



# Women's rights and the Post-2015 development framework: An advocacy guide

## **Women's rights and the Post-2015 development framework: An advocacy guide**

February 2014

### **How to use this guide**

This guide is for all those working to ensure women's rights and gender equality are central to the outcomes of the negotiations on the Post-2015 development framework that conclude in September 2015. This includes women's rights organisations and those working on women's rights and gender equality in other civil society organisations. It directly builds on, and should be used in conjunction with, Womankind Worldwide's existing Women's Rights Advocacy Toolkit, available at [www.womankind.org.uk](http://www.womankind.org.uk).

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# 1 WHY POST-2015 IS IMPORTANT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

Insecurity, violence, extreme poverty, participation, gender inequality and maternal mortality are some of the major challenges women continue to face in many nations. The Post-2015 framework is an opportunity for governments to build on the MDGs and deliver for women. As women's civil society organisations we must continue and step up our advocacy to ensure that development is holistic, and that women's rights are not rolled back.

Deborah Taylor Reeves, Liberia Women Media Action Committee.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) have framed development policy, programming and funding for the past 15 years, and are due to conclude in 2015. The Post-2015 framework will replace them, and set a global agenda likely to last for decades. While the process is complicated and access limited, it provides a valuable opportunity to further the promotion of women's rights.

The MDGs leveraged resources and political will with some notable, if limited, successes in promoting gender equality. While not binding, the goals proved useful in guiding priorities and resources as well as providing an accountability mechanism for civil society. The next phase will need to build on these achievements, particularly on MDG3 'to promote gender equality and empower women'. Despite its limitations, MDG3 has led to considerable gains in gender equality and is a valuable platform from which to progress.

## Millennium Development Goal 3

|  | Target 3.A:   | Indicators   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Goal 3:<br/>Promote<br/>Gender<br/>Equality and<br/>Empower<br/>Women</b> | Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015. | 3.1 Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education<br>3.2 Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector<br>3.3 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament |

As a result of MDG 3 governments have increased their focus on meeting the indicators, and learning more effective methods. Donors have also created new funds and budget lines in support of government initiatives.<sup>1</sup>

### Increased school enrolment

West African countries have been particularly successful in moving towards parity in the enrolment of girls and boys in primary school. Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal and Togo have all met the target, with Guinea and the Gambia making the most significant progress. The provision of scholarships and other financial support for girls in rural areas has been seen as part of the solution.<sup>2</sup> To make remaining in school attractive for girls, the Government of Ghana introduced support with the provision of school supplies and uniforms, scholarships, free meals and safe toilets for girls.<sup>3</sup>

Bangladesh, despite being one of the poorest countries in Asia, has made dramatic strides in girls' access to education and in improving women's health, through a mix of targeted policies and high-level political commitment.<sup>4</sup>

### Action on waged work

Mali has had most success in achieving indicator two. This is attributed in part to the government's partnership with the United Nations system and other development partners in supporting the informal trade organized by women in the mango market.<sup>5</sup>

Ethiopia, with nearly half of all women in wage employment, has one of the highest rates of progress, due largely to government supported job creation schemes in small and medium enterprises.<sup>6</sup>

### Parliamentary representation

Rwanda is a success story, achieving substantial progress in women's representation in the judiciary and executive as well as the legislature.<sup>7</sup>

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of seats held by women in Liberia's National Legislature. Following the October 2011 election, women now hold 8 seats in the national legislature (11 per cent) and 4 seats in the senate (13.3 per cent).<sup>8</sup>

The Dutch MDG3 Fund has also funded programmes promoting the long term development of women’s political participation. Through the Women’s Learning Partnership women such as those of the Soulaliyates ethnic community in Morocco, women are supported to become leaders of the future and challenge the existing norms around their roles.<sup>9</sup>

### Additional funds for women’s organisations promoting women’s rights.

The EU has furthered MDG3 by supporting 736 CSOs promoting gender equality.<sup>10</sup>

The MDG3 Accountability Initiative was started by the Huairou with financial support from the Dutch Foreign Ministry in 2009. Forty-two grassroots women’s organizations and networks in 27 countries have participated, using the MDGs to promote women’s political participation and working to secure assets for women, particularly land and housing.<sup>11</sup>

## 2 THE POST-2015 PROCESS – MAPPING THE OPPORTUNITIES

### 2.1 THE STRUCTURE

**CAUTION** The Post-2015 process is complicated; it is all too easy to get caught in the detail, knowing some of the process will help identify when and how to make the case for women’s rights.



The **Post-2015 structure** is a combination of the Rio +20 discussions (held 20 years after the influential UN Conference on Sustainable Development <http://www.uncsd2012.org/> and the post Millennium Development Goals process. Each set of negotiations had originally worked towards its own set of goals, but at the UN General Assembly in 2013 consensus emerged that there should be a single set of goals.

