



## MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM

21 January 2016

10 am–1 pm and 3–6 pm

United Nations Headquarters

Conference Building

Conference Room 2

## *Implementing the 2030 Agenda to Accelerate Realization of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls*

### CONCEPT NOTE & DISCUSSION GUIDE

## INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES & FORMAT

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development responds to the overarching imperative to realign the world's economic, social and environmental trajectories in favour of sustainability for the planet and present and future generations. The 17 goals and 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda are universal, indivisible and rights-based to “leave no one behind”, addressing the economic, social, environmental and political dimensions of inequality and unsustainability.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are at the center of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda positions the Beijing Platform for Action as a foundational framework for sustainable development, with governments committing to work to significantly increase investments to close the gender gap, to strengthen support for gender equality institutions at all levels, and to systematically mainstream gender perspectives in the implementation of the Agenda.

Sustainable Development Goal 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and its targets are accompanied by gender-sensitive targets across 11 other SDGs including those addressing poverty (SDG1), hunger (SDG2), health (SDG3), education (SDG4), water and sanitation (SDG6), employment (SDG8), inequalities (SDG 10), sustainable cities (SDG11), climate change (SDG13), just and peaceful societies (SDG 16), and global partnership (SDG 17).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development builds on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development where Governments committed to ensuring gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, as well as to gender mainstreaming and targeted actions and investments. It also builds on Member States' pledge, in the Political Declaration adopted at the 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, of the full, accelerated and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, through a range of strategies including: strengthened implementation of laws and policies; strengthened and increased support for gender equality mechanisms; the transformation of discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes; significantly increased investments to close resource gaps;

strengthened accountability for implementation; and enhanced capacity building, data collection, monitoring and evaluation.

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its sixtieth session, has a critical opportunity to identify the key enabling conditions for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also has the opportunity to provide concrete guidance on how to translate the commitments and gains from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and its own 2015 Political Declaration into concrete steps and measures towards realizing ‘Planet 50-50’ by 2030.

The Commission will adopt short and succinct agreed conclusions that are expected to focus on action-oriented recommendations for steps and measures to close remaining gaps, meet challenges and accelerate implementation, to be taken by Governments, relevant intergovernmental bodies, mechanisms and entities of the United Nations system and other stakeholders.

Stakeholders at different levels are preparing for CSW60, building alliances and strengthening networks to build the linkages and synergies with processes and mechanisms tasked with implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at national, regional and global level. UN-Women is convening a forum to engage a range of stakeholders in the preparations for CSW60 and to help create a conducive environment for a successful session and to generate momentum for gender-responsive localization and implementation of the SDGs.

The Multi-Stakeholder Forum will:

- highlight commitments and opportunities for full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- identify key areas and issues that should be considered at CSW60, in the context of its priority theme, and ways for addressing those
- foster dialogue, build alliances and galvanize partnerships for action in support of gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and the realization of their human rights.

The Multi-Stakeholder Forum will consist of four inter-active panel discussions and one closing session where participants will engage in dialogue, highlight key areas for implementation and commit to further action. Each panel will, in particular, identify specific expectations for CSW60.

Panelists are invited to address one or more of the questions highlighted in the discussion guides for the panels. Each panelist is also encouraged to present one concrete outcome for CSW60 and her/his contribution towards achieving that outcome.

#### OUTCOME

A report on the Multi-Stakeholder Forum, summarizing the key elements from the discussions and outcome expectations will be prepared and published on the web, and contribute to the preparations for CSW60. It will also help galvanize stakeholders towards effective implementation of the outcomes of CSW60.



## DISCUSSION NOTE FOR PANEL 1

*Institutional arrangements for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

#### CURRENT SITUATION

Because of the integrated and cross-sectoral scope of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all parts of government will be involved in its implementation. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level is expected to build on existing national policy frameworks, development strategies and normative instruments. As these processes go forward and national development policy and planning frameworks are aligned with the 2030 Agenda, determined efforts are needed to reflect gender perspectives systematically across national sustainable development plans and strategies.

Effective and inclusive national institutions will be essential for achieving all the Goals and targets, and the entire implementation effort should contribute to the realization of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment. Therefore, national institutions across all branches and sectors of government will have to ensure that planning, decision-making, policy action and budgeting reflect gender equality considerations and benefit all women and girls.

National gender equality mechanisms are the principal governmental bodies charged with policy coordination for gender equality and women's empowerment and human rights. Working with line ministries and different branches and levels of government, national gender equality mechanisms support gender mainstreaming in all policy areas. They also collaborate with civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders towards common goals. National gender equality mechanisms must be central actors in all national institutional arrangements for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They need to be strategically positioned and equipped with authority and power, as well as funding and capacity, to ensure that gender equality considerations are systematically addressed in planning and implementation, across sectors, at all levels of government and by all actors.

#### PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- How are countries aligning existing national strategies and policies to the 2030 Agenda, and what steps and measures can be taken to ensure that full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is an integral part of these efforts?
- What steps are being taken to ensure that inclusive, effective and accountable institutional mechanisms are in place for localizing the SDGs – for planning and implementation, and for monitoring, review and follow-up – that include national gender equality mechanisms? What opportunities are being created for women's organizations to contribute to these processes and efforts?
- What challenges are being foreseen for implementation of SDG 5 and for mainstreaming gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls across implementation of the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? How can those challenges be tackled? What lessons can be learned and used from the implementation of the MDGs?

