



CALL TO ACTION



UN WOMEN GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY ADVISORY GROUP

We, the members of the UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group, are issuing this Call To Action to you, the global citizens, to intensify our work together to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. This is a historic moment in time. If we do not act now to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in our lifetime, we not only fail ourselves, we fail our sons and our daughters and history will judge us harshly.

Next year, in 2015, three major global policy making processes will come together: the Beijing Platform for Action will celebrate its 20th anniversary, the Millennium Development Goals will finish their term and a new post-2015 international development agenda will be adopted. 2015 will also see the convening of the CoP (Conference of the Parties) in Paris where we hope that Governments will agree and adopt a new climate deal. We must seize this opportunity and use this convergence of global events to deal a death blow to the current patriarchal structures and practices that continue to disempower women and girls.

We have seen much progress in the intervening years since the MDGs were adopted as the global development framework. But challenges persist and many remain unaddressed. For example, at least 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced violence in their lifetime; many women and girls continue to be subject to discrimination within the

laws and practices of their own countries; globally only one in five members of parliament are women and few women are included in party leadership; women represent 70 per cent of the world's poor; more than 800 million women remain shut out of the formal labour market; and, women's equal access to the media and the persistence of prejudicial gender stereotypes in media remain a challenge, despite advances in media and communication technology.

Civil society and the women's movement have been critical in furthering the gender equality agenda and, as global policy makers move into defining a new development framework for the world, this time is no different: the voices of civil society must be heard. And, the chorus of voices must include the voices of young girls and boys and the voices of men, all seeking the same world, free of inequality and discrimination.

We, the Global CSAG, call upon all civil society and citizens to commit to work with passion and creativity in designing new strategies that accelerate progress for women and girls by reflecting them as the solutions to ending poverty and achieving sustainable human development. By changing the narrative from women as victims to women as actors and enablers, alongside men, we can transform the discussion on gender equality and women's rights to an aspiration for all.

AS WE MOVE TOWARDS 2015, WE, THE UN WOMEN GLOBAL CSAG, URGE GOVERNMENTS TO:

Place gender equality as a specific, stand-alone goal at the core of the post 2015 framework. A stand-alone goal on gender equality must be accompanied by a clear commitment to implement gender mainstreaming in all goals, targets and indicators of the new Agenda.

Include women's participation in peace and security issues and processes including in conflict prevention and peace building as part of the new framework, backed by necessary institutional mechanisms of accountability in order to involve women's organizations and civil society through all stages of the peace processes.

Protect freedom of association, expression, assembly and political participation, and protect human rights defenders, including women human rights defenders, as central agents translating international political commitments into lived realities.

Launch comprehensive norms and policies against all forms of violence, establish quotas for the equal participation and representation of women in political institutions including political parties, apex financial institutions and corporate management; and implement plans for equal wages of women and men, the incorporation of women into the formal economy and the promotion of their entrepreneurial initiatives.

Ensure adequate and sustainable financing for women's rights and gender equality in regional, national and local government budgets.

We call upon all Governments to ratify CEDAW and its optional protocol and to harmonize constitutions, legislations and national policies with this Convention so that it may be implemented in its full strength.

WE CALL UPON OUR SISTERS IN THE MOVEMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY TO:

Participate in international, national and regional consultations for Beijing+20.

Strategically influence the post-2015 development framework to bring home the message that structural inequality and macro-economic issues must be tackled if we are to eradicate gender inequality and other forms of inequalities and realize women's rights.

We, the UN Women Global CSAG, call upon civil society and every community and political leader to respond to this Call to Action and reach out to your communities and constituencies, to every woman and girl, man and boy, and all citizens, wherever they may be, to join us and accelerate action towards achieving gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment.

This is a defining moment and a tremendous opportunity. Let us seize it with both hands and let us demand a move from rhetoric to a real change in women's lives. Because without this there will be no significant progress in the world.

UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group:

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