**The UN Secretary General** <http://www.un.org/sg/> Ban Ki-moon has formally led the proceedings, and appointed a **UN Special Advisor on Post-2015** Amina Mohammed <http://www.un.org/sg/management/bios/Mohammed.shtml>. The **UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda** [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam\\_undf/index.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/untaskteam_undf/index.shtml) assembles

more than 60 UN agencies and international organisations and includes a Technical Support Team (TST) which provides background briefings, including for the Open Working groups. The **UN General Assembly**, which convenes every September, is the key decision-making body where all Member States (governments) are represented and at which the Secretary General produces a report.

There has been a complex web of **consultations**, designed to contribute to a report in September 2014 by the Secretary General. This is followed by a year of **government to government negotiations** before a hoped for final document in September 2015. The discussions to date have covered: (i) the structure of the framework; (ii) types of consultation; (iii) the content of the framework; (iv) financing, implementation and accountability.

## 2.2 THE STORY SO FAR



**TIP** Various streams of work have fed into the process so far. The reports mentioned below can be useful in three ways. Firstly they reveal the current debate. Secondly they may help to identify allies. Thirdly, quoting from them lends legitimacy to an argument.

**Regional consultations** The UN has five regional commissions that have held consultations: the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA).

**National consultations** were held in many countries in 2013. (Find the one for your country by doing a web search as they are not collated centrally by the UN).

**Thematic consultations led by UN agencies:** Gender was covered under a broader inequalities theme led by UN Women and UNICEF. The outcome *Consultation Report* is at: <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/inequalities>. **UN Women** also produced its own report: *A Transformative Standalone goal on achieving gender equality women's rights and women's empowerment*. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/post-2015/un-women-position>

The Secretary General appointed the **High Level Panel** co-chaired by the Presidents of Indonesia and Liberia and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The Panel reported in May 2013 made specific

recommendations on goals.<sup>12</sup>

Two additional reports, including private sector representatives, have been particularly influential.<sup>13</sup> **The United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network** led by Jeffrey Sachs, is a global network of research centres, universities and technical institutions which works with stakeholders including business, civil society, UN agencies and other international organisations to produce an Action Agenda.<sup>14</sup> **The United Nations Global Compact** coordinates private sector input into the process and produced a report in 2013.<sup>15</sup>

Finally the UN Secretary General released a report at the General Assembly in 2013 indicating his current thinking.<sup>16</sup>

## 2.3 CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2014

**TIP** Various streams of work have fed into the process so far. The reports mentioned below can be useful in three ways. Firstly they reveal the current debate. Secondly they may help to identify allies. Thirdly, quoting from them lends legitimacy to an argument.



### FOR LATEST NEWS LOOK AT

<http://post2015.iisd.org/> and <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/> and <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1561> or the website designed for NGOs at <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article4333>

The **Open Working Group** - a sub-group of the General Assembly - is holding eight meetings to prepare reports to feed into the UN Assembly at its 68th session in September 2014. These are likely to be very influential. <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

The **Major Groups** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups.html> are the organisations recognised by the UN as contributors and will be the voice of CSOs in the Open Working Group process. There is a Women's Major Group which has a list serve (email group): [women\\_major\\_group@googlegroups.com](mailto:women_major_group@googlegroups.com).

**The President of the General Assembly** is influential. Mr John Ashe



(Antigua and Barbuda) is currently president (until September 2014) and has indicated that he will hold three high level events one of which is 'Contributions of women, the young and civil society to the Post-2015 development agenda', and three thematic events, due to take place in March 2014. <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/settingthestage/>. The President also convenes the **High level political forum on sustainable development** which was established in September 2013 and will meet in 2014 <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1556>

**The Commission on the Status of Women** will meet from the 10th to the 21st of March. The theme is '*Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls*'. Although the theme is predominately on the MDGs the main topic of debate is likely to be the Post-2015 framework. The Outcome Document (agreed by the Member States) will be seen as one of the most important inputs on gender equality to the process, so it is essential that strong messages are agreed. Many women's organisations will attend the meeting in New York in an attempt to influence the outcome. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw58-2014#sthash.nUEFUx9f.dpuf><http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw58-2014>

**The Committee for Sustainable Development Financing** will report in August 2014 on the best ways to finance the new framework. <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1558> or <http://uncsd.iisd.org/news/sustainable-development-financing-committee-holds-first-meeting/>

The discussion on inequalities is continuing under the auspices of the newly formed 'Addressing Inequalities Networked Alliance' (**AINA**) with on-line consultations. <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/inequalities>

## 2.4 THE NEGOTIATIONS: SEPTEMBER 2014 TO SEPTEMBER 2015

Negotiations among the Member States (governments) are due to be launched at the UN General Assembly in September 2014, with a synthesis report from the UN Secretary General by the end of 2014. This document will be crucial, setting the parameters and framing the more detailed negotiations for the final agreement. Deliberations on the goals and implementation package then take place in 2015 culminating, it is hoped, in a Head of State event in September 2015 to adopt the new framework.



**CAUTION** From September 2014 it appears that the consultation process will be over and all discussions will take place among Member states. It is vital therefore to have approached governments and UN missions in New York before this time.

