



**Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-ninth session**

Managing the transition from Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals: Lessons learned for gender equality from the Millennium Development Goals and galvanizing transformative change.

PANEL DISCUSSION

How the UN system is preparing to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda delivers transformative change for women and girls.

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“Fit for Purpose” for the Post-2015 Development Agenda**

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3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.**

*The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

Moderator, distinguished fellow panelists, delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I'm very pleased to be here this afternoon to participate in this panel discussion on managing the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs, and in particular to discuss how the UN system is preparing to be "fit for purpose" to deliver a transformative post-2015 development agenda that can really make a difference for women and girls.

As other panelists have said, we have a huge opportunity ahead of us. A transformative, universal, rights based post-2015 development agenda and SDGs represent a once in a lifetime chance to ensure we really invest in and deliver change for women and girls. Linked to this, it is critical to also ensure that we have a more "fit for purpose" UN system that can really "deliver as one" in support of this change.

From the outset, what is clear is that the new post-2015 development agenda will be a very significant departure from the MDGs. Where the MDGs were largely vertical and somewhat siloed, this agenda has the potential to be much more integrated and horizontal. Where the MDGs reflected and drove a largely North-South agenda, the post-2015 development agenda is universal and will apply in all countries, regardless of their development status – to my mind, the main element that makes it a radically different and potentially transformative agenda. And it is a much more transformative agenda thanks:

- First, to its rights-based perspective and the explicit focus on tackling inequality and discrimination, and the root causes of gender inequality, gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence, including through Goal 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Second, by bringing the climate change and development agendas together in one framework;
- Third, by focusing on getting to zero and really leaving no-one behind – and especially eliminating extreme poverty; and
- Fourth, the inclusion of Goal 16, which, while not perfect, not only ensures that governance, rule of law, and peace and security are included in the framework – all issues that were notably missing from the MDGs – but which also, and very critically, will substantively impact on the work of the UN more broadly, by potentially helping to better bring together not just the development and human rights work of the UN, but also humanitarian action, and peace and security. I will return to this point later.

And there can be no doubt that a transformative, rights-based, universal post-2015 development agenda also requires an international community – including a UN development system – that is also transformative, and "fit for purpose" to support countries to implement the new generation of SDGs. As the CEB and its pillars have highlighted, in helping countries to implement this transformative new agenda, the UN will need to focus on five key elements: universality, human rights, inequality, integration and the data revolution. Each of these elements is critical to supporting the achievement of gender equality and women's rights. And at the same time, the extent to which we achieve gender equality and women's rights will really be the litmus test of the UN's overall success in delivering these five elements and becoming more "fit for purpose".

First, universality means that all countries will need to implement, monitor and report on the goals, targets and indicators that are agreed at global level – as well as relevant national targets and indicators. And this means in turn that the UN system will need to support all countries to localize, monitor and report the goals and targets, including the goal and targets on gender equality. But it won't be a truly

universal agenda unless we address gender inequality, and support governments to implement their gender equality commitments, in all countries regardless of development status.

Second, human rights and the normative commitments governments have made, must underpin the new agenda and its implementation – including the principles of participation and accountability. The UN system will need to help countries to implement their normative commitments and build their capacity to do so and really accelerate integration of human rights in development efforts at all levels. And we cannot achieve the realization of human rights unless we fully realize the human rights of women and girls: this must be at the heart of our work going forward.

Third, a focus on inequality means that the UN system will need to support all countries, including middle-income and high-income countries, as well as LDCs and conflict affected countries, to address inequalities, and tackle the exclusion and discrimination that limit progress towards sustainable development. And we cannot address inequality unless we tackle gender inequality and gender based discrimination, the most persistent form of inequality which underpins all other forms of inequality.

Fourth, a focus on integration means that the UN development system will need to support countries to fully integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development, and help to ensure policy coherence and cross-government approaches on cross-cutting, multi-sectoral challenges – and engage all stakeholders in issue-based partnerships to respond to these challenges. Further the UN itself must work in a more cohesive and joined up way across the three pillars of the UN system – human rights, peace and security and development. Yet we cannot hope to achieve integration if gender equality and women’s empowerment are not fully integrated across the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Finally, a focus on the data revolution means the UN will need to really step up its support to National Statistical Commissions, and ensure use of disaggregated data, develop greater analytical capacity for measuring and understanding inequalities, risks and vulnerabilities, as well as use data and evidence much more effectively and transparently. But we cannot achieve a data revolution unless we ensure not only disaggregation of all indicators by sex, age, disability, socio-economic status and so on, but also the collection of, analysis and reporting on core gender indicators – including the 9 indicators on ending violence against women, and the 52 gender equality indicators adopted by the UN Statistical Commission – in all countries, as well as at the global and regional level.

