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**Ensuring
Gender-sensitive
Implementation of
the Post-2015
Development Framework***

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Ensuring gender-sensitive implementation of the post-2015 development framework

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have provided an overarching framework for development that has guided national priorities and aid flows over the last decade. As we near the end of the target date for the achievement of the MDGs, it is clear that although a few targets have been met, a lot more remains to be done to fulfill the vision underlying the MDGs.

The consensus on the need of a new development framework has resulted in a proposed set of 17 ambitious and universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets that delineate the areas of focus. Discussions are ongoing at the technical level on around 120 indicators that will be used to measure progress achieved.

The purpose of this policy brief is to offer stakeholders (government, civil society) that are willing to implement the new development framework in a gender-sensitive manner some suggestions on elements and data that could help doing so. While gender equality should be promoted throughout the goals, this brief examines and offers suggestions on SDGs 1, 2, 5 and 17, the goals that are intimately related to the role of women as economic agents. The elements suggested emerge from analytical studies conducted by UNCTAD on the gender impacts of trade policy and trade liberalization¹.

From the MDGs to the SDGs: Poverty and hunger, gender equality, and partnership for development

Goal 1 of the MDGs deals with extreme poverty and hunger. Linked to this, it also deals with decent and productive employment for all. While access to productive resources is a precondition for fighting poverty and hunger and achieving productive employment, none of the indicators of Goal 1 refers to it. In particular, no attention was paid to the fact that women's lack of access to land and other productive resources is a key obstacle to tackling hunger and achieving MDG 1. According to UN data (UN Inter-agency Task Force on Rural Women 2011), on average, women make up about 43 percent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries. If these women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 per cent, raising total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 per cent, in turn reducing the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 per cent. The proposed SDG 1 - end poverty - and SDG 2 - end hunger and malnutrition and promote sustainable agriculture - remedy this serious shortcoming by including targets on ensuring that all men and women have equal access to economic resources, basic services, property and inheritance, technology, financial services and markets as a means to fight poverty and improve food security. SDG 1 includes as well a target referring to the need to put in place sound policy frameworks at all levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, in order to support accelerated investments in poverty eradication actions.

The gender equality Goal (3) in the MDGs was criticized for not paying enough attention to the structural causes of gender inequality such as violence against women, systematic gender-based discrimination and lack of access to economic resources while focusing mostly on education and

¹ The countries studied are Angola, Bhutan, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Lesotho, Rwanda and Uruguay. The country case studies and a synthesis report summarizing their main findings and lessons learned are available at: <http://unctad.org/gender>.

political participation. The proposed new SDG remedies some of these gaps by including targets on violence against women, unpaid care work, and on access to economic resources, land ownership, inheritance, and natural resources.

Goal 8, fostering a global partnership for development, was supposed to mobilize support from rich countries for development in the form of trade policy concessions, higher aid, debt relief and capacity building but has been found weak in design and lacking in implementation. Its "successor", SDG 17, addresses some of these shortcomings, among others, by calling developed countries to honour their commitments related to the percentage of GNI in ODA to developing and least developed countries, and by including among the measures meant to facilitating market access for the LDCs transparent and simple rules of origin. In its trade-related component, SDG 17, however, mainly focuses on trade in goods, while paying limited attention to trade in services, where most women are employed; and on tariff barriers, overlooking the role of non-tariff measures, the latter being a major obstacle for women producers and exporters. While the SDGs are meant to be inspirational, Goal 17 is not particularly so. Target 10 promotes a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the WTO including through the conclusion of the Doha round. However, it does not explicitly link the existence of such a trading system with the achievement of overarching objectives that are beneficial to a wide range of countries and of people within countries. Conversely, the draft document of the Financing for Development accord (the so called "zero draft")² makes explicit the links between trade and some suitable outcomes, such as decent work and equality. Within the SDG framework, however, trade is addressed in several other goals (beyond Goal 17), where its potential role as an enabler of development emerges more clearly.³

Common structural constraints with respect to gender in low- and middle-income countries: Findings from UNCTAD country case studies

UNCTAD has conducted analytical studies on the impact of trade and trade liberalization on gender equality in a number of developing countries. Although the context and history of each country and each geographical region is quite different, UNCTAD's analytical work shows that there are clearly identifiable structural constraints with respect to women's economic empowerment that are common to all.