## 2.5 THE CURRENT DEBATE ON POST-2015 AND GENDER

The growing consensus is that gender equality should be included in any new framework. In 2012 the UN Secretary General recommended that the pursuit of gender equality and the empowerment of women should feature prominently.<sup>17</sup> This view was supported by the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda.<sup>18</sup> A specific gender goal was recommended by the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda,<sup>19</sup> the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network<sup>20</sup> and the United Nations Global Compact.<sup>21</sup>

In the 2013 report of the UN Secretary General paragraph 85 states:

“The new agenda must ensure the equal rights of women and girls, their full participation in the political, economic and public spheres and zero tolerance for violence against or exploitation of women and girls. The practice of child marriage must be ended everywhere. Women and girls must have equal access to financial services, infrastructure, the full range of health services, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and water and sanitation; the right to own land and other assets; a safe environment in which to learn and apply their knowledge and skills; and an end to discrimination so they can receive equal pay for equal work and have an equal voice in decision-making.”<sup>22</sup>

It seems clear that gender equality will appear in the new framework in some form. However two questions remain: will the challenge be given sufficient priority, and will the recommendations be sufficiently transformative?

Many states now feel the need to mention gender equality, but this may mask an absence of any real commitment or priority. In particular, some CSOs fear that proposals for an inequalities goal will subsume and therefore de-prioritise commitment to women’s empowerment.<sup>23</sup>

There is also a danger of complacency, with few governments prepared to champion gender equality once the negotiations begin in earnest behind closed doors. Gender has sometimes been referred to as yesterday's issue or as 'done', with leaders eager to find 'new' ideas for the next framework. Calls for a standalone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment are seen by women's rights advocates as a good way to ensure explicit commitment from governments.

The second area of concern is that the approach to gender equality should be improved, with a general consensus that the MDGs were not sufficiently transformative, and often tackled the symptoms of inequality rather than its root causes.<sup>24</sup> This reflects broader discussions on the need for social transformation within the Post-2015 framework. The omission of certain issues, particularly violence against women and girls, was also noted. Specific proposals have been made both on the missing issues, and the way in which targets and indicators could tackle structural barriers of gender inequality. (See **Section 3**)

## **3 WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE? – DEVELOPING YOUR POSITION PAPER**

### **3.1 PREPARING YOUR POSITION PAPER**

This is one of those rare opportunities when gender equality appears to be firmly on the global political agenda. Making the most of this opportunity means going beyond rhetoric to stipulate clear proposals on the changes needed. We can still be bold in our aspirations – but precise in our propositions. Many organisations have developed position papers detailing the changes they want to see in the Post-2015 framework. (**Appendix 3** gives an example of Womankind Worldwide's position paper).

#### **Priorities**

A position statement will reflect your own analysis and the priorities of the marginalised women with whom you work. It may not matter if you don't have time to consult specifically on the Post-2015 process (for many women this complex set of international negotiations will seem remote from their day to day to work). You may already know the priorities of local women. The challenge now is to present these within the framework on offer. It is fine to focus on your particular issue; you could for example just stress the need to focus on violence against women and girls. However a comprehensive approach is more likely to be used by your government, so you could also endorse the proposals prepared by others on different themes.

## Be specific

At this stage in the process, be specific. At present most commentators are working under the assumption that the framework will have goals, targets and indicators as in the Millennium Development Goals <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/gti.htm> – but keep an eye out to see if this changes and adapt your proposal accordingly. If possible include ideas on how to measure progress (indicators) as well as the change that needs to happen (goals and targets).

## The broader context

This briefing focuses specifically on women’s rights and gender equality. You may also want to locate these points in a wider discussion about economic, political and social transformation, depending on your organisation’s position and areas of expertise. Demonstrating the way in which gender equality interacts with other priorities can be particularly powerful and provide a holistic analysis. For example, most governments’ current macro-economic policies undermine progress in women’s rights a variety of ways.<sup>25</sup>

**TIP** A number of organisations have engaged in discussions about what form the whole framework should take, and the way in which consultations should occur.<sup>26</sup> At this stage, unless you have substantial resources, you may want to focus on the issues you think should be addressed rather than getting enmeshed in the structure and process, much of which has already been decided.



## Building on the work of others

There are already a number of position papers available on gender equality and women’s rights from CSOs and international alliances that you may find helpful.<sup>27</sup> For example *Achieving Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in the Africa Common Position on Post-2015: Recommendations by African Women’s Rights Organizations* is a detailed and useful report based on the views of African women’s organisations.<sup>28</sup>

## 3.2 POSSIBLE POINTS FOR THE POSITION STATEMENT

Below are some of the emerging points of consensus among women’s rights organisations, which may provide a starting point. But be sure your position paper reflects your own experience and views.

