

CSW60 Multi-Stakeholder Forum

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

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Panel 3: Strengthening the evidence for gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

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This is an ambitious agenda, we can't let our measurements fall short of that ambition despite the challenges

We have to be willing to explore and ultimately embrace new indicators and new methodologies which capture the most vulnerable. This has to include qualitative research and analysis, and even anecdotal evidence. It will also necessarily include those not living in traditional households. We need to work with NGOs and local organizations to reach these populations not captured by traditional surveys.

Key to gathering reliable data on the most vulnerable will mean new partnerships for data need to be developed to build overall capacity at all levels.

It's also important to remember that it's not just the "gender-specific" indicators that have data gaps, but many indicators that have gender and age data and analysis gaps as well. There's very little in this agenda that won't contribute to gender equality and a large part of the work for a gender responsive 2030 Agenda is ensuring non-gender-specific indicators capture the demographics and issues accurately. This can largely be done through better disaggregations but a gender and age responsive analysis of the data is also necessary.

This especially comes up in areas where there are especially large gaps in data and knowledge, though plenty of individual accounts, and that's regarding issues, particularly sexual and reproductive health and rights, for younger adolescents, particularly 10-14 year old girls. It's about more than childbearing, though that is an extremely important aspect, but about their access to information, services, and their rights. This particular population is still invisible in most of the indicators proposed in the SDGs, including those that affect them most such as FGM, menstruation, and making their own sexual and reproductive decisions. In fact, menstrual hygiene management, something of extreme importance to more than half the population, and with real impact on adolescent girls' lives, is completely invisible in this Agenda right now.

We must make sure we measure all parts of complex indicators. For example, the indicators in the most recent report proposed for target 2.2 which states, "By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and

wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons” only address the nutritional needs of children under 5. Previously the indicator on wasting did not have these limited age parameters and was hoped to be disaggregated by age, sex, and disability across the lifespan. Limiting it to those under 5, while of course important, ignores the nutritional needs and vulnerabilities of the rest of the population and missed out on measuring half of the target.

Indicators which measure perceptions are equally important, as they capture the lived realities of the very populations we hope to serve. For example, we have proposed a number of perception indicators about safety, including in and around schools, as well as in public spaces and on public transportation. The currently proposed indicator for measuring access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems needs to capture how safe people feel using it, rather than just proximity or infrastructure. Again, while important, it does not measure the usage or outcome of the target, and can miss the spirit in which the target was intended, which is to improve the lives of all people, especially the most marginalized. I was heartened to see a newly proposed indicator on perceptions of safety proposed this round. While these indicators are difficult to measure, they can and should be done. There are organizations like Plan International already working on piloting these types of indicators. Partnering with such organizations will help develop both new indicators and capacity at the national level.

Reaching zero means we’ll have to make room for absolute numbers. As we progress, and begin to truly reach the most vulnerable, sample sizes will get smaller and smaller. We have to have a way to account for individual accounts of experiences we are trying to eradicate.

Building capacity and ensuring a gendered analysis is applied across all goals, targets, and indicators, not just goal 5, is a big task, but one that will have us closer to where we truly want to be, in a world of non-discrimination, gender equality, and development that is truly sustainable, by 2030

In order to make this happen, we have to invest in data capacity and gender analysis. There has to be political will and resources behind these ambitions if we are to truly make this work

Plan International has been supporting that effort by working over the last several months with the adolescent girl community to develop a core list of indicators we feel are necessary are key to achieving this.

Creating such a package of indicators that work for girls has included consolidating existing indicators that are working, adapting those that need updating – such as schools assessments that require the addition of measurements for single-sex sanitation facilities, including accommodation for menstrual hygiene management. It has also required proposing some new indicators to adequately reflect the lived realities of girls.

Vital to all of this is ensuring our indicators and monitoring framework match and evolve with our ambition. We cannot be measuring the same things in 2030 that we are measuring now. We have made progress, both in programming as well as in data collection, over the last 15 years and we can do so again. We need to work hard together to take this agenda forward.

Plan International is committed to working with partners in all sectors to achieve an accountabilities framework so that all girls can realize their rights to learn, lead, decide and thrive