In the first place, gender segmentation is evident in all economic activities. Women are concentrated in low-value added and low-productivity work that pays little and in subsistence production that generates no surplus. They are systematically excluded from high-skill occupations and from the commercialized and capital-intensive segments of production and trade thus providing few pathways of advancement unless specific policy interventions are put in place.

Second, women have unequal access to productive resources in relation to men. Since many of the lucrative income-generating activities are already male-dominated, women often have restricted access to community managed facilities or receive assets that are of poor quality. Discriminatory customary laws that deprive women of equal rights to land are still prevalent especially in Africa.

Third, women have low access to vocational and on-the-job training that would increase their chances of obtaining higher skilled jobs and to support services that could expand their trades and livelihoods. This in turn is related to the gender segmentation of occupations: because women are

² Available at: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/1ds-zero-draft-outcome.pdf>

³ For example, SDGs 2, 3, 8, 9, 10 and 14.

crowded in labour-intensive work in the manufacturing sector, they have less opportunity to acquire advanced skills required for more technically sophisticated work. Employers may also prefer not to “invest” in women due to their intermittent participation in the labour market or to gender norms and stereotypes that reserve higher paying jobs for men. In terms of agriculture and fisheries, women use rudimentary and low-productivity technologies, have low access to credit and finance for expansion and are often excluded from extension programmes and other support services due to time and mobility constraints as well as social and cultural barriers that make it difficult for them to participate.

Finally, in all countries and regions, women remain primarily responsible for household work and caring for family members. In fact, in countries where data is available, women are reported to spend more than twice the number of hours than men do on unpaid domestic and care work on average (ECOSOC 2013). Given poor infrastructure facilities in low-income countries, such as the lack of regular electricity, fuel and water supply and means of transport, the burdens of household work are multiplied and lead to even higher female time poverty. Managing care responsibilities alongside economic activities also curtails women’s ability to advance in their positions or to expand their livelihood generating activities.

UNCTAD’s suggestions

These structural constraints need to be addressed and progress on them needs to be monitored in the post-2015 development framework. This section presents suggestions on the elements, data and considerations that may prove useful to assess whether SDGs 1, 2, 5 and 17 are being implemented in a way that takes into account the structural constraints that have been identified. The same elements/data can be used to measure progress with reference to several goals and targets. In the sections below, we outline our suggestions.

(i) Poverty, hunger, food security and sustainable agriculture

SDGs 1 and 2 make an appropriate link between ending poverty and hunger and access to economic resources, basic services, land, technology and finance. They also link investments in poverty eradication actions with the establishment of pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies. Since women's lack of or limited access to productive resources is among the main reasons why they are poorer and often less efficient than men as economic agents, the establishment of such links is welcome.

The following could be used to track compliance with some of the proposed targets, having women's economic empowerment in mind.

For target 1.4 (access to productive resources):

- a. Female share of landholding and immovable property.
- b. Female share of bank/ savings accounts.
- c. Female participation rate in technical and vocational training programmes.
- d. Female participation rate in government support programmes (extension services, inputs, credit).
- e. Proportion of micro-enterprises and SMEs owned by women that have access to mobile phones and the internet.

For target 1.b (poverty eradication actions):

- a. Domestic revenues targeting specifically women as per cent of GNI, by sector.
- b. Official development assistance and net private grants targeting specifically women as percent of GNI.