## Standalone goal

Firm commitment to a distinct standalone goal on women's rights and gender equality is a priority because:

- The experience of MDG3 has demonstrated the value of a goal in leveraging political will, leadership and resources.
- Such a goal allows space for targets that tackle specific dimensions of inequality that do not fall easily into other goal areas (such as violence against women), and for targets to address gender-specific issues that may be lost under other goals (for example property rights in the economic sector, and sexual and reproductive rights in the health sector).
- Mainstreaming efforts to promote gender equality across the framework are far more likely to succeed if complemented by the focus of a standalone goal.



**CAUTION** Some groups fear that governments will only pay lip service to gender. Others that gender may be subsumed under a broader inequalities goal. Advocating for a standalone goal is therefore thought to be strategically vital for many groups.

## Mainstreaming

Gender equality should also be 'mainstreamed' throughout the framework. Targets and indicators should address the specific barriers women face under each goal. Data should be disaggregated by gender, ensuring that the individual, not the household, is the unit of analysis.

## Transformative targets

The targets that come under each goal should be transformative, tackling the causes of inequality and barriers to women's empowerment beyond ameliorating the problem or providing equality of opportunity. They should specifically cover the priorities of women, rather than just ensuring that women benefit equally from mainstream initiatives. For example on education, while the enrolment of girls and boys may be similar we know that girls are more likely to drop out of school so a more gender sensitive indicator is the rate of *completion* of education rather than enrolment.

Transformative gender targets could come either under a gender goal or another relevant goal.

Priorities include:

- Eliminating violence against women and girls through the provision of care services and the enactment and implementation of legislation
- Political participation and influence of women and girls in decision-making processes from the household to the international stage
- Economic empowerment of women and girls through access to land, resources, decent work, equal pay, social protection and the sharing of unpaid care
- The provision of sexual and reproductive health and rights through services and legislation
- The completion of primary education for girls and more investment in secondary and tertiary education for girls and women

## Indicators

The choice of indicators is political as well as technical, as resources will be focused on that aspect of a problem which is to be monitored. That the indicator for maternal mortality in the MDGs was the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel meant other causes, such as availability of contraception, were given less priority. The collection of data should therefore reflect political priorities, rather than the other way round. The measurement of changing social norms should be included in the range of indicators and is particularly important for gender equality.

**TIP** For each target one or more indicators are identified as a way of measuring whether progress is being made. Most discussion among Member States will be at level of goals and targets, with officials left to fill in the details. (This will largely be done by technical experts and national civil servants or UN staff). However reference to the availability of *existing* data to use for indicators that can measure progress in achieving targets greatly adds strength to a proposal.<sup>29</sup> The perceived lack of indicators to measure progress on violence against women and girls was one of the excuses given for its absence in the MDGs. Since then more indicators have been developed.



## Consultation

There should be wide ranging consultation to ensure that the framework reflects the priorities of marginalised women and excluded groups.

### 3.3 FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE (5:69)

It is particularly important to frame, or present, your position statement and core message in a way that will be acceptable to your target and make them want to listen to you.

**The importance of gender equality and women's rights** Your biggest hurdle may be in convincing others of the importance of gender equality and women's rights. You could argue that it is critical to maintain a strong and explicit focus on gender equality in the Post-2015 framework for two reasons. First, women's empowerment is important in its own right with women disproportionately represented among the poorest and most marginalised in the world; women are estimated to account for two-thirds of the 1.4 billion people globally who live in extreme poverty.<sup>30</sup>

Second, gender inequality has a major impact in preventing women and girls achieving other development goals. For example school enrolment is still hampered by: violence against girls on the journey to and in school, parents' lack of priority to investing in their daughter's education, girls' heavy domestic workloads, poor quality sanitary facilities, early marriage and teenage pregnancy.<sup>31</sup>

**Relevant to government's current priorities** Praising the government's dedication to the issue and progress already made is a useful starting point. Root your arguments in any commitments you can find from your own government on gender equality. National consultations on MDGs may be a useful source of quotes. Discussion of progress on the MDGs in your country, based on existing evidence, can be a good way of introducing your Post-2015 proposal and creating a link with current priorities.

You may also want to consider whether your government will best relate to the language of 'gender equality', 'women's empowerment' or 'the rights of women and girls'.

**A home-grown agenda** Demonstrating that gender equality is a regional priority, not an imposition from the Global North, is often persuasive. You could refer to the Guadalajara declaration for Latin America: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article4283> or use one of the following references for Africa.

In November 2013 the African Union's Committee of Women in Development agreed that Africa's common position (ACP) on the Post-2015 development agenda should include a stand-alone pillar on gender

equality and women's empowerment, and should mainstream gender in other indicators and targets.<sup>32</sup>

The *Africa Regional Consultative Meeting on the Sustainable Development Goals, Outcome Document* from the Economic Commission for Africa (November 2013) included as Goal 5: "Achieve gender equality, protect and empower women, the youth and persons in vulnerable situations."<sup>33</sup>

Dr. Anthony Mothae Maruping, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, African Union Commission said in October 2013.

