

“Gender Equality to End Poverty” – Statement to the HLP

While the UN High Level Panel on Post 2015 has declared that we can end poverty in our lifetime, it is clear that women across the globe are becoming increasingly impoverished and if we do not transform the current political, cultural and economic systems by placing women at the heart of development, we will not be able to achieve an end to poverty.

If the members of the panel are serious about eradicating poverty and inequality, they will consider the following points as they draft recommendations to the UN Secretary-General:

- First and foremost, combatting poverty and the worsening feminization of poverty must be rooted in respecting the human rights of women. The Post 2015 Development Agenda should be rooted in existing international human rights instruments and the Universal Declaration for Human Rights.
- Combatting all forms of gender-based violence is essential to end poverty. Violence against women (VAW) is a structural driver of the increasing feminization of poverty. VAW has been identified as the #1 priority in the e-discussion on Gender Equality that was held as part of the Global Thematic Discussion on Inequalities. The HLP should prioritize ending violence against women and its intersection with increasing poverty.
- Stemming and reversing the feminization of poverty and the structural drivers of women’s poverty and inequality, including lack of access to land ownership and property, among others, should be prioritized by the HLP for the Post 2015 framework. Addressing the root causes of inequality and poverty is essential in developing a new framework which has sustainable development at its core.
- The Post 2015 framework should affirm and guarantee sexual and reproductive rights and universal access to quality, comprehensive, integrative sexual and reproductive health services.
- Discrimination due to sexual orientations and gender identities to bodily integrity is detrimental to society as a whole and impacts the economic lives of LGBTQ people. The Post 2015 framework must ensure a world free of violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and diverse gender identities.
- Caste, class and ethnicity perpetuate poverty as social and cultural norms are discriminatory and have a devastating effect on a women’s livelihood. The Post 2015 framework should ensure promote a world where people live free of discrimination.
- Both formal and non-formal education has the power to level the playing field for women. Literacy and equality of access for women and girls to quality education should remain relevant targets for post-2015 education and development goals.
- The impact of climate change has a devastating effect on women, their families and communities. Worsening natural disasters due to climate change has deepened poverty for women and contributes to generational poverty. The HLP must emphasize the link between climate change, worsening natural disasters and women living in poverty.

- Land grabbing and the “extractives development model,” the nexus of government sanctioned mining and other extractives industries, is an assault on the dignity and sovereignty of women, their families and their communities. The HLP must bring attention to the impact of these unsustainable methods and their devastating effect on perpetuating poverty for women.
- Current models of measuring economic activity do not take into account unremunerated work, such as the care economy and social reproduction. The HLP should ensure in new economic measures.
- Full employment and decent work, and ensuring universal and affordable access to social protection is a pillar for achieving women’s economic independence.
- Moreover, we need a new development paradigm that works for women, includes women, particularly the voices of socially-excluded, disenfranchised and marginalized women, as part of the solutions and in the decision-making.

--This summary statement was initiated at a session entitled, “Poverty and Gender” at the “Advancing the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda: Reconfirming Rights, Recognizing Limits, Redefining Goals” Conference held in Bonn, Germany, March 20-22, 2013 in which a core group of women and men articulated the need to stress the interlinkages between and among gender and povety. The Feminist Task Force, a coalition of women’s rights, grassroots and rural women’s organizations and networks, and a member of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) and the Women’s Coalition on Post 2015, compiled input and further developed it into this statement which we entitled, “Gender Equality to End Poverty” and present to the High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Development Agenda. This statement has been endorsed by the FTF, GCAP and other women’s organizations. These as well as the statement will be posted on www.worldwewant2015.org for additional endorsements. For more information, contact Rosa G. Lizarde, Global Director, Feminist Task Force rosa.lizarde@whiteband.org www.feministtaskforce.org