

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

While the UN High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Development Agenda has declared that their vision is “to end poverty in our lifetime”¹ at the London HLP meeting, 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 Post 2015 development framework, 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 increasing 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 feminization of poverty and a major contributor to generational poverty for women. VAW has been identified as the #1 priority in the e-discussion on Gender Equality that was held as part of the UN Global Thematic Discussion on Inequalities.² The recent outcome at the 57th UN Commission on the Status of Women also underscores the interconnectedness between poverty and VAW.³ The HLP should emphasize 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

¹ Town Hall Meeting with civil society and members of High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Development Agenda Meeting in London, UK on October 29 – Nov. 2, 2013. Homi Kharas opened the meeting by highlighting the vision of the Panel: “to end poverty in their time.” <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article4148>.

² Addressing Inequalities Global Thematic Consultation co-convened by UN Women and UNICEF, <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/2953515/inequalities>.

³ UN Commission on the Status of Women-57, Elimination and Prevention of all forms of Violence against Women and Girls Agreed Conclusions, http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/CSW57_agreed_conclusions_advance_unedited_version_18_March_2013.pdf

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 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 their ability to move out of poverty. The HLP must emphasize the link between climate change and women living and staying in poverty.
- Land grabbing and the "extractives development model," the nexus of government sanctioned mining and other extractives industries, and the system which prioritizes profits over people, is an assault on the dignity and sovereignty of women, their families and their communities. The HLP must emphasize 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 women's work in the care economy and social reproduction. The new development framework should ensure new economic measures for women's unremunerated work.
- 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 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 interlinkages between and among gender and poverty. 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 is a call for "Gender Equality to End Poverty" and present to the High Level Panel on the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

For more information, go to www.feministtaskforce.org or www.worldwewant2015.org/feministtaskforce

Contact: Rosa G. Lizarde, Global Director, Feminist Task Force rosa.lizarde@whiteband.org

www.feministtaskforce.org