For target 2.3 (access to land and other productive resources in order to improve agricultural productivity and small farmers' income):

- a. Female share of landholding.
- b. Female participation rate in technical and vocational training programmes.
- c. Female participation rate in government support programmes (extension services, inputs, credit).
- d. Female use rate of storage, drying and processing facilities.
- e. Female rural employment in non-farm activities.

(ii) Gender equality and women's empowerment

UNCTAD recommends that economic empowerment be meaningfully and thoroughly included in the implementation of SDG 5.

For target 5.1 (end all forms of discrimination against women and girls), compliance, among others, could be tracked by looking at:

- a. Ratio of female wages to male wages for similar work, by sector/ industry.

For target 5.4 (recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work)

- a. Average hours spent on paid and unpaid work, by sex.

For target 5.5 (ensure women's full participation and equal opportunities in decision-making, including in economic life)

- a. Index of Dissimilarity for occupations and sectors (among others)
- b. Female share of managerial jobs
- c. Female share of professional jobs (incl. and excl. teaching; incl. and excl. health workers)
- d. Female share of clerical jobs
- e. Female share of informal employment
- f. Female share of permanent jobs

Perhaps most importantly, target 5.a refers to the need to ensure women's ownership and access to productive resources, the cornerstone of women's economic empowerment. Since gender segregation in the labor market is intimately connected to continuing gender segregation in vocational and technical training, which in turn is directly related to employability, tracking access to training, including vocational training, is important. Compliance could be tracked by looking at the same elements/data as suggested for targets in SDGs 1 and 2, and in particular target 1.4. Moreover, the suggested elements would be of relevance also for SDG 8 dealing with sustainable economic growth, productive employment and decent work for all:

- a. Female share of landholding and immovable property.
- b. Female share of bank/ savings accounts.
- c. Female participation rate in technical and vocational training programmes.

d. Female participation rate in government support programmes (extension services, inputs, credit).

For target 5.b (enhance the use of enabling technologies to promote women's empowerment):

a. Proportion of micro-enterprises and SMEs owned by women that have access to mobile phones and the internet.

The same element is proposed for checking gender-sensitive compliance with target 1.4.

(iii) Means of implementation and global partnership for development

Goal 17 of the SDGs still appears to be weak. A strong link between promoting a universal multilateral trading system and achieving overarching objectives such as equality and inclusive development has not been established. The existence of a well-functioning multilateral trading system will not in itself guarantee economic growth that is equitable among and within countries. Trade can be used by countries to move up the value chain and to improve labour standards and working conditions, that is to link economic upgrading with social upgrading. However, as it emerges from previous sections of this note, women tend generally to be concentrated in the labour intensive nodes of the chain where working conditions remain poor and upgrading may be associated with a defeminization of employment. Thus apart from tapping the potentialities of trade, the possible adverse effects of trade also need to be addressed.

For SDG 17, the intention is to capture the various dimensions of inequality women face in the economic sphere and to track the progress made on them.

UNCTAD suggests the following:

For target 17.10 (promoting the multilateral trading system), in addition to assessing the fairness, openness and non-discriminatory nature of the multilateral trading system, it seems important for countries that wish to ensure that trade contributes to inclusive development and to reducing inequalities (including those based on gender) to look at the following elements:

- a. Female share of seasonal export jobs.
- b. Gender wage gap, work conditions and social benefits in the export sector relative to the domestic sector.
- c. Female under-employment rate in import-competing sectors.
- d. Female share of high skilled jobs in export-oriented sectors.
- e. Female share of managerial jobs in export-oriented sectors.
- f. Female share of permanent jobs in export-oriented sectors.

Moreover, gender impact assessments of trade and investment agreements may contribute to gauge the contribution of international trade to inclusive development.

Target 17.15 (policy space to establish and implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development) could be interpreted to include social safety nets to address economic insecurity and volatility due to trade. Elements to assess if the target is being implemented in an inclusive manner could include:

- a. Coverage of unemployment insurance

b. Coverage of cash transfer and nutrition programmes for unemployed and under-employed population

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