

May 10th, 2013

Dear High Level Panel Member,

We, the undersigned, are reaching out to you today to reaffirm the importance of ensuring that women's empowerment and gender equality are front and centre in the new post-2015 development. We are from organisations working in development, women's and girls' rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights and other sectors. We represent millions of individuals in nearly every country in the world.

Civil society organisations from many parts of the world have lined up behind a call for a transformative, stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment. They have also echoed the call for gender-specific targets and indicators across the entire framework, and that the post-2015 development framework builds on the unfinished business of existing Millennium Development Goals 3 and 5. The need to prioritise action on women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality has been clearly communicated during High Level Panel outreach with civil society organisations in London, Monrovia, Bali, Guadalajara, in addition to various thematic, national, regional, online and offline consultations globally.

It is essential that the final report of the High Level Panel proposes that a post-2015 development framework contains a stand-alone goal to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, with transformative targets tackling critical women's rights issues, including violence against women and girls, economic empowerment, maternal mortality, political participation and sexual and reproductive health and rights.¹ This must be done in the context of broader efforts to address the unequal allocation of power, decision-making and resource sharing between regions, countries and populations.

By including a stand-alone goal and targets, you will be echoing calls from civil society organisations from many parts of the world to ensure the post-2015 framework builds on the unfinished business of existing Millennium Development Goal 3 and 5. In doing so, the High Level Panel would act as a true champion for the rights of half the world's population, while paving the way for sustainable and meaningful development for individuals and communities around the world. A failure to do so would be a backtracking on commitments made in 2000 and an indication that the voices of millions of women around the world are being ignored.

We urge you, in your role as a High Level Panel Member, to ensure that achieving gender equality continues to be central to the discussions of a post-2015 development framework going forward by supporting a goal on women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality, alongside ensuring gender is integrated throughout the framework.

¹ For further suggestions by the Gender and Development Network on what transformative targets look like and possible target areas please see the following report:
<http://www.gadnetwork.org.uk/storage/Achieving%20gender%20equality%20and%20women's%20empowerment%20in%20the%20post%202015%20framework.pdf>

For further information, please contact Tewodros Melesse, Director General of International Planned Parenthood Federation at tmelesse@ippf.org or +44 (0) 207 939 8250.

Signed,

ActionAid

African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)

Bangladesh Indigenous Women Networks

CARE International

Cherie Blair Foundation for Women

Christian Aid

Feminist Task Force

Gender and Development Network

International Planned Parenthood Federation

Kapaeeng Foundation

Liberian Civil Society Women's Steering Committee on the Post 2015

National Alliance of Women Human Rights Defenders

Oxfam

Planned Parenthood Association of Liberia

UK National Committee for UN Women

WOREC Nepal

World YWCA

Young Women's Leadership Institute