"As you well know, progress towards gender equality has been encouraging in Africa. Gender gaps in girl's enrolment in primary education have narrowed in most of the countries and women participation in the labour force and appointment and election into the decision-making have increased. However, despite these developments, progress has been slow and uneven and gender disparities continue to delay eradication of poverty on the continent. Therefore, gender equality must be central to the Post-2015 development framework. Because of the importance of women empowerment in its own right and the impact that gender inequality has on achieving other development goals."<sup>34</sup>

**Based on international agreements (8:2)** Add legitimacy to your argument by stressing that your position reflects priorities agreed under International human rights conventions. These include the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the International Conference on Population and Development's (ICPD) Programme of Action, and UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960.<sup>35</sup>

You could also cite relevant regional agreements such as the Africa Women's Protocol and the Inter-America Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (8:136)

**Useful** Adopting your positions could actually help the government or your other targets. Governments and missions may be looking for things to say during Post-2015 negotiations. Provide them with evidence to support your statements and background on what will be discussed when, and they will be more likely to put forward your proposals.



## 4 YOUR STRATEGY - WHO TO INFLUENCE AND HOW?

This section will help you plan your strategy. You could use it in conjunction with Womankind's toolkit – and references to the toolkit are provided throughout this section in brackets. We've included some suggested aims, objectives, targets and methods (5:58). Decide whether they work in your context, or adapt them.



**CAUTION** A note of caution - the Post-2015 negotiations are an opportunity to further existing work; it is important not to be diverted into engaging with the process for its own sake.

### 4.1 PLANNING

#### **Possible Aim** (4:31)

For many organisations the aim is: 'For the Post-2015 framework to promote gender equality and women's rights'.

#### **Strategy**

The mapping of the process in **Section 2** suggests the following opportunities for influence before the September 2015 deadline. (See **Box 2** to keep up with the latest developments).

1. Influence the position of the government  
New York mission Governments are the key players now. Some will be involved in current discussions such as members of the Open Working Group, others will be part of the Member States negotiations after September 2014. Influencing their negotiating positions is key now. This is a particularly important strategy if you have good relations with the relevant part of government, and if they have an influential role in any of the negotiations or in the regional block.
2. Influence your Regional Block  
Many governments will follow the lead of a regional block during negotiations (See Box 3 on UN Negotiations). Changing the negotiating position of such a block can therefore have a major impact. Attempting such a strategy is best done through a regional coalition, or via your government if they have influence within the regional group.
3. Influence the influencers  
If you don't have easy access to the government it may be better to try to influence those who do, such as a national platform. On the international stage there are also influential coalitions, think tanks

and ‘experts’ – persuading them of your views could have a wide impact.

### **Possible Objectives (4:43)**

The objectives for your Post-2015 work might be:

1. To persuade the government to call for a strong approach to gender equality during the negotiations among UN members states prior to the UN General Assembly in 2015
2. To promote a standalone goal and mainstreaming of transformative targets on women’s rights in specific regional consultations (*name them and give dates*) on the Post-2015 framework
3. To persuade the national CSO platform to incorporate core demands on women’s rights into its national position paper

### **Identifying advocacy targets (4:46)**

You will need to identify the targets for your advocacy (not to be confused with the goals and targets in the framework!) – best are those that have power to make the changes you want to see, and over whom you have some influence.

- The Ministry leading the Post-2015 process – probably the Foreign Ministry
- The permanent mission at the UN in New York (**See Section 4.2** for details)
- The relevant regional block (**See Box 3** on UN negotiations)
- ‘Influencers’ such as CSO coalitions or Parliamentarians who have the ear of the Minister or other UN member states

### **ALLIANCE BUILDING (6:85)**

Start by identifying other organisations working on gender and the Post-2015 framework or MDGs. There is a coalition specifically for CSOs promoting women’s rights: <http://www.post2015women.com/about/> and Femnet have been very active in the process <http://femnet.co/index.php/en/>

But don’t stop there. It could be very effective to link with other CSO movements on Post-2015. They may already have good access to decision makers, be able to keep you up to date with all the latest developments and explain the processes so that you don’t need to devote resources to duplicating this background work. You might also convince them to include your demands on gender equality and

women's empowerment in their manifestos.



**CAUTION** Be careful: It's relatively easy for networks and coalitions to add something on gender to their long list of demands, but try to ensure that the spokespeople for the coalition will actually prioritise gender when they get into face to face meetings (or better still that they take you along).



**TIP** For details of national platforms try G-CAP <http://www.whiteband.org> or Beyond 2015 <http://beyond2015.org/> or the local offices of INGOs like ACORD, Oxfam, ActionAid and IPPF, all of whom are likely to be part of coalitions. The UN NGLS may also prove a useful way to identify who else is active in your region: [http://www.un-ngls.org/IMG/pdf/UN-NGLS\\_Post-2015\\_Regional\\_Consultation\\_September\\_2013.pdf](http://www.un-ngls.org/IMG/pdf/UN-NGLS_Post-2015_Regional_Consultation_September_2013.pdf)

## 4.2 ACTIVITIES

### Prioritise (6:83)

There's not much time and resources are limited, so prioritising activities is crucial. Consider what influences your target, what your strengths are and where the two overlap. Some governments, particularly those with small missions in New York, may be looking for things to say on Post-2015 so will be grateful for your suggestions. Other governments may already be sympathetic to the need to promote gender equality and want some more detailed proposals on how to do this within the Post-2015 context.

