UN Women, checked monthly against updates from the United Nations

³¹ United Nations (2012). UN Secretary-General's report to the Security Council on women, peace and security, S/2012/732, New York.

³² United Nations General Assembly (2013). Measures taken and progress achieved in the promotion of women and political participation: Report of the Secretary-General, A/68/184, New York.

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³⁵ World Health Organization (2013). Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, Geneva.

- ³⁶ World Health Organization (2013). “Female Genital Mutilation: Fact Sheet No. 241,” Geneva.
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- ³⁸ Based on reports by the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Commission. J. Ward on behalf of the Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium (2002). “Bosnia and Herzegovina”, *If Not Now, When?: Addressing Gender-based Violence in Refugee, Internally Displaced, and Post-Conflict Settings*, p. 81 (cited in UNIFEM, *Facts and Figures on Peace and Security*).
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- ⁴⁰ For example, UNDP (2012). *Powerful Synergies: Gender Equality, Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability*.
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- ⁴² UNDP (2011). *Human Development Report 2011. Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All*.
- ⁴³ Agarwal, B. (2010). *Gender and Green Governance: The Political Economy of Women’s Presence Within and Beyond Community Forestry*, Oxford University Press, Oxford. Ray, I. (2007). ‘Women, Water, and Development’, *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, Vol. 32: 421-449.
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- ⁴⁶ Duflo, E. (2012). ‘Women’s Empowerment and Economic Development’ *Journal of Economic Literature*, 50(4), pp. 1051-1079; Kaber, N. and Natali, L. (2013). ‘Gender Equality and Economic Growth: Is there a win-win?’ IDS Working Paper no. 417. Sussex, UK; Goetz, A.M., ed. (2009). *Governing Women: Women’s Political Effectiveness in Contexts of Democratization and Governance Reform*. New York. Routledge.
- ⁴⁷ Seguino, S (2000). ‘Gender Inequality and Growth: A Cross-Country Analysis’, *World Development* 28(7): 1211-1230.
- ⁴⁸ Please see note 2.
- ⁴⁹ Yamin, A., and Boulanger, V. (2013). ‘From Transforming Power to Counting Numbers: The evolution of sexual and reproductive health and rights in development; and where we want to go from here’, and Sen, G. and Mukherjee, A. (2013). ‘No Empowerment without Rights, No Rights without Politics: Gender Equality, MDGs and the post 2015 Development Agenda’, Working Paper Series, *The Power of Numbers: A Critical Review of MDG Targets for Human Development and Human Rights*. In addition to the focus on skilled birth attendance, ensuring access to emergency obstetric care, as well as other factors that contribute to maternal morbidity and mortality such as early marriage, lack of physical security, constrained sexual and reproductive choices such as when to have children and how many, and women’s weak access to health care systems are all important issues still to be addressed.
- ⁵⁰ United Nations (2010). *Millennium Development Goals Report*. New York.
- ⁵¹ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/ruralwomen/facts-figures.html>
- ⁵² UN Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012. *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*; UN System Task Team on the Post 2015 UN Development Agenda (2012) “Realizing the Future We Want for All” Report to the Secretary General.
- ⁵³ www.worldwewant2015.org.
- ⁵⁴ The proposals reviewed here include those issued by the High Level Panel of the Eminent Persons (HLPE), Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), UN Global Compact, United Nations Development Group (UNDG) post 2015 consultations, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) and the Korean Development Institute (KDI), i.e., Bellagio Group Goals, Action Aid, Friedrich Ebert Institute, Center for Women’s Global Leadership (CWGL), The Gender and Development Network (GADN), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), The African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF), Association of Women in Development (AWID) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- ⁵⁵ Most prominently, Rio + 20, UNDG Inequalities Consultation, HLPE, UN Global Compact, SDSN, and CIGI/KDI.
- ⁵⁶ Other proposals for increased voice for women come from: Rio + 20, UNDG Inequalities Consultation, HLPE, UN Global Compact, SDSN, OECD, GADN, DAWN, FEMNET, and Action Aid.
- ⁵⁷ United Nations (2012). UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s remarks at the Commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, SG/SM/14681 OBV/1166 WOM/1931.
- ⁵⁸ The capabilities approach, as developed by Amartya Sen, puts emphasis on people’s substantive freedoms and sees development as a process of expanding those freedoms. These substantive freedoms include capacities ‘to be and to do’ what one has reason to value, such as the freedom to be nourished, educated, and healthy, to freely decide on the number and spacing of children, and so on. Sen, A. (1999). *Development As Freedom*. Knopf, New York.
- ⁵⁹ Please see note 2.