## DISCUSSION NOTE FOR PANEL 2

*Financing gender equality and women's empowerment in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

### CURRENT SITUATION

Achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. The urgency to close the resource gap for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has been amply confirmed, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where Member States agreed to work for a significant increase in investments to close the gender gap. Closing the resource gap

is one of six acceleration strategies pledged by Member States in the Political Declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women in 2015. The Addis Ababa Action Plan on Transformative Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, launched by Member States, civil society and the United Nations system, calls for transformative policy and financing actions to accelerate implementation of existing commitments in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to meet new commitments in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

Sufficient support and financing to increase gender equality across sectors will help to reduce other inequalities and discriminatory norms, with broad social, economic and political effects. For example an enabling macroeconomic environment that generates jobs and livelihoods and allows governments to invest in infrastructure, services and human capabilities is central for financing gender equality and women's empowerment. Enhanced attention to these linkages and related policy responses should therefore be a key component of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, for which all sources of funding will also need to be tapped.

### PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- How are macroeconomic policies being reviewed to ensure policy coherence in the pursuit of sustainable development that is truly inclusive and effectively contributes to the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?
- What measures are being implemented towards closing the resource gap and effectively invest in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls? What good practices exist to accelerate such efforts?
- What steps are being put in place at national level to monitor and track resource allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment? How is funding for women's organizations going to be enhanced?
- How can gender responsive budgeting as a tool be best used for implementation of commitments to gender equality and women's human rights in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?

## DISCUSSION NOTE FOR PANEL 3

*Strengthening the evidence for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

### CURRENT SITUATION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development makes provision for follow-up and review processes, including voluntary country-led reviews and national data that will contribute to global and regional follow-up. To ensure the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, it will be critical to base national processes on gender analysis.

The global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals is under preparation and will serve as basis for regular review of progress towards the achievement of all goals and targets, including the means of implementation. Data are expected to be of high quality and disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location, among other criteria, to ensure that no one is left behind.

The scope and ambition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pose huge data challenges. Existing sources of data are insufficient and many countries currently lack the requisite statistical capacity to monitor all of the Sustainable Development Goal targets. Data requirements to monitor effectively the gender dimensions of the 2030 Agenda will be substantial and require significant investments and capacity building to fill data gaps. The prospect of developing new data and statistics to regularly monitor all of the targets, with indicators disaggregated by sex and other criteria, will require significant efforts, including technical and financial collaboration on the part of all countries, support by the United Nations system and participation by civil society organizations, including women's human rights groups and gender equality advocates.

### PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What steps are being taken at national level to put in place a comprehensive monitoring framework that includes all the indicators necessary for ensuring effective tracking of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, across the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? How are national gender equality mechanisms participating in these processes?
- What are some of the major gaps in national data collection for the proposed gender-specific indicators and how will those be tackled? What steps will be taken to build capacity for related data collection, especially in new areas and targets of the 2030 Agenda not covered by the MDGs?
- How has enhanced knowledge contributed to better policy-making and resource allocation towards gender equality and women's empowerment? What examples of good practice can be replicated?

## DISCUSSION NOTE FOR PANEL 4

*Participation and leadership of women's organizations and gender equality advocates in the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

### CURRENT SITUATION

Having voice and participation in the political processes and decisions that determine their lives is a fundamental dimension of women's and girls' human rights and critical for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Strong coordination with civil society organizations, especially women's advocacy and human rights groups, will be indispensable for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development given their well-known role in promoting reform, influencing policies, participating in monitoring and upholding accountability. Implementation efforts will benefit from the experience and leadership of women's rights and gender equality advocates at all levels, including in national parliaments, trade unions, cooperatives and community associations. Yet in many contexts the full and effective functioning of civil society organizations has been curbed.

Gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development needs leadership by women as well as the full and effective participation of women's civil society organizations, for which renewed and strengthened support and substantially increased funding is required. Key to making accountability systems work for women is the strength of women's collective action, within women's rights groups and within associations. Coordination and leadership by national machineries for gender equality vis-à-vis all government bodies, and collaboration with civil society and other stakeholders will strengthen gender equality agenda-setting.

### PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What actions should governments take to ensure that women's organizations are involved in setting policy priorities and monitoring progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?
- How can national machineries for gender equality effectively work with women's organization to amplify the gender equality agenda across the entire 2030 Agenda across different parts and levels of government?
- What strategies can be used, by governments and women's organizations, to ensure the participation of marginalized women and girls in an effort to ensure that all women and girls are empowered and 'no one is left behind'?

## DISCUSSION NOTE FOR PANEL 5

### Wrap-up/Closing session

Member States have reaffirmed the Beijing Platform for Action as a foundational basis for sustainable development. The priority theme of the Commission on the Status of Women makes it clear that the realization of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment and their human rights is not only a goal in itself but essential for sustainable development. At the same time, the pursuit of sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – must contribute to the realization of gender equality, as embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Placing women's human rights at the center of transformative change in policies, practices and partnerships can create more just societies, inclusive economies and a sustainable planet. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a gender-responsive manner will simultaneously contribute to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

As countries proceed to localize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, improved policy coordination and gender mainstreaming across all sectors and ministries, and solid disaggregated data, will be essential for creating conducive environments for women's empowerment, to advance policy and legal reforms and enhance partnerships among all stakeholders.

Based on the discussion of key areas on the above panels, the closing session will provide the opportunity to synthesize key issues to ensure that the entire implementation effort of the 2030 Agenda delivers for women and girls. The session will help in identifying policy priorities and actions on how to translate the gender equality commitments and gains from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Commission's own 2015 Political Declaration into concrete steps and measures towards realizing 'Planet 50-50' by 2030.

### PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Going forward, what role can different stakeholders play to ensure that commitments from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Commission's own 2015 Political Declaration are implemented towards realizing 'Planet 50-50' by 2030 in line with the Beijing Platform for Action?
- How can the Commission on the Status of Women most effectively contribute to the global follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in order to accelerate realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women?