Using the advocacy continuum can help (5:61). If your issue is already firmly on your government's agenda then you can go straight to lobbying. If it isn't, you may need to do some public campaigning and media work. It is always worth trying the easy way first - you may find you are pushing at an open door.

## Negotiations at the UN<sup>36</sup>

Most, but not all, states have permanent missions to the UN in New York. These are staffed by diplomats, usually from the Foreign Ministry, who lead on negotiations. For special conferences such as those on Post-2015, government officials may also come in from capitals. These delegations could range from Heads of State and senior government officials to technical experts; sometimes they may also include NGO or private sector representatives. High level officials would normally attend closed bilateral sessions or make plenary speeches rather than taking part in the formal negotiations.

During negotiations member states frequently work in 'blocks'. The European Union, African Union, and the G77-China are common groupings. Latin America and the Caribbean countries sometimes work together as CARICOM or the Rio Group. However governments may agree on some issues and not others so groupings can vary. It is particularly valuable to influence the negotiating position of such a block.

Much of the negotiation takes place between diplomats based in New York, frequently in the corridors rather than around the formal negotiating table. Tactics will be used, with trade-offs made. Just because an issue is supported by your government does not mean it is a priority once the trade-offs begin.

## Lobbying your government (6:90)

**The right person:** Make sure you are speaking to person who has the authority to decide on negotiating positions (probably in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). This may not be your usual Ministry so see if any INGOs or national platforms can help you with background information. Find out whether the representative to the UN is based in New York (part of a 'permanent mission') or in your capital and who they report to. Contact details for the missions in New York are at: <http://www.un.org/en/members/index.shtml> and a list of current representatives can be found at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_current\\_Permanent\\_Representatives\\_to\\_the\\_United\\_Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_current_Permanent_Representatives_to_the_United_Nations). For large meetings, a delegation from your capital may join the permanent representative. If this is so, see who is going and whether anyone has expressed an interest in gender. The permanent representative may have to take the

lead of the relevant regional block, if so make sure to target the regional block too.

**Relevant information:** Discover whether your government is sitting on any of the relevant bodies such as the Open Working Group (**See Annex 2**) or holds a key role such as the Co-chairs of the Open Working Groups or President of the General Assembly. If so, tailor your lobbying towards their role in that event. Read the agenda and any background papers and adjust your message accordingly.

**The right time:** Speak to your target before they enter negotiations with other Member States. Dates for negotiations are changing all the time. (**See Box 1**).

**Meetings:** The Womankind Toolkit contains a list of suggestions for preparing for a lobby meeting (6:90). It's easy for a Minister to support your position in public, but then not give it priority in private negotiations, so ask for a report of the negotiations after the event.

**Written briefings:** You may wish to prepare a short briefing to present at the meeting, or to send if you can't arrange a meeting in time.

**Publicising proposals:** Some governments and UN agencies are actively looking for proposals and position papers, particularly from organisations in the Global South. It is therefore important to circulate position papers and briefings as widely as possible.

A number of websites will post your proposal to ensure it is widely read:  
The World We Want: <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/>  
Beyond 2015: <http://beyond2015.org/> email your document to Gerard.Vives@concordeurope.org  
Post-2015.org (administered by the Overseas Development Institute)  
<http://Post-2015.org> email your document to [j.couturier@odi.org.uk](mailto:j.couturier@odi.org.uk)

## Advocacy in practice- Womankind's partner organisations

FIDA in **Kenya** were part of a Forum organised by ACORD in September 2013 and subsequently developed a position paper. They have links with the Ministry of Devolution which includes the Gender Department, but are now looking to make contact with the Foreign Affairs Department who is responsible for the permanent mission in New York. The permanent representative to the UN is co-chair of the Open Working Group and therefore a focus for Kenyan CSOs.

**Liberian** women's groups started organising early, partly as President Sirleaf co-chaired the influential High Level Panel . They now have a strong national platform; women's rights organisations have formed a coalition and are producing the 'Women's Agenda for Liberia' based on consultations with women in urban areas. LIWOMAC is a media organisation empowering marginalised women through use of the media and is part of the coalition.

President Sirleaf remains an influential proponent of gender equality in the process and her voice will be listened to in regional negotiations in the Africa Union. Liberian organisations therefore have a clear strategy for influence. However Liberia is not on the Open Working Group so these negotiations are of less relevance.

WILDAF is working through the Network for Women's Rights in **Ghana** and strategising with colleagues across West Africa. It is a signatory of the Mind the Gap Declaration. Once the Post-2015 framework is agreed they expect to support local groups in using it to hold their government to account.