Over the coming months, the ECOSOC dialogues on the “longer-term positioning of the UN development system”, together with the final negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and Financing for Development, offer a vital opportunity to ensure we have the universal, transformative, rights-based agenda we need to really bring about change for women and girls, that these commitments are matched by investment, and that the UN development system is ready to support delivery of this agenda.

In the immediate term, there are seven critical priorities I see ahead to ensure the UN development system is more “fit for purpose”, and can deliver real change for women and girls by creating an enabling environment for the UN to more effectively promote gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment at all levels.

First, is to fully roll-out the Standard Operating Procedures for “Delivering as One” in all countries. There is growing and strong support for the “Delivering as One” approach with an increasing

number of governments and country teams adopting elements of the second generation of Delivering as One. And, as we know from the independent evaluation of the “Delivering as One” pilots, when countries adopt this approach it helps to give much greater focus and priority to gender equality and women’s rights in the work of UN Country Teams. So we really need to see this approach adopted everywhere.

Second, is to provide integrated policy support at all levels, drawing on the expertise of different agencies in a strategic and cohesive manner, and anchored in global norms and commitments, to support Governments – and more broadly societies – to address complex, multi-sectoral challenges and implement a post-2015 agenda that is much more horizontal and integrated than the MDGs. Such a joined up approach to policy support is particularly critical to effectively address cross-cutting issues such as gender equality which require both specific action, and integration across goals and sectors.

Third, is to drive forward, and help implement, the data revolution, to ensure that data and evidence are used much more effectively, more systematically and more transparently. And as I said earlier, disaggregation of data, and use of data and analysis to better understand and monitor inequalities and vulnerability, and track progress for the most marginalized and vulnerable groups, will really be key, including to help us much better understand intersecting inequalities.

Fourth, is to take a much more systemic, system-wide approach to assessing risk and promoting resilience. Much more integrated partnerships and collaboration between humanitarian action and development, better build national and local capacities to manage shocks and stresses, and better coordinate emergency response and prevention work with sustainable development. Ensuring women’s participation and integrating gender equality will be critical to ensure prevention, response and recovery efforts are effective.

Fifth, is to better pool resources, including by bringing together development and humanitarian financing where this makes sense, as well as by ensuring negotiated, sustained and coherent financing for long-term support to the post-2015 agenda. Adequate and sustainable financing for gender equality commitments will be absolutely critical and we must use every tool and mechanism at our disposal to increase these resources – pooled and thematic financing and negotiated pledges for specific goals and targets, as well as assessed funding to support the UN’s normative work, including its work to support implementation of CEDAW and normative frameworks for gender equality, will be key.

Sixth, is to really open up the UN to be much more consultative with not only civil society, but also the private sector, Parliamentarians and other stakeholders, building on the great work that has been done to date to engage millions of people in the UNDG-sponsored post-2015 consultations. Increasing the space, resources, and support for women’s civil society organizations in all countries, and at the regional and global levels is a vital part of this effort.

Seventh, and finally, is to ensure much greater transparency, including regarding resources (human and financial) at country, regional and global levels, as well as sharing data, analysis, programme and operations information. Gender-based budgeting and accountability for the resources the UN system invests in gender equality and women’s empowerment will be key.

Looking beyond the UN development system, we must also ensure that we take a coherent approach and really maximize and leverage the opportunities to address gender equality, women’s rights and

women's empowerment in the reviews and conferences currently taking place in the peace and security and humanitarian sectors.

This means ensuring that the three major reviews of the UN system's peace and security architecture – the Peace Operations and Peacebuilding Architecture review, and of course the High Level Review of implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 really address gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment and participation, and that the outcomes are coherent, common and mutually reinforcing and can really drive change in the way the UN system responds in conflict affected settings, to the benefit of women and girls.

And it means ensuring that the preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit, and the linked discussions that are underway on how best to bring together the humanitarian and development work of the UN system, also fully address the needs and interests of women and girls, and integrate gender equality and women's empowerment.

As we go forward into the final months of negotiation on the new post-2015 agenda and Financing for Development, and as Member States enter into preparations for the 2016 QCPR, what's very clear is that to achieve the change we need to see for women and girls requires clear shared objectives; leadership by Member States, in the UN system and among all stakeholders; funding for gender priorities that really promotes collective efforts; partnerships at all levels; clear measurement that can demonstrate progress; and transparency and accountability for efforts and for results. We count on all of you to ensure we have what we need and to hold us to the promises we make.

Thank you!