## ANNEX ONE - BACKGROUND PAPERS AND CONTACTS

### Position papers

African women's rights regional steering group on the Post-2015 development framework, 2012, *Mind the Gender gap: Accelerating gender commitments in the MDGs and shaping the Post-2015 development framework* This paper builds on discussions from the African women's regional consultation in Monrovia on October 21 - 22, 2012.)

### Background papers on gender and Post-2015 with detailed information on the issues

Gender and Development Network (2013) *Gender Equality and the Post-2015 Framework* <http://www.gadnetwork.org.uk/gadn-post-2015-report/>

OECD, 2013, Gender equality and women's rights in the post-2015 agenda: A foundation for sustainable development <http://www.oecd.org/dac/POST-2015%20Gender.pdf>

UN Women, 2013, *A transformative stand-alone goal on achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment: Imperatives and key components* - <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/post-2015/un-women-position>

UN Women in collaboration with ECLAC, October 2013, *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Structural and Policy Constraints in Achieving the MDGs for Women and Girls, Mexico City, Mexico* <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-2013-EGM-Report-en.pdf>

UN Technical briefing paper prepared for the Open Working group on Inequalities *TST Issues Brief: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* [http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2406TST%20Issues%20Brief%20on%20Promoting%20Equality\\_FINAL.pdf](http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2406TST%20Issues%20Brief%20on%20Promoting%20Equality_FINAL.pdf)

VSO, 2013, *Women in Power, Advancing women's participation and influence in political and public life through the Post-2015 agenda.*

## ANNEX TWO - THE OPEN WORKING GROUP

The OWG is co-chaired by Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary, and Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya. (<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>)

Member states represented in the Open Working Group:

### **African Group**

1. Algeria / Egypt / Morocco / Tunisia
2. Ghana
3. Benin
4. Kenya
5. United Republic of Tanzania
6. Congo
7. Zambia / Zimbabwe

### **Asia-Pacific Group**

1. Nauru / Palau / Papua New Guinea
2. Bhutan / Thailand / Viet Nam
3. India / Pakistan / Sri Lanka
4. China / Indonesia / Kazakhstan
5. Cyprus / Singapore / United Arab Emirates
6. Bangladesh / Republic of Korea / Saudi Arabia
7. Iran (Islamic Republic of) / Japan / Nepal

### **Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC)**

1. Colombia / Guatemala
2. Bahamas / Barbados
3. Guyana/Haiti/Trinidad and Tobago
4. Mexico / Peru
5. Brazil / Nicaragua
6. Argentina / Bolivia (Plurinational State of) / Ecuador

### **Western European and Others Group (WEOG)**

1. Australia / Netherlands / United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
2. Canada / Israel / United States of America
3. Denmark / Ireland / Norway
4. France / Germany / Switzerland
5. Italy / Spain / Turkey

### **Eastern European Group**

1. Hungary
2. Belarus / Serbia
3. Bulgaria / Croatia
4. Montenegro / Slovenia
5. Poland / Romania



## ANNEX THREE - WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY IN THE POST-2015 FRAMEWORK

**Position paper: FIDA (Kenya), LIWOMAC (Liberia), WILDAF (Ghana), Womankind Worldwide (UK).**

With funding from the Dutch government's FLOW programme, Womankind Worldwide and our partners Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) Kenya, Liberian Women Media Action Committee (LIWOMAC) and Women in Law and Development (WILDAF) Ghana are campaigning for women's rights to be at the heart of the Post-2015 development framework. This paper sets out our shared vision for a framework with the potential to transform the lives of women and girls. Central to this is a standalone goal on women's rights and gender equality, and transformative targets and indicators which mainstream gender equality throughout all goals. This position paper is based on our shared expertise and understanding of women's rights, with particular emphasis on violence against women and women's civil and political participation.

### **A strong and explicit focus on women's rights and gender equality**

Despite some gains made since the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals, the persistence of gender equality and denial of women's rights remains a significant global challenge. The emerging Post-2015 framework must therefore contain a strong and explicit focus on gender equality and women's empowerment.

We believe that four principles should guide the Post-2015 framework on women's rights.

**Universality:** Gender inequality exists in all the UN Member States. The approach to women's rights should therefore be universal in its application, with priority resources given to reaching the world's poorest and most marginalised women.

**Structural change:** The Post-2015 framework must tackle both poverty and inequality. To this end its targets and goals should be transformative, challenging the structures which pose barriers to the full realisation of women's rights. Transformative targets will usually be ones that increase women's choices and control over their own lives, beyond the immediate removal of hardship. These could include women having more control over when and whether to have children, greater voice and influence in political decision-making, or greater ownership and control of economic assets such as income, land and property. This may require

a change in legislation, or in the social norms which perpetuate and justify discrimination.

**The participation of women:** Women's rights organisations and social justice groups working with marginalised women for gender equality, human rights and women's empowerment should be enabled to meaningfully engage at all levels of consultation.

**Coherence with existing agreements:** The framework should be coherent with existing international policy initiatives and aligned with established human rights agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Beijing Platform for Action.

### **A standalone goal and mainstreaming, with transformative targets**

For the Post-2015 framework to make significant advances in promoting women's rights it must include a dedicated goal on gender equality and women's rights. Securing this standalone goal must be the priority for all governments committed to tackling gender inequality. Targets and indicators will need to specifically address the structural causes of inequality and include both violence against women and women's civil and political participation as priorities.

**1. A standalone goal on women rights and gender equality** It is critical that the Post-2015 framework contains a standalone goal on women's rights and gender equality. This is essential to provide leadership, create the political will, and leverage the necessary funding. Moreover given the existence of Millennium Development Goal 3, anything less will be seen as a backtracking and a signal that gender equality has been de-prioritised.

A dedicated goal also allows space for targets that tackle specific dimensions of inequality that do not fall easily into other goal areas (such as violence against women), and for targets to address gender-specific issues that may be lost under other goals (for example property rights in the economic sector, and sexual and reproductive rights in the health sector).

**2. Women's rights mainstreamed throughout** The promotion of women's rights should be mainstreamed across the new framework. This will require targets and indicators that specifically address the structural barriers that women face in achieving equality, beyond the creation of equality of opportunity and the measurement of progress. (Recognition

could, for example, be given to: sanitation in schools as a barrier to girls' education; reproductive rights as a factor in reducing maternal mortality; or unpaid care as a barrier to women's formal employment).

It will further require the disaggregation of data, at individual not household level, and the development of data measuring changes in social norms

**3. Transformative Targets and Indicators** Womankind works primarily with partner organisations specialising in the areas of women's participation and leadership and violence against women and girls. Our proposed targets, rooted in the priorities of the women our partners work with, are therefore on these themes. We also support the proposals put forward by our partners globally and by fellow members of the Gender and Development Network in calling for targets that promote women's economic empowerment (including decent work, social protection and the recognition of unpaid care), reproductive rights, and education.

**i) Women's participation and leadership.** The scope of the Post-2015 framework should go beyond the current focus on participation in national politics to include local decision making bodies that often have a more direct impact on the lives of women affected by poverty. Participation could include leadership roles outside formal politics, in schools, civil society, the media and the judiciary. Proposed changes must also extend to decision making roles within the household, where social norms frequently constrain women's voice. Effective change will mean women not only participate, but have actual influence over decisions, and targets must reflect this. Furthermore, to achieve progress the political, social and economic barriers that prevent women from participating effectively need to be tackled directly and this should be reflected in the indicators of success.

Suggested target:

- **Ensure full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all decision making at international, regional, national, community and household levels.**

Possible indicators of success:

- Proportions of women in key decision making positions at all levels, including roles outside formal politics.
- Female politicians' perceptions of the impact that they have on political decisions.

- Number of women's rights organisations active at national and local levels.
- Social norm change on household decision making and attitudes on how decisions should be made on household income.

Possible Indicators of progress:

- Repeal of laws and policies that outlaw participation.
- Close funding gaps that prevent women running for formal leadership roles.
- Reduce the burden of unpaid care work that denies women the time to participate in politics.
- Men and women believe that women should participate and influence decision-making at all levels.

**ii) Violence Against Women and Girls** The omission of this issue within the MDGs is now widely recognised to have been a major oversight. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing World Conference and Platform for Action (1995), UNSCR 1325, 1888, 1889, the UN Secretary General's 2006 report on violence against women all contain commitments towards the elimination of violence against women and girls. Action is needed in the areas of: prevention; care and support for survivors; legal redress requiring changes in and enforcement of laws; the provision of services; a change in attitudes and behaviour.

Suggested target:

- **Eliminate violence against women and girls through effective prevention measures, funded support to survivors, improvements in and enforcement of laws, and a change in social norms.**

Possible indicators:

### **Prevention**

- Prevalence of violence against women and girls – percentage of women who have experienced violence in the past year.
- Legislation on violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, sexual assault or rape, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting, sexual harassment.
- Percentage of people who think it is justifiable for a man to beat his wife/partner.
- Number of women's rights organisations active at national and local levels.

## Response

- Provision of shelters/refuges per head of population.
- Availability of continuum of care services.
- Percentage of people who believe that women are treated equally by the police and courts.
- Percentage of women survivors of violence who accessed healthcare and/ or counselling.

For more information or to discuss the issues in this briefing, please contact Womankind's Head of Policy and Influencing on [lee@womankind.org.uk](mailto:lee@womankind.org.uk).

## About Womankind Worldwide:

Womankind Worldwide is an international women's rights and development organisation. Based in the UK, we partner with women's rights organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America who enable women to challenge the discrimination and violence that affects their daily lives.

[www.womankind.org.uk](http://www.womankind.org.uk)

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[www.womankind.org.uk](http://www.womankind.org.uk)

Charity Number: 328206

Company Number: 2404121

**Development House,  
56-64 Leonard Street,  
London EC2A 4LT, UK**

**Tel: +44 (0)20 7549 0360**

**Email: [info@womankind.org.uk](mailto:info@womankind.org.uk)**